



# **Disability Evaluation System (DES) (Referral Stage) Second Multidisciplinary Brief (MDB1)**

THIS BRIEFING IS CLASSIFIED:

**UNCLASSIFIED - FOUO**

## Welcome to the Disability Evaluation System (DES)\*

- You are receiving this initial Disability Evaluation System (DES) multidisciplinary brief (MDB1) because your RILO has been dispositioned and you have been directed to undergo full Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) processing.
- Full MEBs are processed through the DES and are a Service Member's path out of the military.
  - There are two DES processes: **IDES** and **LDES**. Both processes go through the same Air Force phases and stages of the DES. However, the **LDES** process is expedited due to deferring VA Claim processing until the MEB is finalized. At this initial step, you will be required to decide which process you wish to undergo.
- Most full MEB/DES cases can end in one of 3 ways, a member is discharged, separated, or returned to duty (Although return to duty is possible during the DES, chances are slim).
- Although you are currently in the referral stage of the DES, **this presentation's focus is on your first Air Force DES step (see [slide 4](#))**. The next Air Force step will come post-VA stages, at which time you will receive your second DES MDB(2). Please focus on the highlighted slides (see the table of contents on the [next slide](#)) at this time, as trying to understand the entire process from the get-go can be confusing and overwhelming.
- **Urgency of this process:** This process is not only mandatory, but time-sensitive, therefore, you should treat it with a sense of urgency. What that means is that when you receive an action item from your PEBLO at each Air Force step, you must make the time to take that action regardless of duty status. If you can't complete a task during work hours, you must complete it on your off time (weekends included). If you are on leave, you are still required to take action during that time (see [slide 27](#)). Leadership will be made aware, if you are not complying with timelines and suspenses provided by your PEBLO.



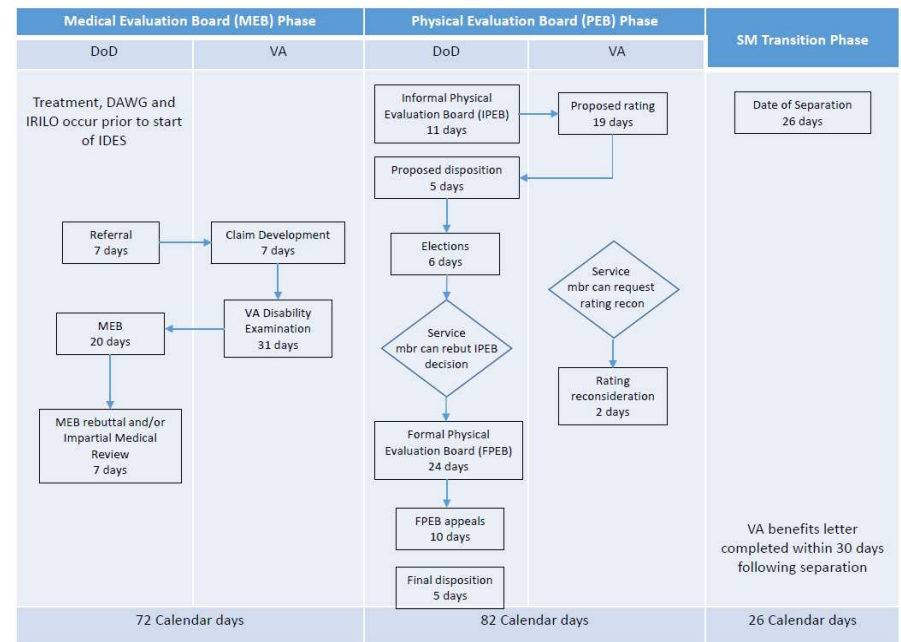
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(\*Slides to focus on; #Member's Actions at this step in the DES)  
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IDES 180-DAY TIMELINE



## Choosing Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Verses Legacy Disability Evaluation System (LDES)\*#

- First you will need to choose which DES process you wish to undergo during this initial AF Step (this main difference pertains to the VA):
  - **Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES):** The standard DoD (DES) process includes the VA claim process and takes approximately 180 days. The Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are two separate programs, however, they run parallel in the **IDES** process.
    - ✓ If you already know you want to undergo the standard (IDES) process (with the VA), you will need to complete and return attachment **(10) SHA DBQ Part A Self-Assessment** within **3 calendar days**, as indicated in the e-mail notification from the PEBLO. This form can be completed at: [https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/docs/SHA\\_DBQ\\_Part\\_A\\_Self-Assessment.pdf](https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/docs/SHA_DBQ_Part_A_Self-Assessment.pdf) and is also attached to the DES notification e-mail from the PEBLO.
    - ✓ Following completion/submission of this form to your PEBLO, you will be referred to the **Veteran's Affairs (VA) Military Service Coordinator (MSC)**, whom will be contacting you to walk you through the VA portion of the process and refer you to mandatory **Compensation and Pension (C&P)** examinations. (skip to [slide 7](#) if going with **IDES**)
  - **Legacy Disability Evaluation System (LDES):** The exception to **IDES** processing, which excludes the VA claim process, can make for a more expeditious MEB process (you could be discharged/retired within approximately 103 days of referral for an MEB). Your VA claim would be processed like any other separating Service Member through the Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) aka "Quick Claim". The BDD program allows a Servicemember to file a VA disability claim while still on active duty and without the completed DD-214 (Record of Separation) paperwork.
    - ✓ You must contact Office of Disability Counsel (**ODC**) (see [slide 5](#) & [6](#)) if entertaining the possibility of electing for **LDES**. (proceed to the next slide for further instructions and extended timeline for entertaining and/or electing for **LDES**)

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## Legacy Disability Evaluation System (LDES) Exception to Policy Process\*#

- You are entitled to **7 duty days**, from receiving the DES notification e-mail from your PEBLO, to reach out to the **Office of Disability Counsel (ODC)** in San Antonio, Texas for further counseling on the differences between the **IDES** and **LDES** processes and advisement as to which process is likely to be more beneficial for you based on your specific situation/circumstances.
    - Speaking to the **ODC** is **mandatory** if you wish to undergo **LDES** processing, as it is an exception to policy process. See the [next slide](#) and reference the **ODC** Right To Counsel Memo with Fact Sheet attachment (5) from your DES notification e-mail from the PEBLO for more information on **ODC**.
    - In the event you elect for **LDES** processing: you will **make that election on the Legacy DES Election Statement Memo** (attachment 4 in the DES notification e-mail from your PEBLO). Your election will need to be **made NLT your 7th duty day** from the DES notification. **So be sure to jot down the name of the ODC Lawyer** who counsels you, as you will need to annotate it on the **LDES** election memo ([this is required](#)).
      - ✓ If you have any issues making contact with **ODC** or receiving a call back within your **7 duty days**, please provide us an e-mail message with your attempts to reach them, and we will forward your e-mail message up the chain to ensure someone from **ODC** gets back to you.
- ([Slide 7](#) continues with information regarding the referral stage of DES processing)*

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## ***Air Force Office of Disability Counsel (ODC)\****

