



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE  
MILLINGTON, TN 38055-0000

BUPERSINST 1600.7A  
BUPERS-00D  
3 Mar 2022

BUPERS INSTRUCTION 1600.7A

From: Chief of Naval Personnel

Subj: DESERTION AND UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1325.02 of 26 October 2021  
(b) 10 U.S.C. Chapter 47, Uniform Code of Military Justice  
(c) NAVPERS 15560D, Naval Military Personnel Manual (MILPERSMAN)

Encl: (1) Regional Chaplains, Navy Installation Command Directory

1. Purpose. To implement the provisions of reference (a) and establish policies to minimize desertion and unauthorized absence (UA), foster development of effective deterrent programs, enhance apprehension efforts, and provide for accurate and timely reporting of incidents of desertion and UA. Major changes to this instruction include alignment of definitions with reference (a) and use of Department of Defense forms.
2. Cancellation. BUPERSINST 1600.7.
3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction is applicable to all active duty, full-time support, and inactive duty Reserve personnel.
4. Background
  - a. Desertion and UA represent serious breaches of military discipline, reduce military effectiveness, and impose an added burden on commanders and Service members. Reasonable efforts must be made to cause the surrender or apprehension and expeditious return to military control (RMC) of deserters and absentees. Such efforts should be made at appropriate command levels to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding absences, initiate apprehension actions, and expedite appropriate notification procedures.
  - b. In the past, the ability of the Military Services to return deserters to military control relied significantly on the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) through routine investigation and apprehension of deserters. While the FBI no longer provides such services, they continue to provide other support such as granting access to and the inclusion of deserter information in the Wanted Person File of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database.

c. The Navy Deserter Apprehension Program (NDAP) has been established to provide for the apprehension and RMC of Navy members officially declared in a deserter status. A key element of the NDAP is to encourage, by appropriate Service action, civilian law enforcement agencies (LEA) to support efforts in apprehending deserters. This instruction provides policies and assigns responsibilities to ensure attainment of the program's objectives within the Navy.

5. Definitions. For the purpose of this instruction, the following definitions apply:

a. Absentee. A Service member who is absent without authority or without leave from the unit, organization, or other place of duty where the Service member is required to be.

b. Alien Military Service Deserter. An alien (i.e., a non-citizen of the United States) serving in the U.S. Military who deserts.

c. Apprehension. Physical custody of another person (i.e., arrest or detention).

d. Deserter. A Service member who intends to permanently abandon their military duties.

e. Desertion under Aggravated Circumstances. Conviction or suspicion of commission of one or more of the following offenses per references (a) and (b):

(1) Article 82, soliciting commission of offenses;

(2) Article 87a, resistance, flight, breach of arrest, and escape;

(3) Article 89, assault of superior commissioned officer;

(4) Article 90, willfully disobeying superior commissioned officer;

(5) Article 91, insubordinate conduct toward warrant officer, noncommissioned officer, or petty officer;

(6) Article 92, failure to obey order or regulation;

(7) Article 94, mutiny or sedition;

(8) Article 99, misbehavior before the enemy;

(9) Article 100, subordinate compelling surrender;

(10) Article 103, spies;

(11) Article 103a, espionage;

- (12) Article 103b, aiding the enemy;
- (13) Article 108a, captured or abandoned property;
- (14) Article 110, improper hazarding of vessel or aircraft;
- (15) Article 116, riot or breach of peace;
- (16) Article 118, murder;
- (17) Article 119, manslaughter;
- (18) Article 119a, death or injury of an unborn child;
- (19) Article 120, rape and sexual assault generally;
- (20) Article 120b, rape and sexual assault of a child;
- (21) Article 120c, other sexual misconduct;
- (22) Article 122, robbery;
- (23) Article 125, kidnapping;
- (24) Article 126, arson;
- (25) Article 127, extortion;
- (26) Article 128, assault;
- (27) Article 128a, maiming; and
- (28) Article 130, stalking.

f. Member under Custody. Absentee, deserter, or supervised release violator in the custody of a law enforcement agency, or military escort with the authorization from the Navy Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM), Corrections and Programs Office (PERS-00D), Navy Absentee and Collection Information Center (NACIC).

g. RMC: the date and hour when:

(1) An absentee or deserter surrenders to, is delivered to, or is apprehended by or for military authorities;

(2) A civilian authority, holding the absentee or deserter for some reason other than at the request of the military, informs the military of his or her availability, or

(3) An absentee or deserter otherwise comes under the control of military personnel.

## 6. Responsibilities

a. The Bureau of Naval Personnel Corrections and Programs Office (BUPERS-00D) is designated as the Navy's senior policy official to serve as lead for the deserter and absentee program.

b. NAVPERSCOM (PERS-00D) develops directives, as needed for apprehension of deserters and their RMC, and provides oversight of the NACIC.

c. NACIC has the mission to administer centralized deserter information services to provide tracking, monitoring, and collection services of all non-discharged Navy personnel who are administratively declared deserters. Discharged members are still subject to the jurisdiction of reference (b) include parolees, supervised release violators, and escaped prisoners.

d. Commanding officers (CO) and officers-in-charge (OIC) must develop procedures at their command or unit to ensure strict adherence to the requirements of the NDAP as provided in this instruction and reference (c). Enclosure (1) provides addresses and phone numbers of regional chaplains for inclusion in letters to notify member's next of kin (NOK) of their UA and RMC.

e. Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (COMNAVRESFORCOM) will ensure assistance and counsel is provided to an absentee's NOK per reference (c).

