

Part 5

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Chapter 29

PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING AS A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

29.1. Preparing Conscientious Objector Applications.

29.1.1. Conscientious Objector.

29.1.1.1. Class 1-O. A member who, by reason of conscientious objection, sincerely opposes participation in combatant and non-combatant military training and service in war in any form and for whom such beliefs play a significant role in the member's life.

29.1.1.2. Class 1-A-O. A member who, by reason of conscientious objection, sincerely opposes participation only in combatant military training and service and for whom such beliefs play a significant role in the member's life.

29.1.2. Establishing Claim. The applicant for conscientious objector status bears the burden of establishing conscientious objection as grounds for separation or, for Class 1-A-O, assignment to noncombatant training and service. **(T-0)**. The applicant must establish the following by clear and convincing evidence: **Note:** Clear and convincing evidence is evidence indicating the thing to be proven is highly probable or reasonably certain. It is that level of proof which lies between proof by a preponderance of the evidence and proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

29.1.2.1. The nature or basis of the claim falls within the definition and criteria of conscientious objector prescribed in this publication and DoDI 1300.06. **(T-0)**.

29.1.2.2. The applicant's belief is firm, fixed, sincere, and deeply held. **(T-0)**.

29.1.2.3. The applicant's belief is due to sincerely held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs, or a combination of such beliefs. **(T-0)**.

29.1.2.4. The applicant opposes participation in war in any form or the bearing of arms. **Note:** An applicant's willingness to bear arms in exclusively noncombatant or non-lethal contexts does not invalidate the applicant's claims or render the application insincere. An applicant's willingness to bear arms to protect themselves or family members does not invalidate the service member's claims or render the application insincere. An applicant's willingness to bear arms in first-person shooter video games shall be weighed against other relevant evidence. **(T-0)**.

29.1.3. Nature of Request. The applicant must set out the exact nature of the request -- that is, whether the applicant requests separation based on conscientious objection (1-O) or for assignment to noncombatant training and service based on conscientious objection (1-A-O) **(T-0)**.

29.1.3.1. Only enlisted members who have time remaining on their enlistment contract or officers who have an ADSC may request noncombatant training and service (1-A-O).

29.1.3.2. Enlisted members with time remaining on their enlistment contract or officers with an ADSC may request conscientious objector (1-O) status with curtailment of ADSC and discharge upon approval.

29.1.3.3. Members with no remaining ADSCs or enlistment agreement at the time of their conscientious objector application must request conscientious objector (1-O) status with discharge upon approval. **(T-1)**. Members seeking characterization as a 1-A-O, who have less than 2 years of service remaining on their enlistment or commitment will typically be discharged, unless it can be shown that their retention to perform non-combatant training or duties will serve the best interests of the Air Force or Space Force. **(T-1)**.

29.1.4. Applying for Noncombatant Training and Service. The applicant will explain on the application, in detail, what benefit the applicant's continued service (to include new duties and responsibilities) would be to the AF. For the regular component, the AFPC Assignment Policy (AFPC/DP3AM) and/or Classification (AFPC/DP3DW) offices will provide the final approving authority information about the health, status, and duties of the applicant's current, proposed, potential career fields and potential non-combatant duties in support of a recommendation for retention or discharge of an applicant seeking classification as a 1-A-O conscientious objector. For ANG or ARC applicants, the recommendation of NGB, HQ AFRC, or HQ ARPC will include a similar analysis of the applicant's current and proposed potential career fields and non-combatant duties. If noncombatant duties cannot be established or validated for a 1-A-O conscientious objector, the final decision authority may direct discharge of the member, even if the member meets the criteria for classification as a 1-A-O.

29.1.5. Submitting Application. A member of the AF or SF who seeks either separation (1-O) or assignment to noncombatant duties (1-A-O) will:

29.1.5.1. Include in the application a notation of the AFI and chapter that applies **(T-1)**:

29.1.5.1.1. DAFI 36-3211, **Part 2**,

29.1.5.1.2. DAFI 36-3211, **Part 3**,

29.1.5.1.3. AFI 36-3203.

29.1.5.2. Include in the application the personal information required by **Attachment 2**.

29.1.5.3. Include in the application the statement required by **Attachment 3** if applicant is requesting separation (1-O). Include the statement required by **Attachment 5** if applicant is requesting noncombatant status/duties (1-A-O).