- **ODC** is there for **you** and you alone. **ODC** does not work for the chain of command, MTF, AFPC or the Dept of Veteran Affairs. **ODC** provides you with confidential legal advice, counseling and advocacy. **ODC** Advocates for you on DES appeal options with the Formal Physical Evaluation Board, the Dept of Veteran Affairs & SAF Personnel Council
- **ODC** can be reached commercially at **(210) 565-0739** and **1-855-MEB-JAGS** or **DSN 665-0739** and/or you may send an e-mail to [afloaja.disabilitycounsel@us.af.mil](mailto:afloaja.disabilitycounsel@us.af.mil). It is recommended that you both call and send an e-mail. You will also want to inform them that the reason you are calling is to receive counseling on the Legacy process. The turnaround time from when you first reach out to **ODC** is typically 72 hours for an attorney to contact you back. This is why you should not delay in reaching out to them, i.e., within at least the first 2-3 days of your 7-duty-day suspense period.
  - **ODC** also highly recommends making contact with them via their Facebook page (no HIPAA information please). [www.facebook.com/officeofdisabilitycounsel](https://www.facebook.com/officeofdisabilitycounsel)
  - Reference the **ODC** Right To Counsel Memo with Fact Sheet attachment from your DES notification e-mail from the PEBLO for more information on **ODC**

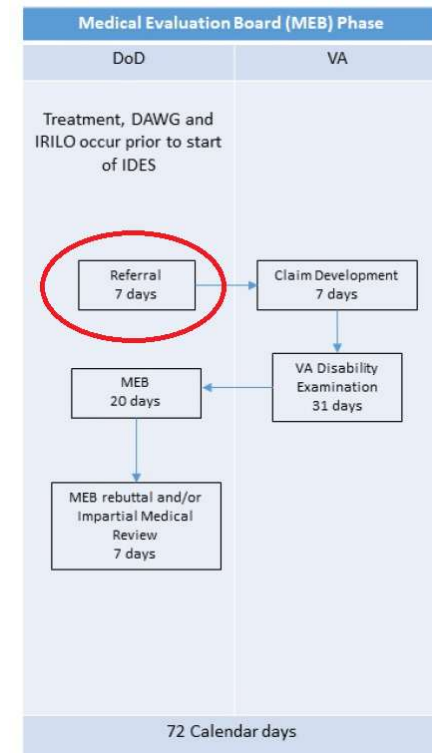
*(Proceed to the next slide for information regarding the referral stage of DES processing)*



## MEB Phase (Case File Assembly): Referral Stage\*#

- During this 7-calendar-day stage, you will have received these Multidisciplinary Brief Slides via the DES Notification from your PEBLO, and from there, you will complete attachments 7 and 8 to acknowledge your understanding of the information and you will decide which process you wish to undergo - **IDES** or **LDES**. Then, you will need to complete and return attachment (10) **SHA DBQ Part A Self-Assessment** within 5 calendar days, as indicated in the e-mail notification from the PEBLO and in slide 4. Last,:
  - For **IDES**, your PEBLO will refer you to the VA **MSC** (Claim Development and VA Disability Examination Stage) via 21-0819 signed by your provider, and you will standby for the VA **MSC** to get in touch with you regarding the next steps. Please bear in mind that **C&P** examinations are mandatory for, **IDES** and you must be available for your scheduled appointments. *\*The VA is not required to work around your schedule. With that said, they are willing to compromise when it comes to pre-scheduled leave. (However, they will not work around more than one week of leave.)*
    - ✓ Your **PEBLO** is the point of contact for Air Force processes
    - ✓ Your **VA MSC** is the point of contact for VA processes
  - For **LDES**, your PEBLO will route your **LDES** election form to the Medical Group Commander for approval, and you will in the meantime need to complete and return attachment (10) **SHA DBQ Part A Self-Assessment** as soon as possible. This form can be completed at: [https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/dbq\\_publicdbqs.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/dbq_publicdbqs.asp) and is also attached to the DES notification e-mail from the PEBLO.

(Proceed to next slide for information regarding VA Stages of the MEB Phase)



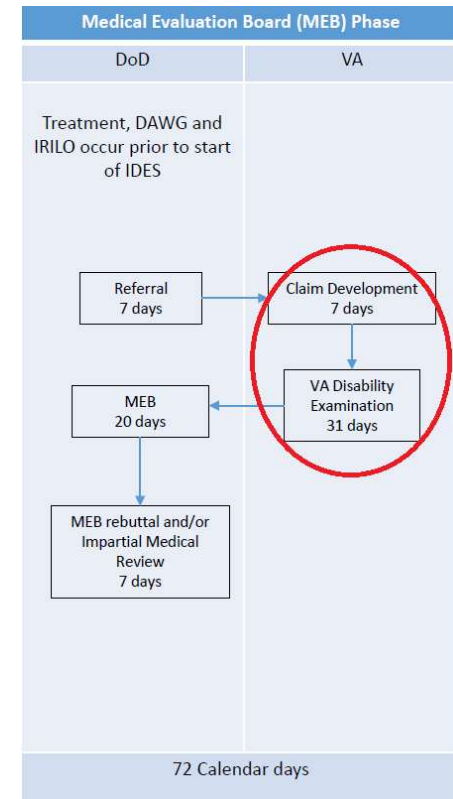
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## MEB Phase (VA Stages): Claim Development and Disability Examination Approximately 38 days\*# (IDES Only)

- Skip this slide if you elected **LDES**
- During the 7 days of claim development stage, you will wait on standby for the VA **MSC** to get in touch with you regarding the next steps. You will be briefed by your VA **MSC** on what to expect during these stages and on your VA benefit entitlements. The VA will develop your claim via the VA 21-526EZ form, then they will refer you to VES for evaluation (**C&P** appointments).
  - **Boardable (referred) conditions:** The Air Force only recognizes, rates, and compensates for conditions in which you were boarded (referred) for. That is, those conditions that do not meet retention standards IAW the Air Force Medical Standards Directory (MSD).
  - **Claim conditions:** The VA recognizes, rates, and compensates for all other medical conditions that are service-connected.
- Please bear in mind that **C&P examinations are mandatory** for **IDES**, and you must be available for your scheduled appointments. The VA is not required to work around your schedule. Anything non-emergent must be scheduled around any VA appointments. *\*With that said, the VA is willing to compromise when it comes to pre-scheduled leave. (However, they will not work around more than one week of leave. So, anything longer will need to be reduced.)*
- **Your VA **MSC** is your point of contact for any VA-related stages and processes questions. Please touch base with your **MSC** while in these stages, as the PEBLO is NOT involved unless you no-show for an appointment. If you cannot reach your VA **MSC**, send them an e-mail and courtesy copy our office on it.**



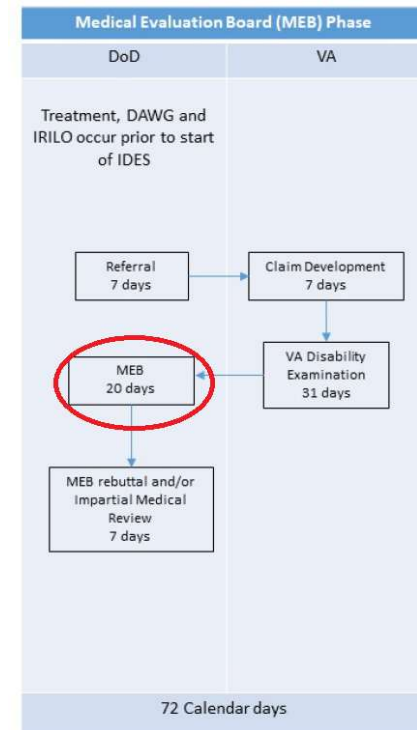
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## MEB Phase (Case File Assembly): MEB Stage\*

