
National Defense Service Medal



Criteria: Awarded to anyone who serves on active duty in the United States military during a designated time period. In the fifty years since the creation of the National Defense Service Medal, it has been authorized for the following time periods; June 27, 1950 to July 27, 1954 for service during the Korean War; January 1, 1961 to August 14, 1974 for service during the Vietnam War; August 2, 1990 to November 30, 1995 for service during the Gulf War; September 11, 2001 to a date yet-to-be-determined for service during the War on Terrorism. For service in the Gulf War and War on Terrorism, it is also authorized for members of the military reserve provided they are a “military reservist in good standing.” The National Defense Service

Medal is further authorized to students at the service academies, but is not granted to discharged or retired veterans who did not serve in one of the above time periods. The decoration is also not authorized to members of the inactive reserve. The award was intended to be a “blanket campaign medal” issued to any member of the United States military who served in a designated time period of which a “national emergency” had been declared. As of 2005, it is the oldest service medal which is still issued to the active military.

Attachments: Bronze Star Device.

