



NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and* RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
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MILITARY RECORDS FRAUD FACT SHEET

What is the National Archives (NARA) Office of Inspector General (OIG)?

The NARA OIG has investigators and other employees who act as agents of positive change. Our mission is to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness at NARA by detecting and preventing fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in its programs and operations while keeping stakeholders informed. We act to protect the integrity of NARA's operations, data, and archival holdings.

When can the NARA OIG help with military records fraud?

We can only help when NARA's records have been wrongfully used. The National Personnel Record Center (NPRC) holds our veterans' military records and is one of NARA's largest operations. For our office to have jurisdiction, there must be some wrongful use or alteration of veteran's records from NARA's holdings. We can investigate when someone alters military records from NARA or somehow misuses these records. For example, if someone gets their DD-214 from NARA and changes the dates or something else, we can investigate that.

Are there times the OIG can't help with military records fraud?

Again, we can only help when NARA's records have wrongfully used. If records from NARA have not been used, we do not have any jurisdiction. For example, we do not investigate claims someone is lying about military service in order to brag, impress someone, or to fool a potential boyfriend or girlfriend.

Isn't it always a crime to lie about military service?

In general, no. While it may be morally reprehensible, it is usually not a crime. However, the *Stolen Valor Act of 2013* (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/258>) makes it a crime for someone to claim they received certain medals in order to obtain money, property, or some other tangible benefit. The law only bars false claims about certain military awards, including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and a few others; and ONLY when someone makes a false claim about them to gain money or some tangible benefit a crime. Someone falsely claiming military service in order to brag or impress others is not a crime. However, our office can investigate other crimes as long as it involves forging, altering, or misusing records from NARA in some way.

Where can I get real information on someone's military record?

The general rule is the public has no right to know about other people's personal data without that person's permission. However, NARA may release some information from Official Military Personnel Files without the consent of the veteran. To learn more or make a request, visit <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/general-public.html>

I have read your fact sheet, and my complaint does not seem related to military records fraud involving NARA. Where else can I go with stolen valor or other issues ?

Each situation is unique, and there is no single office in the government that handles all stolen valor issues or other issues involving false claims of military service. However, depending on the situation there are several offices you may want to try contacting. Several private organizations focus on these issues, and state and local police departments may also get involved if state or local laws are being violated. Some other offices to consider are:

- FBI: The FBI can investigate a broad range of federal crimes, you can find your local FBI field office at <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices>.
- VA OIG: If you suspect someone is fraudulently getting veteran's benefits, contact the VA Office of the Inspector General by visiting <https://www.va.gov/oig/hotline/default.asp>, calling 800-488-8244, or emailing vaogihotline@va.gov.

If current or retired members of the military are involved, you may want to report it directly to Department of Defense law enforcement.

- Air Force Office of Special Investigations at <https://www.osi.af.mil/Submit-a-Tip/> or 1-877-246-1453.
- Army Criminal Investigation Command at <https://www.cid.army.mil/report-a-crime.html>.
- Naval Criminal Investigative Service at <https://www.ncis.navy.mil/Resources/NCIS-Tips/> or 1-800-579-3648.
- Coast Guard Investigative Service at <https://www.uscg.mil/Units/Coast-Guard-Investigative-Service/Organization/>.
- Inspector General of the Marine Corps at <https://hotline.usmc.mil/#/> or 1-866-243-3887.

I think I've Seen Veterans' Records Misused or Forged. I want to help.

Thank you for your interest in helping to protect the integrity of our veteran records, benefit systems, and the legacies of those who truly fought and served. Please visit <https://www.archives.gov/oig>, where you may report suspected cases of stolen valor. You may also call our hotline at **301-837-3500**, or send correspondence to **OIG Hotline, NARA, P.O. Box 1821 Hyattsville, MD 20788-0821**.

What else should I know about contacting the NARA OIG?

Please be aware our number may appear as blocked if we call you back for additional information, and some call blocking services may prevent us from connecting with you. Because of this, it can be very helpful to give us an email address to contact you at, as well as a phone number. As we are a small office, please only make a complaint using one of the options listed above, making multiple complaints can significantly slow down the process. Further, please realize we are limited in what we can investigate and we do not have the ability to follow up with every complaint. If we do not contact you after your complaint, please consider reporting to another office.