- For **IDES**, during this 20-calendar-day stage, the PEBLO will receive the **C&P** examination reports from the **MSC** and request an addendum update from your MEB provider.
  - This request comes post-Compensation & Pension exam reports release from the VA. The exam reports will be reviewed by your provider, who will write an addendum following their review. On the addendum, they will annotate anything that you claimed\* from head-to-toe (apart from what you have been boarded for) and specify that none of those **claimed\*** conditions are unfitting. They will also address any pertinent updates regarding your **boardable** condition(s) if applicable.
- For **LD**, an addendum request from your MEB provider will come post-Medical Group Commander approval and will clarify whether any pertinent updates regarding your boardable condition need to be annotated.
- Next, the PEBLO will create the Medical Board Report Coversheet for your MEB Case File (DAF Form 618), which will be signed by the local convening board referring you to the IPEB. The local board consists of the MEB President and one other military doctor. For Mental Health cases, the other provider must be a uniformed Psychiatrist or Psychologist with a PhD.
- This is the last slide for this step in the DES process. Over the next 9 slides, the other steps in the DES process are covered, however, your PEBLO will contact you with an update when we move to the next step. (Proceed to the next slide to continue reading on about the other Air Force steps or **skip to the remaining slides of the current Air Force step by proceeding to [slide 22](#).**)

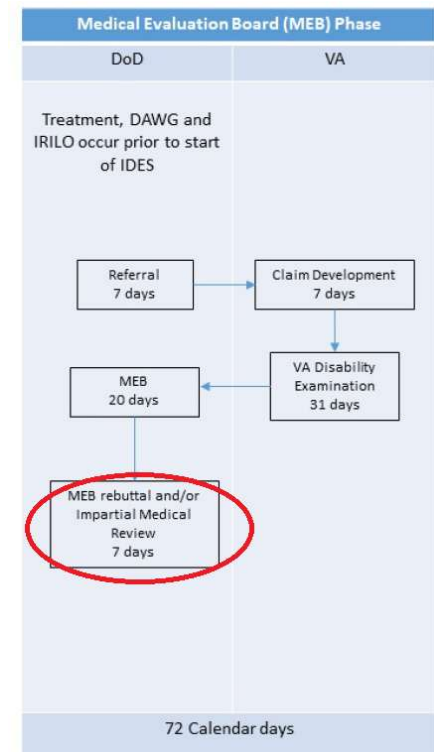


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## MEB Phase(Case File Assembly): MEB Rebuttal and /or Impartial Medical Review Stage

- As soon as the local board has convened and signed off on the member's case (DAF Form 618), the PEBLO will reach out to the member regarding the Service Member's next step, which is review of the MEB Case File prior to its submission to the Physical Evaluation Board (Phase 2).
  - At that time, the member will receive a copy of their MEB Case File via DoD SAFE along with the documents/forms outlining the steps of this process (also described below), to include the second DES Multidisciplinary Brief (MDB2) Slide Presentation. (\*No ratings will have been established at this point)
  - Member will then have 3 calendar days to review the medical documentation that makes up their MEB Case File and make one of the following decisions:
    - ✓ Agree with the MEB Case File, as it stands (Case will immediately be forwarded to the IPEB)
    - ✓ Disagree with the MEB Case File and request an Impartial Medical Review (IMR): Case along with member's concerns will be given to an impartial provider
      - IMR provider will have 3 calendar days to concur/non-concur with the MEB, recommend any applicable changes, and notify the member of their decision; MEB President must concur to implement IMR's recommended changes
        - » Authoring Provider will be notified of MEB President's direction to make any changes
        - » Member may rebut the IMR's decision
    - ✓ Disagree with the MEB Case File and submit rebuttal memo
      - Member will submit a rebuttal letter of which they will receive a response from the Convening Medical Authority (87<sup>th</sup> Medical Group Chief of Staff)
- Upon completion of IMR/Rebuttal process, PEBLO will submit the member's Case File to the Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB) for disposition and ratings  
(Proceed to next slide for information regarding the second Phase - PEB)



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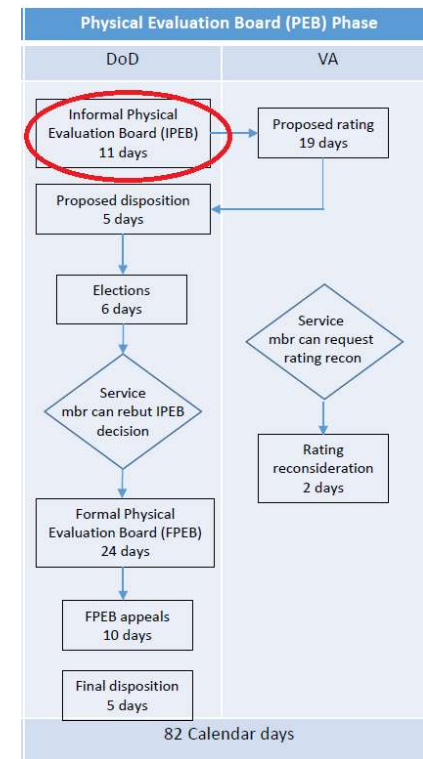


## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): Informal Physical Evaluation Board Stage

- Once the PEBLO has submitted the case to the **Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB)**, the **IPEB** will have 11 calendar days to determine member's fitness for service and make the official **fit** or **unfit** determination, as applicable. Majority of cases reaching the **IPEB** have already been deemed unfit by DPMNR/Medical Standards via the Initial RILO. However, it is the **IPEB** that makes the determination official. *\*In rare cases, where a member is found "fit" by the IPEB, a return to duty disposition will be made and released to the PEBLO immediately (Member may request to appeal the RTD determination but if denied no other PEB or VA actions will be taken).*
  - In some cases, the **IPEB** may return the case without action, requesting additional information. If returned from the Disability Case Manager, the case is likely missing sufficient components and the PEBLO will be notified to correct. If returned from one of the members of the informal Board, a RWOA 356 will be provided with instruction to the provider. (Proceed to next slide for information regarding RWOA 356)
- Following the **IPEB's** official "unfit" determination (most cases), the member's case will be forwarded to the VA Disability Rating Activity Site (DRAS), where all conditions will be rated IAW the **Veterans Affairs Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) Title 38, Chapter 1, Part 4 Schedule for Rating Disabilities** (VA Proposed Rating Stage). Although the DRAS has 19 days to establish and apply ratings, they often take longer depending on how many conditions a member claimed. *For **LDES**, the Air Force will use the same schedule to rate the member's referred condition(s).*

(Proceed to slide 12 for the next PEB stage)

[eCFR :: 38 CFR Part 4 – Schedule for Rating Disabilities](#)

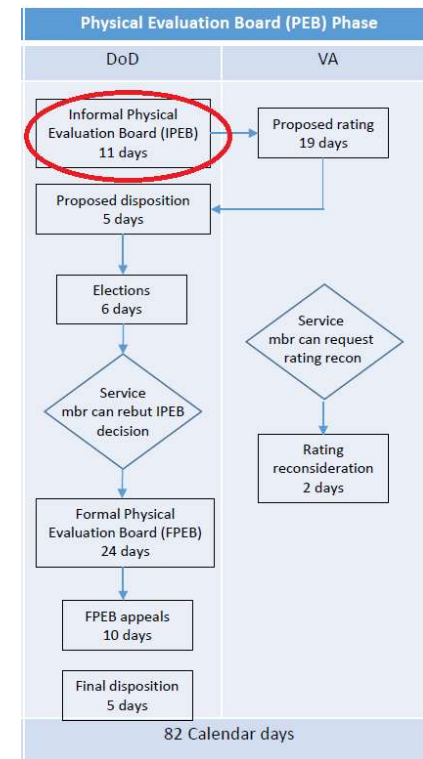


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## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): Return Without Action 356

- If the **IPEB** sends a Return Without Action 356, requesting additional information, the PEBLO will forward to the provider.
  - The provider will need to give prompt attention to the RWOA 356 and provide the information requested by the IPEB to the PEBLO as soon as possible.
- The PEBLO will update the 618 if needed and resubmit the case to the IPEB with additional/updated information; then awaits disposition.

