Overview

If you served in the military and now hold a civilian position, your military service time may apply toward your civil service retirement.

There are specific regulations in regards to these requests that your Human Resources office should answer that will be specific to your situation.

To proceed with this request, you must “buy back” your military service time.

You will be required to obtain your estimated earnings from the appropriate military finance center prior to starting the process.

Benefits

To understand how buying back your military service will impact you specifically, to include how many years of credit you would receive and if it would affect your disability, it is recommended that you speak with a HR retirement counselor.

Since every individual's situation is unique and specific, a HR retirement counselor can assist in interpreting specific regulations and potential impacts, opportunities, etc.

Is it right for you?

Current civilian employees with previous service

- Non-retired military
- Graduates from military service academies can buy back academy time
- Retired military – With a waiver of military retired pay
- Reserves/National Guard even if you qualify for a military retirement under provisions of 10 U.S.C. 12731-12739
- Civilian employees activated by Reserves or National Guard causing a break in civilian service
- Peace Corps
- Public Health Service

For Military Service Credit deposits that do not cause a break in civilian service the amount to buy back the military time is 3% of your military earnings (with the exception of years 1999-2000 which are slightly higher percentage rate).

Interest will accrue on the total amount due each year starting on your third year covered by a retirement system.

Acceptable documents

Substantiating documents must provide proof of honorable service, type of active duty service and the actual to and from active duty dates.

The Office of Personnel Management will not accept the Chronological Statement of Retirement Points, ARPC Form 249-E, or any other equivalent points forms from other military branches, as proof of active duty military service. The ARPC Form 249-E, or any other equivalent points forms, does not provide the actual to and from active duty dates, condition of service (honorable, other than honorable, etc.), lost time or type of active duty service completed. Additionally, the ARPC Form 249-E does not indicate if the duty performed was for weekend drills, yearly, two-week training, or activation to complete required training (Basic, PLDC, BNCOC, etc.)

Where to start

Your Civilian Human Resources office or consolidated benefits office can inform you of the benefits in your specific situation as well as what is required to start the process.
1. Am I eligible to “buy back” military service time?

If you have any prior active duty military service, you may be eligible to buy back that time.

2. How do I buy back my military service time?

Schedule a time to meet with your Human Resource benefit office to review your service time frames and the impact on your civilian/military retirement.

3. How long will it take to process my request?

There are multiple steps involved and each takes approximately 30 business days due to volume. To reduce stress and allow for issue resolution, please start the process a minimum of 6 months prior to your civilian retirement date as Military Service Credit payments cannot be accepted past your separation date.

4. What is the best time to buy back my military service?

During the first 3 years of civilian service interest does not accrue making that the ideal time frame. If that has already passed for you, as soon as possible!

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