7. Apprehending Absentees and Deserters, and Supervised Release Violators. DD 553 Deserter/Absentee Wanted by the Armed Forces, DD 553-1 Parole/Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR) Violator Wanted by the Armed Forces, and DD 616 Report of Return of Absentee will be used when directed to escort or receive an apprehended absentee, deserter, or supervised release violator.

a. NACIC is responsible for administering centralized deserter information services and providing tracking, monitoring, and collection services for Navy personnel who are administratively declared deserters. NACIC serves as the operational arm of the NDAP that:

(1) Operates a 24-hour Navy deserter information point (NDIP);

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(2) Investigates causes of the apprehension and return (via escort or use of technical arrest orders) of military personnel administratively declared deserters or supervised release violators;

(3) Maintains a central repository for deserter records and case files;

(4) Makes entries into the FBI's NCIC database;

(5) Places deserters and returned deserters in appropriate accounting codes in the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System;

(6) Assists local commands and outside agencies with coordination of transportation for Navy absentees and deserters, parole violators, supervised mandatory release violators, and prisoners; and

(7) Reports deserter's criminal history data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Justice Information Services Division.

b. NDIP

(1) Navy's centralized point for control, accounting, and dissemination of information concerning Service members administratively classified as deserters.

(2) NDIP provides management information that identifies the number of absentees and deserters returned to military control. The information should also include one of these modes of return:

(a) Surrendered to military or civilian authorities or

(b) Apprehended by military or civilian authorities.

c. RMC

(1) NACIC must coordinate for the RMC of apprehended absentees and deserters upon receipt of notification by civilian LEAs that such personnel are available per SECNAVINST 5820.7C. Apprehended absentees and deserters must normally be placed in military custody within 1 week of notification by civilian LEAs. PERS-00D may coordinate with other Military Services for the RMC of such personnel in order to conserve resources and to ensure expeditious response.

(2) Commands may request approval from NACIC for the escort of deserters already in custody of military authorities or absentees if unusual circumstances warrant their subject matter expertise. Escort travel must be funded by funds provided through the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) Total Force Manpower, Training, and Education Requirements

Division (N13M). Per reference (a), all costs associated with an absentee's or deserter's transportation will be charged to the pay account of the individual member as prescribed per NAVSO P-6034, Joint Travel Regulations (JTR).

d. Per SECNAVINST 1730.7E and SECNAVINST 1730.9A, Navy chaplains can offer Sailors and family members the opportunity to discuss personal matters in complete privacy. This encourages full and complete disclosure by those who seek chaplain assistance under the protection of confidential communications. Such communication can benefit the individual and the institution. Assistance to NOK of deserters and absentees should be provided such as:

(1) COs and OICs must provide a copy of the NOK notification letter required by reference (c), to the regional chaplain of the appropriate Navy region per enclosure (1). Additionally, COs and OICs will promptly notify the regional chaplain of an absentee's RTM.

(2) Upon receiving the NOK notification letter, the regional chaplain, in consultation with COMNAVRESFORCOM) (as needed), must notify the Active or Reserve Component chaplain closest to the NOK of the Sailor's absence or return from absence. The regional chaplain or COMNAVRESFORCOM (as appropriate) must provide proper training on this program to chaplains and religious program specialists. Additionally, the regional chaplain must provide necessary administrative support (such as reimbursement for postage and official telephone calls) retain records of contact with NOK (as necessary).

(3) If asked to contact the NOK or Sailor, the designated Active or Reserve Component chaplain must provide appropriate care and advice per SECNAVINST 1730.7E and RESPERS M-1001.5. Reserve Component chaplains must receive appropriate participation credit per RESPERS M-1001.5 Navy Reserve Personnel Manual.

## 8. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned for the standard subject identification codes (SSIC) 1000 through 13000 series per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration (DON/AA), Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page at: <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact your local records manager or the DON/AA DRMD program office.

9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, BUPERS-00D will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy

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and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.

10. Forms. The following forms are available on the Department of Defense Web site at: [https://www.esd.whs.mil/Directives/forms/dd0500\\_0999/](https://www.esd.whs.mil/Directives/forms/dd0500_0999/).

- a. DD 553 Deserter/Absentee Wanted by the Armed Forces
- b. DD 553-1 Parole/Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR) Violator Wanted By the Armed Forces
- c. DD 616 Report of Return of Absentee



A. HOLSEY  
Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is only available electronically via BUPERS Web site <http://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/Instructions/BUPERS-Instructions/>.

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REGIONAL CHAPLAINS, NAVY INSTALLATION COMMAND DIRECTORY

Mid-Atlantic (Norfolk)  
Regional Chaplain  
Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (00G)  
1510 Gilbert St. (Bldg N-21)  
Norfolk, VA 23511-2737  
COM: (757) 322-2939/2771/DSN 262  
FAX: (757) 445-9384/DSN 262

Southeast (Jacksonville)  
Regional Chaplain  
Program Manager for Religious Ministries  
Navy Region Southeast Jacksonville Box 102 (N00R)  
Jacksonville, FL 32212-5000  
COM: (904) 542-6016/1542/DSN 942  
FAX: (904) 542-4009/DSN 942

Midwest (Great Lakes)  
Regional Chaplain  
Navy Region Midwest Great Lakes  
2601B Paul Jones Street  
Great Lakes, IL 60088-2845  
COM: (847) 688-4461/DSN 792  
FAX: (847) 688-4465/DSN 792

Southwest (San Diego)  
Regional Chaplain  
Navy Region Southwest (N00R)  
937 North Harbor Drive Box 71  
San Diego, CA 92132-0058  
COM: (619) 532-1508/3898/DSN 522  
FAX: (619) 532-3058/DSN 522

Northwest (Silverdale)  
Regional Chaplain  
Navy Region Northwest (N00R)  
1100 Hunley Road Suite 206  
Silverdale, WA 98315-5000  
COM: (360) 315-5240/DSN 322  
FAX: (360) 315-3592/DSN 322