29.1.5.4. Include in the application any other information that the applicant desires to submit in support of the case.

29.1.5.5. Forward application in accordance with **Table 29.1**.

29.2. Installation Processing Procedures.

29.2.1. General Procedures. Consistent with the national policy to recognize the claims of authentic conscientious objectors in the military services, an application for classification as a conscientious objector may be approved, subject to the limitations of this issuance, for any individual who meets the definition and criteria of conscientious objector prescribed in this and related authoritative publications. The AF or SF does not recognize objection to a particular war as grounds for conscientious objector status.

29.2.1.1. Individual facts and circumstances of each case will be the determining factor for discharging a member as a conscientious objector prior to completion of an obligated term of service. The AF or SF makes conscientious objector classification decisions based upon the applicable criteria. The decision to retain or discharge a 1-A-O conscientious objector will be based upon whether or not the applicant's retention is in the best interest of the Air Force or Space Force such that retention does not compromise AF or SF effectiveness and efficiency. **(T-1)**.

29.2.1.1.1. In accordance with DoDI 1300.06, DAF members who possessed conscientious objection beliefs before entering military service are not eligible for such classification if such beliefs satisfied the requirements for classification as a conscientious objector pursuant to 50 USC § 3806(j), *Deferments and Exemptions from Training and Service*, also known as the Military Selective Service Act, and other provisions of law, and one of the following conditions also applies **(T-0)**:

29.2.1.1.1.1. The applicant failed to request classification by the Selective Service System **(T-0)**; or

29.2.1.1.1.2. The member requested conscientious objector classification before entering military service, the Selective Service System denied the request, and the member's request for classification as a conscientious objector is based on essentially the same grounds (or supported by the same evidence) as the request that was denied by the Selective Service System. **(T-0)**.

29.2.1.1.2. AF or SF members who had conscientious objector beliefs before entering military service are eligible for conscientious objector status if the following circumstances apply **(T-0)**:

29.2.1.1.2.1. The beliefs crystallized after receipt of an induction notice. **(T-0)**.

29.2.1.1.2.2. The member could not request conscientious objector classification from the Selective Service System because of regulations prohibiting the submission of such requests after receipt of induction notice. **(T-0)**.

29.2.1.2. Processing personnel must not use this chapter instead of other administrative separation actions when the member has not been able to establish conscientious objector status, but separation appears to be in the best interest of the AF or SF. **(T-0)**.

29.2.1.3. Process any person classified as a 1-A-O conscientious objector for administrative separation under the appropriate provisions of this instruction when the circumstances (e.g., misconduct, failure to meet standards) warrant it. Persons with this classification will be expected to conform to the normal requirements of military service and to perform satisfactorily such duties to which they are assigned. **(T-1)**. The adjudication of violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice by these members, to include administrative separation, may take priority over the conscientious objector's request.

29.2.1.4. When assigning or transferring persons classified 1-A-O by the Selective Service System after induction, transfer 1-A-Os to a training center or station for recruit training and give them noncombatant training and service duties. These inductees sign and date a statement in accordance with [Attachment 2](#).

29.2.2. Personnel Effects of Conscientious Objector Status Applications. Members who request conscientious objector status under this publication are subject to the following:

29.2.2.1. Regular component enlisted members awaiting promotion may enter withhold status (AFI 36-2502).

29.2.2.2. Officers awaiting promotion to all grades may be subject to delay action (AFI 36-2501) if circumstances suggest that an officer may not be suited for promotion and time is needed to develop more evidence on the question.

29.2.3. Status of Applicant Whose Request Is Under Consideration.

29.2.3.1. During the period applications are being processed, applicants will conform to the normal requirements of military service and satisfactorily perform their assigned duties. **(T-1)**. Applicants may be disciplined for violations of the UCMJ while awaiting action on their applications.

29.2.3.2. During the application processing period, and before a decision is made by the applicable authority, commanders will, to the extent practicable, make every effort to assign applicants to duties that will conflict as little as possible with the applicant's asserted beliefs. **(T-1)**.

29.2.3.3. Unless an exception to policy is granted, an applicant shall be required to comply with active duty or transfer orders in effect at the time of application or subsequently issued and received. **(T-2)**.

29.2.4. Effect of Unauthorized Absence or Disciplinary or Administrative Action. Commanders:

29.2.4.1. May suspend processing of applications for conscientious objector classification in the event of:

29.2.4.1.1. Unauthorized absence of the applicant subsequent to initiation of the application.

29.2.4.1.2. Initiation of disciplinary action, or administrative separation actions against the applicant.

29.2.4.2. Do not discharge an applicant whose request for conscientious objector classification has been approved until all disciplinary actions are resolved. **(T-1)**.

