

Medical Actions (NGGA-  
PEM)

# **Disability Evaluation System (DES)**

Joint Force Headquarters  
Georgia Army National Guard  
Marietta, GA  
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## ***SUMMARY of CHANGE***

**SOP  
Disability Evaluation System (DES)**

**o. No Changes. Last edition, 1 October 2023-**

Proposed changes, modifications, and/or deletions should be made known GAARNG G-1, HR Plans using GA Form 2028. Your feedback to provide a quality product is always welcome.

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## **Chapter 1 Overview**

### **1-1. Purpose.**

Process Soldiers with a service-connected injury, illness, or disease who have reached optimal medical care, but do not meet retention standards in accordance with Army Regulation (AR) 40-501, Chapter 3. The Disability Evaluation System (DES) is the Department of Defense mechanism for determining fitness for duty, separation, or retirement of Service members because of disability in accordance with Chapter 61 of Title 10, United States Code.

### **1-2. Applicability.**

Soldiers with an approved line of duty (LOD) injury, illness, or disease who have reached optimal medical care, but do not meet retention standards in accordance with AR 40-501, Chapter 3. The disqualifying medical condition must be directly related to the approved LOD. An Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Referral Memorandum (IDRM) will be generated if the Soldier served 30 days or more in an active status when the disqualifying condition occurred (the Deputy State Surgeon-Clinical (DSS-C) makes this determination).

### **1-3. Referral to Disability Evaluation System (DES)**

During the Chapter 3 Retention Evaluation process, a 3 or 4 designator is issued on a Physical Profile Record (DA Form 3349), by the DSS-C for medical condition(s) or by a Behavioral Health Officer (BHO) for behavioral health condition(s). The profile will list all current medical conditions and outline all physical limitations. Soldiers will sign a Developmental Counseling Form (DA Form 4856) acknowledging that all medical conditions have been disclosed and they understand that they are being referred to DES.

## Chapter 2 Disability Evaluation System (DES)

### 2-1 Process Steps.

a. The DES Program Manager (PM) will contact the Soldier to schedule an initial DES counseling no later than 7 to 10 business days from the completion of the Chapter 3 Retention Evaluation. During this counseling, Soldiers will receive the DES Checklist, validate their Army National Guard Retirement Points History Statement (NGB Form 23B), verify their Expiration Term of Service (ETS) date, and receive a 60-day suspense to submit a completed DES packet.

b. The PM will notify Major Subordinate Command Medical Readiness Noncommissioned Officer (MSC MRNCO), Case Manager (CM) and MSC S1 by email of the Soldier's counseling and 60-day suspense date.

c. The PM will follow up with the Soldier and/or MSC MRNCO 14 days prior to the suspense date to check the status of the Soldier's DES packet and log communication in Electronic Case Management (eCase). If needed, the MSC MRNCO or CM can request a one-time, 30-day extension via email to the DES distro [ng.ga.gaarnng.list.ngga-MEB@army.mil](mailto:ng.ga.gaarnng.list.ngga-MEB@army.mil) if the Soldier is actively pursuing the DES process.

d. The Soldier, the designated unit representative, and CM will work together to compile all required documents per the DES Checklist. The Soldier's ETS date must be no less than 1 year from the day the complete packet is accepted by the PM. If the ETS date is less than 1 year, the unit must extend the Soldier before submission of DES packet. In accordance with (IAW) AR 635-40, Soldiers cannot be involuntarily retained past their ETS even though they may have a remaining service obligation. However, the Soldier may consult with the Office of Soldier's Counsel (OSC) to discuss their options. If the Soldier declines to extend or enter the DES after speaking with the OSC, he/she must speak with the Judge Advocate General (JAG) office. A declination memo is required from the Soldier and JAG to admin close the case. PM will upload the declination memo to the Health Records Repository (HRR) and Soldier will be referred to the Medical Retention Determination Point (MRDP) for separation.

e. The designated unit representative or CM will ensure all medical documents have been uploaded into the Soldier's HRR in Medical Electronic Data for Care History and Readiness Tracking (MEDCHART) prior to the submission of the DES packet to the PM. The MSC will submit the completed packet through the DES distro email [ng.ga.gaarnng.list.ngga-MEB@army.mil](mailto:ng.ga.gaarnng.list.ngga-MEB@army.mil), Subject: DES, Rank, Last Name, Last Four SSN.

f. If a DES packet is returned to the MSC, the unit will be notified via email of the documents needed to complete the packet. All requested documents must be submitted together. If 90 days have passed since the DES packet was requested, a new DES packet is required.