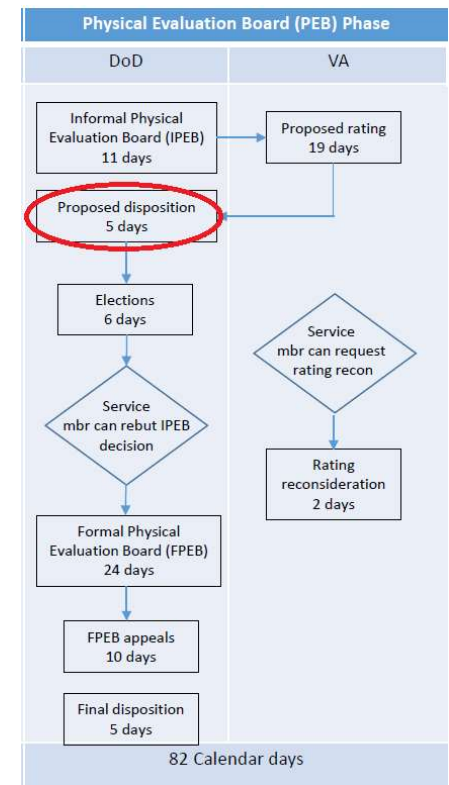


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## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): (IPEB) Proposed Disposition Stage

- Once the VA has established and applied ratings to all conditions, they will return your case to the **IPEB** for proposed disposition. The **IPEB** will then have 5-calendar days to make one of the following dispositions based on the combined rating of member's boardable conditions. **IPEB** and VA ratings will vary, as the VA looks at the overall body whereas **IPEB** only focuses on the boardable condition(s).
  - Return to Duty:** When the **IPEB** finds a member fit, the member will automatically be recommended for return to duty. (See [next slide](#) for information regarding RTD)
  - Discharge with Severance Pay (DWSP):** This disposition results when the **IPEB** combined rating percentage is less than 30% (and less than 20 years Active-Duty service time). Member will receive a separation with lump severance (based on years in service times monthly basic pay); no other Air Force benefits. (See [Slide 17](#) for (ARC only) **Inactive Status List Reserve Section – ISRLS** – process)
  - Permanent Retirement (PR):** This disposition results when the **IPEB** combined rating percentage is greater than 30% (or member has greater than 20 years Active-Duty service time) and boardable condition(s) are stable. Member will permanently receive all Air Force retirement benefits except for Air Force pay (unless member has served greater than 20 active-duty years and received an overall rating from the VA of 50% or greater. \*Both components must be met to receive concurrent receipt; otherwise, monthly compensation most likely will come from the VA only) (see [slide 15](#) for more information on CDRP)
  - Temporary Disability Retired List (TDRL):** This disposition results when the **IPEB** combined rating percentage is greater than 30% (or member has greater than 20 years Active-Duty service time) and one or more of member's boardable conditions is unstable and requires further monitoring. Member will temporarily receive all Air Force retirement benefits except for Air Force pay (unless member has served 20 active-duty years or more and received an overall rating from the VA of 50% or greater. \*Both components must be met to receive concurrent receipt) (see [slide 15](#) for more information on CDRP)
    - ✓ **requires periodic evaluations every 6-18 months (for up to 3 years) to monitor the stability of the condition**
    - ✓ Permanent disposition will be made upon finding stability or after no more than 3 years
  - Discharge Under Other Than 10 U.S.C., Chapter 61:** This disposition results when service members have been found unfit, but their disabilities existed prior to service and were not permanently aggravated by service or were incurred while the member was in excess leave status or were not the proximate result of performing military duties. This is an honorable discharge with no Air Force benefits.
  - Discharge under 10 U.S.C. § 1207:** Applies to members found unfit and the disability is due to intentional misconduct, willful neglect, or was incurred during a period of unauthorized absence. This could result in an honorable or dishonorable discharge; no Air Force benefits



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## ***Fit Determination: Return to Duty***

- In the rare event that a member is found fit and recommended for Return to Duty, the member may request to appeal, however, justification must accompany their request for a formal hearing and their request may be disapproved.
  - If the member accepts their fit and return to duty finding, their case file will be forwarded to the Medical Retention Standards office (AFPC/DPMNR) for possible determination of an Assignment Limitation Code (ALC-C).

10. COMBINED COMPENSABLE PERCENTAGE: %	11. RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION: Return to Duty
12. REMARKS: The Informal Physical Evaluation Board (IPEB) finds the service member (SM) fit and recommends the SM be returned to duty.	

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## ***Concurrent Disability Retired Pay (CDRP) Differentiates a Disability/Medical Retirement from a Traditional Retirement***

- CONCURRENT RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY PAY (CRDP), CONCURRENT RECEIPT. CRDP allows military retirees (with over 20 years of Active-Duty service time) to receive both military retired pay and VA compensation. To be eligible for CRDP, you must have a VA disability rating of 50 percent or greater. If you were placed on a disability retirement but would be eligible for military retired pay in the absence of the disability, you may be entitled to receive CRDP. You do not need to apply for CRDP, you will be enrolled automatically if qualified. Please visit the DFAS website at: <https://www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/disability/> to see if you may be entitled to receive CRDP.
- Defense Finance and Accounting System-Cleveland (DFAS-CL) selects the disability compensation that will be more advantageous to those disability retired members who are ineligible for CRDP. Tends to be the VA for enlisted members)
- For those receiving Discharge with Severance, the VA will reduce your monthly compensation by the rating percentage of your referred condition, until severance is considered exhausted, i.e., “Paid Back.” Get with your VA **MSC** about exhausting or “paying back” severance.

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Improving Health and Building Readiness. Anytime, Anywhere — Always





## ***Post-Separation/Retirement Healthcare***

- **TRICARE (Humana)** coverage options are available to **retirements (and Gray Area) only**. Retiree coverage is not the same as Active-Duty coverage, as co-payments and deductibles are required.
  - Visit <https://www.humanamilitary.com/> to learn more or call to speak to a Humana representative Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 6 PM (ET and CT) at (800) 444-5445.
- **VA Healthcare:** No out of pocket expenses
  - Discharged Veterans are entitled to healthcare through the VA for any service-connected conditions.
  - Retired Veterans are entitled to full healthcare coverage through the VA.
  - Visit <https://www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits/> to learn more.



# PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): (ARC Members Only) Inactive Status List Reserve Section (ISLRS)

- Inactive Status List Reserve Section (ISLRS) is offered to ARC Members who have over 20 years of satisfactory service, in lieu of Discharge with Severance Pay. What this means, is that the member would be waiving the Air Force lump sum entitlement afforded to him/her by the Physical Evaluation Board, in order to be allowed to instead retire through the ARC process at the age of 60. Until that time, the member will be placed in Gray Area status by which they will be entitled to Gray Area Retiree benefits. The PEBLO will provide an attachment of Gray Area Retiree benefits. Includes:
  - Military Installations, Facilities and Activities access (Local post policies and directives govern the use of facilities)
  - Healthcare
  - TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR) (purchase)
  - Space A Travel (CONUS only) – no dependents
  - Limited Legal Assistance
  - Survivor Assistance
  - Casualty Assistance
  - Family Services
- The member will still be compensated by and receive benefits from the VA regardless of which disposition they choose.
- Member must sign the ISLRS in lieu of Discharge Memo in order to be eligible for Guard retirement at age 60.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER  
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH TEXAS

26 August 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR TSG GARY DOE

FROM: AFPC/DFPD  
660 C Street West  
JBSA Randolph AFB TX 78160

SUBJECT: Transfer to the Inactive Status List Reserve Section (ISLRS) for the Purpose of Retirement, in Lieu of Discharge of Severance Pay

Officials within the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force have determined that you are physically unfit for continued military service and directed that you be discharged from the service with entitlement to severance pay as provided under Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), Chapter 61, Section 1203. However, since you have at least 18 but less than 20 years of satisfactory service, you may elect transfer to the Inactive Status List Reserve Section (ISLRS) for the purpose of applying for early retirement under Title 10, U.S.C., Section 12732, in lieu of being discharged with severance pay. If you elect this option, it is your responsibility to submit the appropriate Air Force Form 131, Application for Transfer to the Retired Reserve, through your unit. NOTE: The effective date of the retirement must be prior to your established discharge date.

Request you indicate your choice by placing an "X" in the appropriate block at Attachment 1. Our datafax number is DSN 665-4447 or commercial (210) 665-4447 or email [disability@us.af.mil](mailto:disability@us.af.mil).

DAFC Disability Operations Branch  
USAF Physical Disability Division  
Directorate of Arms & Family Care

Attachment:  
Election

ELECTION REGARDING TRANSFER TO  
INACTIVE STATUS LIST RESERVE SECTION

I, TSG GARY DOE

elect transfer to the Inactive Status List Reserve Section (ISLRS) for the purpose of applying for early retirement under Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 1223, Section 12732, and, if otherwise eligible, receive Reserve retired pay upon application (normally 60 years of age).

elect to be discharged with severance pay as provided under Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 61, Section 1203. I understand that I am not entitled to retirement pay under Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 1223 nor am I entitled to retirement benefits to include an ID card.

DATE

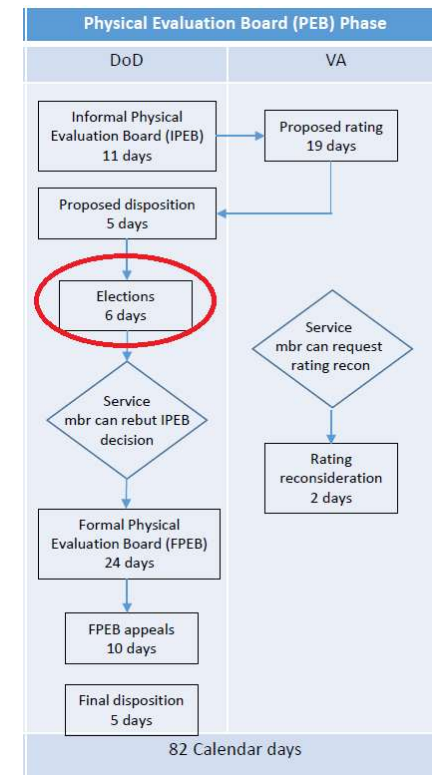
SIGNATURE

Attachment 1



## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): (IPEB) Elections Stage

- Once the **IPEB** has released the results to the PEBLO, the PEBLO must first notify your commander of the **IPEB** findings (fitness determination and recommended disposition).
- The PEBLO must notify you within NLT 72 hours from **IPEB** notification of results whether your Commander has informed you or not.
  - You will, at that time, receive a copy of your AF Form 356 (**IPEB** Findings and Recommended Disposition) via DoD SAFE along with the documents/forms outlining your 6-calendar-day election period via a third DES Multidisciplinary brief (MDB3).
  - You will then have 6 calendar days to review the **IPEB** findings and make one of the following decisions on the AF Form 1180:
    - Agree with the findings and recommended disposition of the **IPEB** and waive the right to a **FPEB** hearing (case will be finalized and separation/retirement date will be established by AFPC); nor request a one-time VA reconsideration of your disability ratings for your unfitting conditions (**IDES** only). \*For **LDES** cases and/or **RTD** dispositions, VA Recon is not applicable
      - You agree with the findings and recommended disposition of the **IPEB** and waive the right to a **FPEB** hearing but request a one-time VA reconsideration of your disability ratings for your unfitting conditions (**IDES** only). \*\*For **LDES**/RTD, see option 1 or 2 only
    - You may disagree with the recommended findings of the **IPEB** and request a formal hearing of your case via the Formal Physical Evaluation Board (**FPEB**), which is the first appeal (see [next slide](#)). **SAFPC** is the second and final appeal (see [slide 20](#)). \*Appeals must be exhausted prior to requesting a VA reconsideration when applicable.

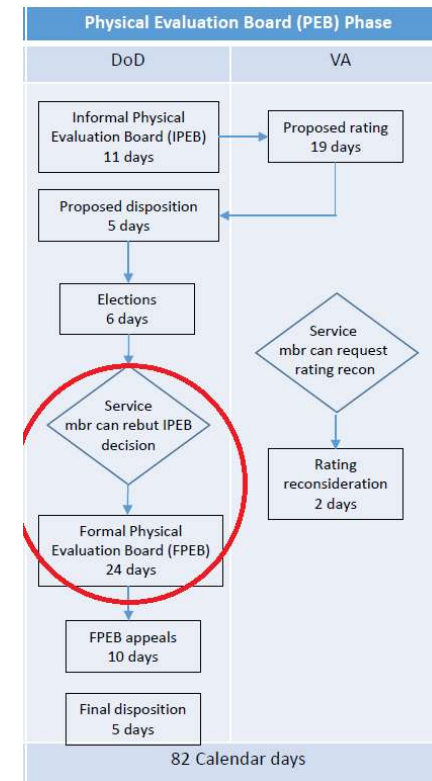


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## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): Formal Physical Evaluation Board (FPEB) Stage

- If you elect to appeal the **IPEB**'s decision to the **FPEB**, you will require legal representation and be scheduled for a hearing within 10 days of making **IPEB** election. Notification of the hearing date will be sent to you via MyFSS e-mail notification. You will need to consult with legal (**ODC**) for further information regarding the hearing. ([Refer to slide 6](#))
  - If you request legal representation outside **ODC**, you will need to provide a memo stating as such; and it's at your own expense)
- Once the **FPEB** has released the results to the **PEBLO** (post-hearing), the **PEBLO** must first notify your commander of the **FPEB** findings (whether **FPEB** concurred or non-concurred with the **IPEB**).
- The **PEBLO** must notify you within NLT 72 hours from **FPEB** notification of results whether your Commander has informed you or not.
  - You will, at that time, receive a copy of your AF Form 356 (**FPEB** Findings and Recommended Disposition) via DoD SAFE along with the documents/forms outlining your next 6 calendar day election period.
  - You will then have 6 calendar days to review the **FPEB** findings and make one of the following decisions:
    1. Concur with the findings and recommended disposition of the **FPEB** and **waive** the right to submit a rebuttal to **SAFPC**; **nor request a one-time VA reconsideration** of your disability ratings for your unfitting conditions (**IDES** only). (Case moves to final disposition) \*For **LDES** cases and/or **RTD** dispositions, VA Recon is not applicable
      - a. Concur with the findings and recommended disposition of the **FPEB** and **waive** the right to submit a rebuttal to the **SAFPC** **but request a one-time VA reconsideration of your disability ratings** for your unfitting conditions (**IDES** only). For **LDES**/RTD, see option 1 or 2 only
    2. Non-concur with the recommended findings of the **FPEB** and **appeal** your case to the **SAFPC** (see [slide 20](#)); and **request or decline a one-time VA reconsideration** (see [slide 21](#)) of your disability ratings for your unfitting conditions (**IDES** only), which will be held until after receipt of **SAFPC** findings.