29.2.5. Making Final Determination on Applications. Because of the personal and subjective nature of conscientious objection (the existence, honesty, and sincerity of asserted conscientious objection), commanders should not apply inflexible standards and should consider each case individually. **Paragraph 29.4** lists final decision authorities.

29.2.6. Returning Applications Without Action. The commander may return the application without action, if a member applies based on the same grounds or supported by the same evidence as a previous application disapproved by SAF/MRB.

29.2.7. FSS/MPF Procedures. The MPF is overall responsible for ensuring the conscientious objector application is processing in a timely manner and for providing all applicable documentation to the investigating officer. Before processing the application, the FSS or MPF/Career Development Element must:

29.2.7.1. Inform the applicant of the effects of being discharged as a conscientious objector outlined in 38 USC § 5303 (see [Attachment 4](#)), to include potential loss of medical, educational, disability, and any other benefits normally granted for satisfactory military service. **(T-0)**. When a member is separated pursuant to a conscientious objector status, the VA will determine what veterans' benefits, if any, a member is entitled to receive.

29.2.7.2. The applicant must complete the statements shown in [Attachment 3](#) and [Attachment 4](#) (if applicant is requesting discharge, 1-O) or [Attachment 4](#) and [Attachment 5](#) (if applicant is requesting noncombatant status, 1-A-O). **(T-1)**. The MPF must forward the statements with the application. **(T-1)**.

29.2.7.3. Screen the applicant's personnel record. Review the applicant's entire record to include all recent personnel actions taken by the applicant or on behalf of the applicant and provide this information to the investigating officer (see [paragraph 29.3](#) for investigation officer information). Use all military personnel databases (e.g., MilPDS, Case Management System, Personnel Records Display Application) in the comprehensive review of the record. **(T-1)**.

29.2.7.4. Contact other sources (the unit of assignment; AFPC/DP3AM for officers of the medical services; base, installation, or local chaplain corps for chaplains; AF/JA for judge advocates) for information about the applicant, relevant to the definition of conscientious objector or to the claimed criteria. These sources must promptly forward information for inclusion in the applicant's file for consideration by the investigating officer. **(T-1)**.

29.2.7.5. Counsel applicant on the information in [paragraph 29.2.1](#) **(T-1)**.

29.2.7.6. Contact the applicant's unit commander and/or first sergeant to schedule the applicant for interviews with the chaplain and mental health professional. **(T-1)**.

29.2.7.7. Ensure commanders consider whether action under [Part 2](#) (enlisted) or [Part 3](#) (officer) of this publication is appropriate. **(T-1)**.

29.2.8. Reports of Interview. If the applicant refuses to participate or is uncooperative or unresponsive in the course of either interview below, include this fact in the report.

29.2.8.1. Chaplain Interview. The chaplain will ensure the applicant is made aware that the conversation is not confidential or privileged and will be used in an official report. **(T-1)**. The chaplain will submit a written opinion as to the nature and basis of the applicant's sincerity and depth of conviction. **(T-0)**.

29.2.8.1.1. The chaplain's report must include the reasons for its conclusions. **(T-0)**.

29.2.8.1.2. The chaplain will not make any recommendations for approval or disapproval of the application. **(T-1)**.

29.2.8.2. Credentialed Mental Health Professional Interview. The mental health professional will submit a written report of the psychiatric evaluation, indicating the presence or absence of any mental condition that would warrant treatment or disposition through medical channels for the appropriate administrative action. This review is solely to ensure no other more appropriate administrative discharge under mental health is warranted. **(T-0)**. This opinion and report will become part of the application file. **(T-0)**.

29.2.8.2.1. The mental health professional will not make any recommendations for approval or disapproval of the application. **(T-1)**. The mental health professional will ensure the applicant is made aware that the conversation is not confidential or privileged and will be used in an official report. **(T-1)**.

29.2.9. Furnishing Case File to Investigating Officer. The FSS or Career Development Section of the MPF includes in the case file the information developed in the screening ([paragraph 29.2.7.3](#)), the chaplain's report, and the mental health evaluation and provides the case file to the investigating officer (see [paragraph 29.3](#)).

29.2.10. Routing the Record. The investigating officer's report, along with the individual's application, all interviews with chaplains and mental health professionals, evidence received as a result of the investigating officer's hearing (see [paragraph 29.3.2](#)), and any other items submitted by the applicant will constitute the "record." The investigating officer's conclusions and recommended disposition will be based on the entire record and not merely on the evidence produced at the hearings. Routing and review procedures for the applicant's record are outlined below.

