

Prisoner of War Medal



*Paragraph 2-9, Army Regulation 600-8-22 (Military Awards)
11 December 2006*

See [Application Form](#) below.

Description and Symbolism

Obverse

In the center of a bronze medallion, one-and-three-eighths inches in diameter, an eagle is shown with its wings displayed. Forming a circle around the eagle and following the contour of the medal, barbed wire and bayonet points may be seen. The eagle is the American bald eagle and represents the United States in general and the individual prisoner of war in particular. It is standing “with pride and dignity, continually on the alert for the opportunity to seize hold of beloved freedom.”

Reverse

The reverse has the inscription "AWARDED TO" around the top, and "FOR HONORABLE SERVICE WHILE A PRISONER OF WAR" across the center, in three lines, with a space between the two inscriptions for engraving the name of the recipient. The shield of the Coat of Arms of the United States is centered on the lower part of the reverse side with the inscription "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" around the bottom of the medal.

Ribbon

The ribbon to the Prisoner of War Medal is one-and-three-eighths inches wide, and consists of a central band of black edged in white. The edge stripes of the ribbon are composed of pinstripes of red, white and blue (with the red forming the outer edge of the ribbon). The red, white and blue edge stripes represent the United States; the larger white stripes represent hope, and the black center stripe alludes to the bleakness of confinement as a prisoner of war.

Instructions:

- a. The POW Medal is authorized by Public Law 99-145, section 1128, title 10, United States Code (10 USC 1128), 8 November 1985, and is authorized for any person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Armed Forces, was taken prisoner and held captive after 5 April 1917.
- b. The POW Medal is to be issued only to those U.S. military personnel and other personnel granted creditable U.S. military service, who were taken prisoner and held captive.
 - (1) While engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States.
 - (2) While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force.
 - (3) While serving with friendly forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.
- c. U.S. and foreign civilians who have been credited with U.S. military service which encompasses the period of captivity are also eligible for the medal. The Secretary of

Defense authorized on January 27, 1990, the POW Medal for the Philippine Commonwealth Army and Recognized Guerrilla Unit Veterans who were held captive between December 7, 1941, and September 26, 1945. DD Form 2510-1 (Prisoner of War Medal Application/Information-Philippine commonwealth Army and Recognized Guerrilla Veterans) was developed as the application for Filipino Veterans who fit this category.

d. For purposes of this medal, past armed conflicts are defined as World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam Conflict, Grenada, Panama, Southwest Asia Conflict, and Somalia. Hostages of terrorists and persons detained by governments with which the United States is not engaged actively in armed conflict are not eligible for the medal.

For the procedures to award the POW Medal for Afghanistan and Iraq see subparagraph j.e. Any person convicted of misconduct or a criminal charge by a U.S. military tribunal, or who receives a less than honorable discharge based upon actions while a prisoner of war, or whose conduct was not in accord with the Code of Conduct, and whose actions are documented by U.S. military records is ineligible for the medal. The Secretary of the Army is the authority for deciding eligibility in such cases.

f. No more than one POW Medal will be awarded. For subsequent award of the medal, service stars will be awarded and worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the medal. A period of captivity terminates on return to U.S. military control. Escapees who do not return to U.S. military control and are recaptured by an enemy do not begin a new period of captivity for subsequent award of the POW Medal.

g. The POW Medal may be awarded posthumously.

h. The primary next of kin of eligible prisoners of war who die in captivity may be issued the POW Medal regardless of the length of stay in captivity.

i. Personnel officially classified as MIA are not eligible for award of the POW Medal. The POW Medal will only be awarded when the individual's prisoner of war status has been officially confirmed and recognized as such by the Department of the Army. Likewise, the return of remains, in and of itself, does not constitute evidence of confirmed prisoner of war status.

j. All requests for the POW Medal will be initiated by eligible former POWs, or their next of kin, using a personal letter or **DD Form 2510** (Prisoner of War Medal Application/Information). Applications should be forwarded to:

Commander, ARPERCEN,
ATTN: DARP-VSE-A
9700 Page Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63132-5200

POW Medal Application - DD Form 2510

To print, first click on thumbnail below and then when image is loaded in new browser window click on print on the browser header. Repeat for the second page.



NOTE: It may take from six months to one year to hear anything back after you submit your application for the POW medal. Your local Congressman may be able to speed this process up for you. When submitting the application, remember to send in copies of as much as you can to substantiate your proof of POW status. These would include copies of any telegrams, newspaper articles reporting your MIA/POW status, POW ID cards, Honorable Discharge papers, POW postcards, etc. Do not send original documents, as they will not be returned to you - send copies of your documents.

In addition, you may choose to have the medal presented to the POW or his surviving next of kin in a formal ceremony, or have it mailed to you. There are regional banquets held annually to honor our POW/MIAs.