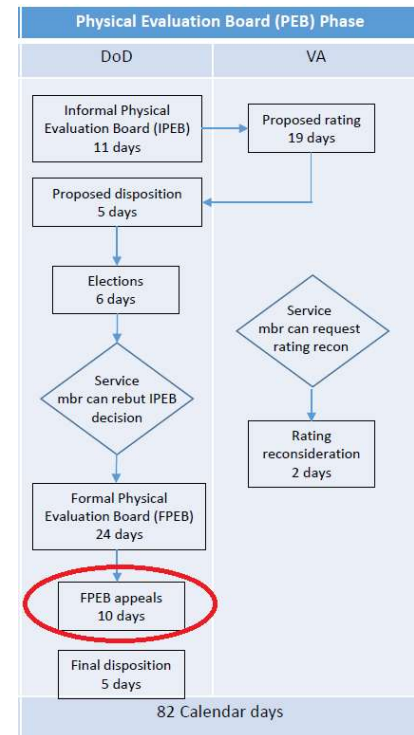


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## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): Secretary of the Air Force Personnel Council (SAFPC) Stage (FPEB Appeal)

- If a member elects to appeal the FPEB's decision to **SAFPC**, member will work with their legal representation on submitting rebuttal to the **SAFPC** (due by 6<sup>th</sup> calendar day).
- **SAFPC** will review your case file, the contention provided by the Service members legal counsel, additionally the member will be afforded the option to request a virtual hearing or a Records Review only hearing; not both. After completion of the hearing a final disposition will be made. Your PEBLO will notify you of the **SAFPC** findings, at which time you will either have 6-calendar-days to submit your one-time VA Rating Reconsideration package via your legal representation or (if declined Rating Recon) immediately submit your pre-separation/retirement worksheet for finalization of your case, as there are no further DES disputing options. However, *further appeals of the PEB decisions can be pursued through application to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR), post-retirement or separation (see [slide 34](#)).*

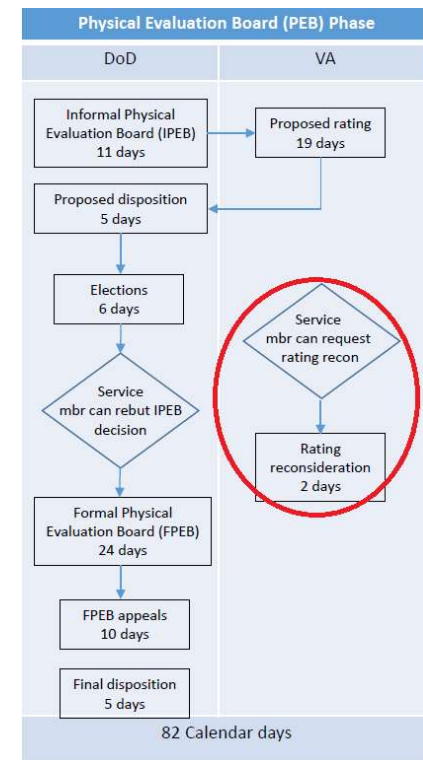


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## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): One-Time VA Rating Reconsideration Stage (IDES Only)

- An **IDES** member can elect a one-time VA Rating Reconsideration at any point during the PEB findings stages. However, all appeals must be exhausted prior to requesting the one-time VA Rating Reconsideration, as the member must accept all other findings in order to dispute ratings.
- If elected at **IPEB** stage, the member must have their Rating Reconsideration request package submitted via **ODC** by their 6<sup>th</sup> calendar election date.
- If elected at **FPEB** stage in conjunction with **SAFPC** rebuttal, **SAFPC** determination will be made first before the Rating Reconsideration package is requested by the PEB.
  - Upon receipt of the **SAFPC** findings, the member must have their Rating Reconsideration request package submitted via **ODC** by their 6<sup>th</sup> calendar election date
- If **SAFPC** rebuttal is waived, member will have 6-calendar days to prepare and submit the Rating Reconsideration package to **ODC**.



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## ***Special Considerations: Limited Assignment Status (not on diagram but prior to Final Disposition stage)***

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- If you are motivated to remain on active duty even though found unfit by the PEB, you may be eligible to apply to be retained on active duty under the LAS program. To be eligible to apply, you must:
    - Have between (not less than, not greater than) 15-20 years of Active-Duty service.
    - Possess qualification in a needed skill or shortage Air Force Specialty Code.
    - The unfit medical condition is essentially stable. (TDRL disposition is unstable and therefore not applicable)
    - Able to function in a normal military environment without adverse effect on their own health or the health of others, and without need for excessive medical care.
    - Obtain commander recommendation for retention and approval of LAS via memorandum
  - If you are approved for LAS, you will be returned to duty with an Assignment Limitation Code Conus and will require:
    - An annual physical examination review (ARILO) every year until you near 20 years of service (YOS)
    - At which time (near 20 YOS), you will be required to undergo another MEB/DES (of which your PEBLO will notify you at that time) (DAFI36-3212, C. 7.9.4.)
      - ✓ Only members over 19 YOS when approved for LAS will have their retirement order generated to reflect a retirement date effective to either equal to or shortly over 20 YOS to get as close as possible.
- (Proceed to next slide for information regarding Administrative Actions)*

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Improving Health and Building Readiness. Anytime, Anywhere — Always





## Special Considerations: Medical Hold\*

- **Medical Hold:** Can be requested for members within 6 months of their separation/retirement date who are already in the full MEB/DES process. When Medical Hold extension is approved, each extension is provided in 6-month increments until the DES case is finalized. Member will be notified by the PEBLO office how to implement the extension with their CSS. *\*Members should not rely on Medical Hold for separation/retirement considerations such as skill bridge (see [slide 30](#)), as Medical Hold is only a buffer to ensure members do not lose pay or benefits while undergoing DES processing and can be cancelled at any time.*
  - ✓ Medical Hold is not typically processed/approved by AFPC until within 30-60 days of member's separation
  - ✓ Medical Hold will be cancelled:
    - If a member is found fit and return to duty during the DES process (see [slide 14](#))
    - If a member is return to duty via Limited Assignment Status (see [slide 22](#))
    - if a member is found ineligible for DES processing (or if a member's MEB is overturned by DPMNR) (see [slide 24](#))
    - Once a member case is finalized and their date of separation/retirement has been established (see [slides 32 & 33](#))
- **Declination of Medical Hold:** Can be requested for members within 6 months of their separation/retirement date that have NOT yet attended any VA Compensation & Pension examinations. Member is essentially waiving Disability processing and as a result must continue on with their already scheduled separation or retirement and pursue disability through the VA. *\*Code 37 will remain through their retirement date to inhibit member from attempting to extend or re-enlist.*