29.2.10.1. The FSS or Career Development Section of the MPF sends the record to the local SJA for a review of procedural compliance. **(T-1)**. If the local SJA acts as the investigating officer, the SJA of the next higher echelon in the applicant's chain of command will provide the legal review. **(T-2)**.

29.2.10.2. If necessary, the SJA will return the case through the FSS/MPF to the investigating officer for further investigation.

29.2.10.3. When the legal review of the record is complete, the SJA forwards it to both the commander who appointed the investigating officer (the commander who holds special court-martial jurisdiction over the applicant) and the applicant, who will be informed of the right to submit a rebuttal to the report within 15 calendar days. **(T-1)**. If a rebuttal is subsequently submitted within the prescribed time limit, the rebuttal becomes part of the record. **(T-1)**.

29.2.10.4. After review of the complete record, the officer who appointed the investigating officer will forward the record, including recommended disposition and rationale for disposition, through channels to:

29.2.10.4.1. The MAJCOM, FLDCOM, or FOA of assignment for members serving in the active military service. **(T-2)**.

29.2.10.4.2. HQ AFRC/A1KK Workflow, via email, for applicants assigned to the AFR Unit Program (Cat A). **(T-2)**.

29.2.10.4.3. NGB/A1PP, Joint Base Andrews, MD 20762 for ANG members.

29.2.10.4.4. HQ ARPC/DPA, Buckley AFB, CO 80011 for AFR members assigned to IR positions, Non-Participating IRR, and the Participating IRR. **(T-2)**.

29.2.11. MAJCOM and FOA Procedures (regular component only). For a 1-A-O application, the MAJCOM and/or FOA recommendation must include a recommendation on whether or not it is in the best interest of the Air Force to retain a member seeking assignment to training or non-combatant duties if the applicant is ultimately classified as a 1-A-O conscientious objector. **(T-1)**. MAJCOM and FOA commanders, to include deputy commanders on G-Series

orders, and judge advocates are required to review and make a recommendation on all conscientious objector applications. This cannot be delegated to a lower level. After review for legal sufficiency, the MAJCOM or FOA will forward a copy, including recommendations and reasons, to AFPC/DP2SSR. **(T-1)**.

29.2.12. HQ ARPC and HQ AFRC Procedures. The commanders, to include deputy commanders on G-Series orders, and judge advocates, are required to review and make a recommendation on all conscientious objector applications. This cannot be delegated to a lower level. For a 1-A-O application, the HQ ARPC or HQ AFRC recommendation must include a recommendation on whether or not it is in the best interest of the Air Force to retain a member seeking assignment to training or non-combatant duties if the applicant is ultimately classified as a 1-A-O conscientious objector. After review for legal sufficiency, these agencies will forward a copy of the application, including recommendations and rationale, to the SAFPC. **(T-1)**. For ANG cases, the Director or Deputy Director, Air National Guard, and judge advocates are required to review and make a recommendation on all conscientious objector applications. This cannot be delegated to a lower level. For a 1-A-O application, the Director or Deputy Director, ANG recommendation must include a recommendation on whether or not it is in the best interest of the Air Force to retain a member seeking assignment to training or non-combatant duties if the applicant is ultimately classified as a 1-A-O conscientious objector. Submit application, including recommendations and rationale, as an electronic package to NGB/A1PP for further staffing to SAFPC. **Note:** Do not forward applications for officers not serving on active duty to AFPC/DP2SSR unless the AF will order the officer to EAD or will consider them for entry on EAD. **(T-1)**.

29.2.13. Processing Timeline. Process Conscientious Objector applications without delay, while observing the following:

29.2.13.1. Protect the applicant's rights and ensure that the record is complete.

29.2.13.2. Everyone in the application processing chain (up to the SAFPC), must move the package to the next office within 3 workdays, with the exception of the investigating officer, who has up to 15 workdays to process and forward the package. **(T-1)**.

29.2.13.3. The applicant has 15 calendar days from the date of receipt of the investigating officer's report to submit a rebuttal ([paragraph 29.3.2.12](#)).

29.2.13.4. Failure to meet the time standards does not invalidate the action.

Table 29.1. Forwarding Application.

R U L E	If member is	and is	then submit the application to the
1	Regular Component	serving on active duty	servicing FSS or MPF/Career Development Section.
2	AFR		
3	ANG		
4	AFR	not serving on EAD	immediate commander (see notes 1 & 2).
5	ANG		
Notes:			
1. Commanders of AFR members request assistance of the MPF (active or reserve component) closest to member's home address. ANG members will be supported by their FSS.			
2. IMAs will submit to their immediate regular component Commander.			

