



NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and* RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
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STOLEN VALOR FACT SHEET

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

The NARA OIG consists of investigators and auditors who act as agents of positive change by carrying out our mission 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 enforce Federal law, which protects the integrity of NARA's operations, data, and archival holdings.

Fine, but what's that got to do with stolen valor?

The National Personnel Record Center (NPRC) is our Nation's repository of military records and one of NARA's largest operations. The OIG ensures veterans have open and expedient access to their records, while protecting them from theft and misuse. With respect to stolen valor, we investigate allegations of identity theft and alteration of our Nation's military records by individuals seeking to obtain fraudulent financial benefits.

OK, what is stolen valor?

Essentially, the *Stolen Valor Act of 2013* makes it a crime for an individual who - with intent to obtain money, property, or other tangible benefit - fraudulently purport to be a recipient of certain military awards, including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and others. A full list of awards may be found at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/258>. In reviewing claims of stolen valor, the OIG needs to establish if the individual falsely claimed to have received certain valor awards in order to obtain a financial benefit for which they otherwise would not qualify. For example, did they receive health benefits, employment, or obtain other benefits from the military by falsely claiming valor awards?

So what is NOT stolen valor?

Money or some type of tangible benefit is the key element in bringing Federal charges against an individual falsely claiming valor awards they are not entitled to. Without the receipt of a fraudulent financial benefit, bringing Federal criminal charges is unlikely.

I want to know more. What are examples of prosecuted cases?

The U.S. Department of Justice has discretion to prosecute cases of stolen valor. Here are a few examples:

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-mdga/pr/georgia-man-masking-purple-heart-silver-star-recipient-pleads-guilty-stolen-valor>

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-cdil/pr/geneseo-man-pleads-guilty-stolen-valor-offenses>

I'm with you. 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. For more information about what we do, 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.