## **Special Considerations: Administrative Actions\***

- Prior to finalization of your case, all pending administrative actions must be concluded.
  - **Dual Action:** If there are Administrative Discharge actions due to misconduct/misbehavior, your administrative discharge package, will be forwarded to General Court-Martial Convening Authority (GCMCA) to determine eligibility for dual processing. If dual processing is approved, both cases will be forwarded to **SAFPC** for final decision whether the disability discharge/retirement or the involuntary administrative separation will be executed. This determination will be based on if (and how) your boardable condition impacted the conduct/behavior.
  - **Grade Determination:** If you have been demoted, your MEB and demotion instrument/package will be sent to **SAFPC** for a grade determination of whether you will be discharged at the higher or lower grade. The following items will be requested from your leadership, if applicable:
    - ✓ EPRS from both ranks
    - ✓ UIF Documents
    - ✓ Article 15
    - ✓ Demotion order
    - ✓ Commander's letter and members acknowledgment of demotion



## **Special Considerations: Recalling a Case\***

- If a service member, who's case has already been sent to the PEB, is diagnosed with a new boardable condition, the case may need to be recalled.
  - If a recall is required, the MTF commander or director or designee will contact AFPC/DPFD in writing per AFI 36-3212, chapter 2, to request the recall.
- If a service member, who's case has yet to final out-process, is diagnosed with a new boardable condition, the case may need to be recalled.
  - If a recall is required, the MTF commander or director or designee will contact AFPC/DPFD to ascertain whether separation/retirement orders should be revoked and the MEB be re-initiated.



# Special Considerations Non-Emergent Surgery Process\*

- Non-Emergent Surgery is defined as any surgery that is not urgent or emergent (to save life, limb or eyesight) and is not authorized during the last 6 months of Military Service or while on code 37 without proper approval. PCM initiates the approval process.
  - The PCM must first complete Non-Emergent Surgery FL4 Request form (pictured) and send to PEBLO for processing.
  - The PEBLO will submit to AFPC/DPMNR for preliminary approval.
  - Upon receipt of preliminary approval from AFPC/DPMNR, the member is to sign Non-Emergent Surgery Acknowledgment Memo and send to the PEBLO.
  - The PEBLO will submit the member’s signed memo to AFPC/DPMNR, who will send a formal approval message
  - The PEBLO will forward the formal approval message to both the member and provider for records
- **If the date of surgery changes from what was annotated on non-emergent surgery FL4, provider will need to submit a new request.**
- **Surgery during DES is likely to be denied prior to MEB finalization if not urgently necessary. Therefore, requests should wait until MEB finalization and falls under the “within 6-months” rule.**

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER  
MEDICAL STANDARDS (DPMNR)

"CONTROLLED UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION"

REQUEST TO PERFORM NON-EMERGENT SURGERY

Today's Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

**PATIENT INFORMATION**  
SSAN:  
Name (Last, First Middle Initial):  
Rank:  
Sep/Ret/DOS Date:  
Is member pending MEB for any diagnosis? Yes/No  
if YES,  
Are the VA C&P exams completed? Yes/No Date of last exam:  
Has the case been submitted to the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB)? Yes/No  
(If Yes, attach signed AF 1180)  
Has the PEB adjudicated the case? Yes/No Date of adjudication:

**NON-EMERGENT SURGERY INFORMATION:**  
Requesting Provider's Name & Department:  
Provider's call back phone number:  
Procedure:  
Procedure Date: Click or tap to enter a date.  
Estimated inpatient care: Yes/No Number of days:  
Estimated outpatient care needed (post-surgery):

What are the estimated functional limitations after recovery and for how long?

Has the member been briefed that they will not be placed on medical hold as a result of or to recover from this non-emergent surgery? Yes/No

**ADDITIONAL NOTES/DETAILS:**

**REQUESTING PROVIDER** (initial)  
Are you aware that if member does not have a scheduled surgery date then this request must be re-accomplished when the date of the actual procedure is known? Yes/No

**REQUESTING PEBLO** (initial)  
Are you aware that if member does not have a scheduled surgery date then this request must be re-accomplished when the date of the actual procedure is known? Yes/No

AFPC-DPMNR FL4.1 THIS IS A COMPUTER GENERATED OFFICIAL AIR FORCE DOCUMENT Revised 3 Mar 2023

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## Special Considerations

### Leave Should NOT Hinder the DES Process

- Leave, while local, does not need approval, as a member is still required to report for DES actions if necessary. Thus, member should be accessible via phone and e-mail for notification purposes.
- Out of local area leave must be approved by the MEB office and approval is contingent on member's understanding that they will be accessible via phone and e-mail if DES action is required while on leave.
  - The SM must also understand that they must obtain access to a fax machine or computer printer/scanner, while on leave or TDY, if needed. \*Legible photos are acceptable for signed documents.
- Member must request leave as they normally do through the proper chains and additionally must also submit a request to the PEBLO via e-mail (at least 30 days prior to taking leave). Guard and Reserve members will still need to request leave through our office regardless of their status (on orders or off orders) for accountability.
- The e-mail request to the PEBLO must include:
  - Location of the leave
  - Dates of the leave,
  - Two contact numbers (Member must be available via phone and e-mail)
  - The statement: "My leave will not interfere with the Pre-DES/DES process, as I will be accessible via phone and e-mail if action is needed."
  - Personal email address (if you will not have access to government e-mail)
- For TDY, member's Commander must coordinate approval through SGH, Lt Col Kathryn Gattone, via phone 609-754-9650 or E-mail: [kathryn.t.gattone.mil@health.mil](mailto:kathryn.t.gattone.mil@health.mil) The MEB office should be courtesy copied on the request. \*Member's should not reach out to the SGH directly.
- Timelines will NOT be extended because a member is on leave or TDY.
- **C&P** Exams take precedence over personal leave. **C&P** exams will not be rescheduled because of personal leave. Failure to attend **C&P** exams could impact the MEB process and/or SM's VA ratings. \*Only one week of leave is authorized during VA stages, as the VA will not work around anything more than one week.
- SM cannot take leave in conjunction with the Formal Physical Evaluation Board Hearing.
- Leadership will be notified if a member is not accessible, as agreed, while on leave.



## Special Considerations

### Pre-Separation and Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Briefing\*

- Pre-Separation and Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Briefing: It is important for you to attend your Pre-Separation and TAP Briefings as they will provide you important information regarding post-retirement insurance, allotments, potential veteran benefits, applicable transition benefits, services provided by military/veteran/national service organization, electronic resources for ill/injured services members, and more. \*Questions that the PEBLO cannot answer.
  - The best time to get scheduled is after you have completed all VA Compensation & Pension examinations.
  - You can coordinate signing up for the next available Transition Assistance Program (TAP) class through the "Military and Family Support Center" (again, following the Compensation and Pension exams) at (609) 754-3154.
    - ✓ Be sure to ask about virtual classes if you are remote from JBMDL



## **Special Considerations**

### **Skill Bridge\*#**

- Those members that are undergoing a medical separation are eligible to participate as an exception to policy, based on establishing a temporary “expected” separation date **180 days** from notification of full Medical Evaluation Board via Form Letter 4 (FL-4). Interested participants should research local or online training opportunities in advance so that the member can start training within the established 180 days. Members must submit their online application for commander approval or disapproval in the Air Force Virtual Education Center. The temporary DOS is only utilized to allow application submission. The DES Board will establish the actual DOS IAW their policy and guidelines. No additional extensions are allowed for Skillbridge participation.
  - (NOTE: If you wish to apply for the Skillbridge Program, begin this process immediately after reading this notification or application may be denied/disapproved.
  - Please contact the base Education & Training Office for additional application details.  
609-754-3019