**Note: Unencrypted emails will not be accepted or opened.**

g. The PM will review all completed packets within 14 days of receipt and if no corrections are needed, the packet will be uploaded into the Medical Evaluation Board Preparation (MEB Prep) module. The PM will contact the Soldier to verify all information needed to process the packet in MEB Prep and the packet will be forwarded to the State Verifying Official (SVO) for review and subsequent submittal to the Medical Evaluation Board Tracking Office (MEBTO).

h. If an IDES Referral Memorandum (IDRM) is completed by the PM and submitted in lieu of an LOD, the packet will be routed to National Guard Bureau (NGB) for IDES Memorandum Approval. If the IDRM is approved, the DES packet is then forwarded to the SVO for review and subsequent submittal to MEBTO review for acceptance at a Military Treatment Facility (MTF).

i. Once Soldiers are accepted into a MTF and assigned a Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer (PEBLO) their case is considered an active DES. A PEBLO is the non-medical case manager who provides information, assistance, and case status updates to the Soldiers throughout the DES process. The PEBLO will contact the Soldiers to notify them of their appointments at their assigned MTF.

j. In accordance with AR 635-40, Chapter 4, a Soldier's eligibility for disability evaluation may be suspended or terminated for the following reasons:

1. Absent without leave.
2. Reserve Component Soldiers with unexcused absences.
3. Action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

4. Civilian confinement.
5. Soldiers with military suspended sentences.
6. Enlisted Soldiers pending administrative separation.
7. Officers pending administrative elimination.
8. Certain adverse line of duty findings.
9. Prognosis of imminent death or terminal illness.

k. Once the case has been adjudicated, all findings of separation will be submitted to the G-1 Retirement Section or to HRO for all AGR Soldiers by the Program Manager (PM) for processing. All Soldiers returned to duty will continue to perform their duties within the limits of their profile.

l. Per the Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG) Commanding General's (CG) guidance, all Soldiers who are medically discharged will receive an award or the unit will submit a memorandum detailing why an award was not recommended.

## **2-2 Process for Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers**

a. AGR Soldiers will be processed through IDES IAW "Policy and Procedures for Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG), AGR Soldiers Processing Through the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)." See Appendix A.

## **2-3 DES Travel Orders.**

a. If a Soldier has a medical appointment, it is the unit's responsibility to pay for IDES appointments and travel via "unit funds" or Inactive Duty Training (IDT) travel.

b. If a formal hearing is requested for Formal Physical Evaluation Board (FPEB) Appointment Travel - IAW AR 635-40, Chapter 4-24, d (2), the Soldier's unit is required to fund travel for the Soldier to attend the formal hearing.

### Chapter 3 DES Checklist

- a. Complete Service Treatment Record - HRR Composite- this is requested by the PM. Ensure the Soldier's medical documents supporting the disqualifying medical condition(s) identified with a PULHES 3 or 4 on the Soldier's DA Form 3349 are uploaded in HRR.
- b. Periodic Health Assessment (PHA)- must be within the last year. If the Soldier does not have one the unit must provide a memo with an explanation detailing the reason for the lack of an annual PHA along with the last PHA. A memo will not be accepted if the PHA is older than two years.
- c. Entry Physical Exam- search in iPERMS for the Soldiers Entry Physical Exam (DA Form 2808 and DA Form 2807-1). If not in iPERMS, the unit must provide a memo with an explanation detailing the reason for the lack of entry physical exam.
- d. Physical Profile Record (DA Form 3349) (PULHES 3 or 4)- must list the Soldier's disqualifying medical and/or behavioral health condition(s) in block 9 and must have a second signature in block 13.
- e. Commander's Performance and Functional Statement (DA Form 7652)- the Commander must be an O-3 or above, if not, an assumption of command memo is required. The Battalion Commander must be an O-5 or above, if the Battalion Commander is below an O-5, the MSC Commander's information is required.
1. Section III C must be filled out by the Commander.
  2. The form requires a signature date.
  3. A digital copy of the form is highly recommended.
- f. MOS Medical Retention Board (MMRB)/MOS Administrative Retention Review (MAR2) Proceedings- if applicable.
- g. Approved LODs with Determinations- Statement of Medical Examination and Duty Status (DA Form 2173) and Investigation, Report of Line of Duty and Misconduct Status (DD Form 261) for Formal LOD or LOD Approval Memo, for Informal LOD. Only the LOD(s) for the disqualifying conditions are required.
- h. VA Rating- if applicable, the following information is required:
1. VA Rating must be annotated in part III on the DA Form 4856.
  2. VA disability letter can be obtained by logging onto <https://www.myhealth.va.gov>.
- i. DA Form 4856- this is different from the initial counseling completed by the DES PM. There are three signature dates on page 2 of the DA Form 4856. All signature dates must match.
1. The Soldier must elect IDES or LDES in part IV. The Soldier cannot elect LDES if receiving an IDR in lieu of the LOD.
  2. If the Soldier elects LDES, the LDES memos are required from the Soldier and the Commander.
  3. A digital copy is highly recommended.
- j. Previous DES/PEB Decisions (if applicable) - if the Soldier has completed a DES/PEB submit DA Form 199 (Formal Physical Evaluation Board Proceedings).
- k. Last 3 evaluation reports (OER/NCOER/ E-4 Word Picture) - if any of the evaluations are missing, the unit must provide a memo with an explanation.
- l. Current ORB/ERB- ensure the form is generated within 60 days.
- m. Leave and Earning Statement (LES) - current end of month (DFAS Form 702) (ensure the form is generated within 30 days) even if the Soldier does not drill, a \$0 balance LES is required.
- n. Orders– only submit Attachment, Extension, Mobilization, Active-Duty Medical Extension (ADME), Medical Retention Processing Evaluation (MRP-E), Medical Retention Process (MRP), Community Care Unit (CCU), and Active Guard Reserve (AGR) orders in chronological order as one attachment.
- o. Promotion/Demotion orders – if applicable, submit orders within the last 2 years.

p. Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 214)/ Correction to DD 214/ Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 215)/ Active-Duty Report (DD 220) – verify with Army National Guard Retirement Points History Statement NGB Form 23B.

1. A DD 214 is needed when the Soldier is on consecutive orders for 90 days or more.
2. A DD 215 is needed if corrections were made to the Soldier's DD214.
3. A DD 220 is needed when the Soldier is on consecutive orders for more than 30 days but less than 90 days.

q. 20-year Retirement letter - if applicable.

r. NGB Form 23B- ensure the form is generated within 60 days.

s. VA's Separation Health Assessment / Part A- A self -assessment report of medical history to be completed by the Soldier. An exam is not required to complete.

t. Restricted Documents- if applicable.

**Note-send all items individually not scanned as one attachment.**

## **Chapter 4**

### **Title 10, United States Code (USC) 12301(h) orders**

#### **4-1 Eligibility.**

All officers and enlisted Soldiers of the GAARNG (Title 10 and Title 32) on Active Duty (AD) greater than 30 consecutive days, who are nearing the end of their current order, and need to be extended to complete the Disability Evaluation System (DES) process, are eligible for Title 10, United States Code (USC) 12301(h) orders. Soldiers must be assigned a PEBLO. Additionally, Soldiers orders cannot end prematurely.

#### **4-2 Orders Process.**

- a. The orders issuing authority for the original AD order is responsible for submitting a request through their MSC/MRNCO to the G-1 Medical Actions Branch (MAB) using the required documents checklist.
- b. The unit and/or Soldier is responsible for providing the PEBLO letter to the G-1 MAB. The G-1 MAB is responsible for providing the DA Form 3349, the approved LOD memorandum, and the DA Form 2173.
- c. The G-1 MAB submits the completed 12301(h) orders request packet to the United States Army Medical Command (USAMEDCOM) via email to [usarmy.jbsa.medcom.mbx.medcom-12301h@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.jbsa.medcom.mbx.medcom-12301h@mail.mil) and NGB G-1 POC. The email subject line must include the Soldier's name and "Request for 12301(h) DODI orders."
- d. Upon receipt of the 12301(h) orders from MEDCOM, G-1 MAB will forward the orders to the Soldier, unit, and the MRNCO. The unit of assignment is responsible for all administrative actions to process orders.
- e. The unit of assignment is also responsible for requesting the required extensions (using the same format, a complete packet with updated documents from the checklist) through the G-1 MAB until completion of the DES process. Upon completion of the DES process, the unit must coordinate with G-1 MAB to ensure the Soldier's 12301 (h) orders are amended.
- f. 12301(h) orders end when the Soldier's DES process is adjudicated.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Continuation on Active Duty/Active Reserve (COAD/COAR) of Unfit Soldiers**

#### **5-1 Eligibility.**

COAD/COAR applies to GAARNG Soldiers on the active duty/reserve list, Soldiers in the AGR program, or on full-time National Guard duty. Normally, a COAD/COAR will be for any period up to the last day of the month in which the Soldier attains 20 years of active federal service or active reserve service for purposes of qualifying for length of service retirement under Title 10, United States Code, and Section 3911 or 3914 (10 USC 3911 or 3914).

a. To be considered for COAD/COAR, A Soldier must be:

1. Determined unfit by the Physical Disability Evaluation System (PDES) for a disability that was not the result of intentional misconduct nor willful neglect, nor incurred during a period of unauthorized absence.
2. Stable or have a disability that is of slow progression accepted by medical principles.
3. Physically capable of performing useful duty in a MOS for which currently qualified or potentially trainable (to include re-classification).

b. Eligible under one or more of the criteria listed below:

1. For COAD/COAR, have 15 but less than 20 years of active federal service.
2. Qualified in a critical skill or shortage MOS. Qualification must be confirmed in writing by the applicable personnel office and attached to the request; or disability resulted from combat or terrorism.