## Special Considerations

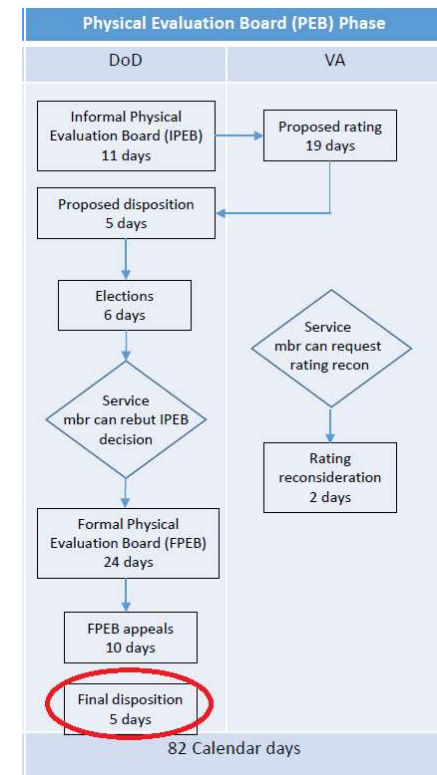
# AIR FORCE WOUNDED WARRIOR (AFW2) PROGRAM\*

- The AFW2 Program is available to Total Force Active, Guard and Reserve members who have been identified as SI/VSI on a Casualty Morning Report or by a Medical Authority, Airmen with highly complex medical conditions as provided by a Medical Authority, and medical diagnosis of Post- Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Military Sexual Trauma (MST), and under consideration for MEB.
  - If you believe you may be eligible for AFW2 services, you can also self-refer by going to [www.woundedwarrior.af.mil](http://www.woundedwarrior.af.mil) and click the link "Refer an Airman" or contact your local Air Force Recovery Care Coordinator (RCC) assigned at your location. AFW2's Toll-free number is 1-800-581-9437.
    - ✓ Crystal Mettrock, COMM- 609-754-9326, E-mail: [crystal.r.mettrock.ctr@heath.mil](mailto:crystal.r.mettrock.ctr@heath.mil)



## PEB Phase (MEB Determination & Ratings): Final Disposition (Case finalization) Stage

- AFPC will establish the member's date, after case finalization. SAFPC must sign off on all MEBs regardless of appeals (takes approximately 1-3 weeks). Member's separation/retirement date will be established on finalization day using the following information – two items of which will be annotated on their pre-separation/retirement worksheet when member makes their election, also coinciding with DFAS web. Members may not request a later date than that established as above, unless a hardship can be justified by their Commander via memorandum.
  - ✓ **15 days of out-processing:** This is not extra leave. These are calendar days calculated into a member's separation/retirement date to allow for final out-processing with the base as not to interfere with their terminal and permissive time.
  - ✓ **Accrued leave:** This is the number of leave days the member has available as of the day they complete/submit the pre-separation/retirement worksheet. Any days accrued while awaiting finalization of their case will be added by AFPC into calculating the member's separation/retirement date (annotated on pre-separation worksheet) (Not applicable for ARC members not on orders)
  - ✓ **Permissive TDY days:** The member's Commander can approve up to 20 days of house/job hunting time. The member is instructed to get with their first shirt or Commander to verify how many granted permissive TDY days to annotate on their pre-separation/retirement worksheet (annotated on pre-separation worksheet) (Not applicable for ARC members not on orders)
- Members whose established date takes them passed their current ETS, must decide if they want to request a Medical Hold to accommodate all their leave (see [slide 23](#)) or get out or Disability Retire/Separate at their current ETS date.
- Administrative Actions will delay finalization (see [slide 24](#))
- Members may also, instead, request an earlier separation/retirement date through their PEBLO at the time of their concurrence with the **IPEB** or **FPEB**. If a member requests a separation/retirement date of less than 30 days away, they must obtain and provide to the PEBLO, Military Personnel Section (MPS) endorsement. The MPS is responsible for ensuring all out-processing and briefings can be completed by member's requested earlier date.

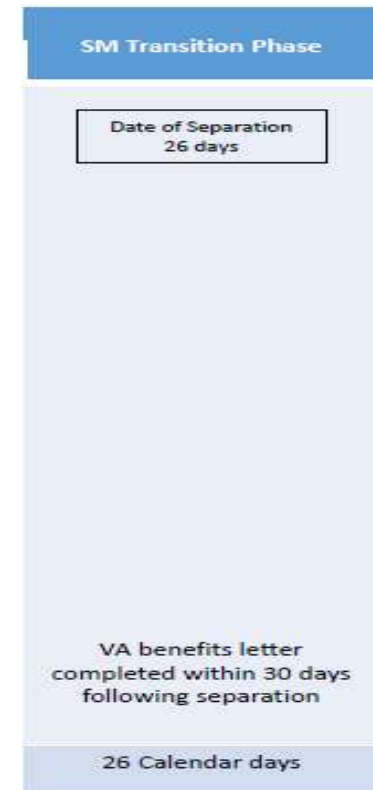


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## Transition Phase

- Your PEBLO will notify you of your established separation or retirement date immediately upon receipt, at which point you will be advised when your official order should be available to you for out-processing. MPF will provide you a final out-processing date, at which time you would start any permissive TDY days leading into your terminal leave.
  - You will out-process like any other separating/retiring military member. The only thing different, is that you will not require a Separation Health Physical Examination (SHPE) as the SHA you completed, will serve as your separation exam.
- VA reconsiderations for all claimed conditions are to be requested after your separation or retirement date has passed.



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## ***Special Considerations***

### ***Survivors Benefits Plan (SBP) Counselor (Retirees only)***

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- Contact your local Survivors Benefits Plan (SBP) Counselor if medically retiring (later on in the process).
  - The SBP office at the Military and Family Readiness Center (M&FRC) provides a more detailed briefing before final out-processing.
  - Donna Gauze is the local SBP counselor and can be reached at 609-754-3814 after receiving your retirement order.



## ***AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORD (AFBCMR)***

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- Further appeals of the PEB decisions can be pursued through application to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR).
- Once your case has been finalized and after you have been discharged from service and have received a DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, if you feel an error or injustice has occurred during the processing or finalization of your case, you may apply to the AFBCMR. The AFBCMR is the highest level of administrative appeal in the Air Force and will carefully consider your petition and make recommendations as it deems appropriate to the Secretary of the Air Force. Please be aware that submission of an application should not be considered an automatic approval. For more information visit the website at: <http://www.afpc.af.mil/board-for-correction-of-military-records>.



## **Reference Information\***

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**DAFMAN 48-108, Aug 2021 – PRE-DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM (DES) AND MEDICAL EVALUATION BOARD (MEB) PROCESSING and Continued Military Service**

**DAFI 36-3212, Feb 2024 – PHYSICAL EVALUATION FOR RETENTION, RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION**

**DoDI 1332.18, Nov 2022 - Disability Evaluation System**

**DoDM 1332.18, V1, Feb 2023 - DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM MANUAL: PROCESSES**

**DAFMAN 48-123 – Medical Examinations and Standards**

**AFI 10-203 – Duty Limiting Conditions**