#### **5-2 Orders Process.**

a. The application for COAD/COAR is completed by the Soldier's PEBLO and forwarded to the National Guard Bureau's (NGB) G-1 Personnel Office for submission to the Soldier's command and G-1 MAB.

b. Required administrative and medical documents must include the Soldier's request memorandum, three letters of input to "retain" or "not retain" from the Soldier's command, and The Adjutant General (TAG) "approval" or "disapproval" memorandum.

c. The completed application is forwarded to the NGB G-1's Personnel Office for review and publication of COAD/COAR orders if approved by the State.

d. Soldiers approved for a COAD/COAR of greater than six months will be referred to the PDES before expiration of the COAD/COAR. Soldiers approved for a COAD/COAR of 6 months or less to attain eligibility for active service retirement will not be referred to the PDES. The Soldier will be retired for physical disability upon the expiration of COAD/COAR.

**Appendix A**  
**References**

**AR 40-501**

Standards of Medical Fitness, dated 27 June 2019

**AR 40-502**

Medical Readiness Procedures, dated 27 June 2019

**AR 635-40**

Physical Evaluation for Retention, Retirement, or Separation, dated 19 January 2017

**DA PAM 635-40**

Procedures for Disability Evaluation for Retention, Retirement, or Separation, dated 12 January 2017

**AR 600-8-4**

Line of Duty Policy, Procedures, and Investigations, dated 15 March 2019

**DODI 1332.18**

Disability Evaluation System, Incorporating Change 1, dated 17 May 2018

**United States Code (USC)**

Title 10 sections 1218 and 12301

**AR 600-8-24**

Officer Transfers and Discharges, dated 08 February 2020

**AR 635-200**

Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations, dated 19 December 2016

Policy and Procedures for Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG), AGR Soldiers Processing Through the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES), dated 8 August 2022.

**Appendix C**  
**Glossary**

**AD**

Active Duty

**BHO**

Behavioral Health Officer

**CG**

Commanding General

**CM**

Case Manager

**COAD/COAR**

Continuation on Active Duty/Active Reserve (COAD/COAR)

**DES**

Disability Evaluation System

**DSS-C**

Deputy State Surgeon Clinical

**eCASE**

Electronic Case Management

**ETS**

Expiration Term of Service

**FPEB**

Formal Physical Evaluation Board

**GAARNG**

Georgia Army National Guard

**HRO**

Human Resources Office

**HRR**

Health Readiness Record

**IDES**

Integrated Disability Evaluation System

**IDRM**

IDES Referral Memorandum

**IDT**

Inactive Duty Training

**ILOD**

In the Line of Duty

**IPERMS**

Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System

**LOD**

Line of Duty

## **Appendix C**

### **Glossary**

#### **MAB**

Medical Actions Branch

#### **MAR2**

MOS Administrative Retention Review

#### **MEB Prep**

Medical Evaluation Board Preparation

#### **MEBTO**

Medical Evaluation Board Tracking Office

#### **MEDCHART**

The Medical Electronic Data (for) Care History and Readiness Tracking

#### **MMRB**

MOS Medical Retention Board

#### **MPM**

Medical Program Manager

#### **MRNCO**

Medical Readiness Noncommissioned Officer

#### **MSC**

Major Subordinate Command

#### **MTF**

Military Treatment Facility

#### **NGB**

National Guard Bureau

#### **OSC**

Office of Soldier's Counsel

#### **PDES**

Physical Disability Evaluation System

#### **PEBLO**

Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer

#### **PHA**

Periodic Health Assessment

#### **PM**

Program Manager

#### **PULHES**

Physical capacity, Upper Extremities, Lower Extremities, Hearing and Ears, Eyes, Psychiatric

#### **RPAM**

Retirement Points Accounting Management

#### **SVO**

State Verifying Official

**Appendix C**  
**Glossary**

**TAG**  
The Adjutant General

**USAMEDCOM**  
United States Army Medical Command