29.3. Investigating Officer.

29.3.1. Appointing Investigating Officer. Commanders, shown below, appoint a judge advocate serving in the active military service (regular component, or members of the Reserve Component on active duty or full time ANG duty). (T-1). The investigating officer must be in the rank of O-3 or higher. (T-0). If the applicant is a commissioned officer, the investigating officer must be senior in grade. (T-0). The letter appointing the investigating officer becomes a part of the case file.

29.3.1.1. Regular component members. The commander exercising special court-martial jurisdiction over the applicant appoints the investigating officer.

29.3.1.2. AFR Non-EAD and AFR EAD Members. The commander exercising special court-martial jurisdiction over the installation processing the application appoints the investigating officer.

29.3.1.3. ANG Non-EAD Members. The ANG wing or group commander exercising control over the ANG Force Support Squadron that is responsible for processing the application appoints the investigating officer.

29.3.2. Investigating Officer Actions:

29.3.2.1. Reviews this publication. (T-0).

29.3.2.2. Expeditiously investigates and conducts a hearing, the purpose of which is to:

29.3.2.2.1. Give the applicant an opportunity to present any desired evidence in support of the application. (T-0).

29.3.2.2.2. Enable the investigating officer to gather all relevant facts. (T-0).

29.3.2.2.3. Create a comprehensive record. (T-0).

- 29.3.2.2.4. Facilitate and inform the investigating officer's recommendation and the higher authority's decision. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.3. The investigating officer may consider the applicant's failure or refusal to submit to questioning under oath or affirmation when evaluating the applicant's claim.
- 29.3.2.4. The investigating officer will proceed in the applicant's absence if the applicant fails to appear at the hearing without good cause and the applicant is deemed to have waived an appearance. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.5. The applicant is entitled to be represented by legal counsel at applicant's own expense. Legal counsel shall be permitted to be present at the hearing, to assist the applicant in the presentation of the case, and to examine all items in the file. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.6. The hearing is informal and not governed by the courts-martial rules of evidence, except that all oral testimony presented must be under oath or affirmation. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.6.1. The hearing is not an adversarial proceeding. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.6.2. The hearing may receive any relevant evidence.
- 29.3.2.6.3. Statements obtained from persons not present at the hearing need not be made under oath or affirmation.
- 29.3.2.6.4. The investigating officer should make every effort to interview friends, acquaintances, clergymen, supervisors, first sergeant, co-workers, subordinates, and anyone in a position to shed light on the applicant's moral, ethical, or religious beliefs and how these beliefs have guided the applicant's life. Only through a complete investigation of the application by the investigating officer are reviewing authorities in position to judge the merits of the application. **(T-1)**.
- 29.3.2.7. The applicant may submit any additional evidence, including sworn or unsworn written statements, and present any witnesses on the applicant's behalf; the applicant is responsible for their attendance.
- 29.3.2.7.1. The commander exercising special court-martial jurisdiction will try (if reasonably available) to make available any military members requested by the applicant as witnesses. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.7.2. The applicant may question any other witnesses who appear and may examine all items in the file.
- 29.3.2.8. The AF or SF does not require a verbatim record of the hearing.
- 29.3.2.8.1. If the applicant wants a verbatim record, the applicant must make prior request which includes paying for the preparation, reproduction, and distribution of the record. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.8.2. If the applicant elects a verbatim record, the applicant provides a copy to the investigating officer, at no expense to the government, within a reasonable time after the hearing.

- 29.3.2.8.3. If there is no verbatim record, the investigating officer will summarize the testimony of witnesses and permit the applicant or counsel to examine the summaries and then note, for the record, their differences with the investigating officer's summary. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.8.4. File in the hearing record copies of statements and other documents received in evidence.
- 29.3.2.9. At the end of the investigation, the investigating officer will prepare a written report that contains:
- 29.3.2.9.1. The date of the hearing, if the applicant appeared, if the applicant was accompanied by counsel, and, if so, the latter's identity, and whether the nature and purpose of the hearing were explained to, and understood by, the applicant. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.2. Any documents, statements, and other material received during the investigation. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.3. Summaries of witness testimonies or a verbatim record of the testimonies, if there is one. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.4. A statement of the investigating officer's conclusions as to the underlying basis of the applicant's conscientious objection and the sincerity of the applicant's beliefs, including the reasons for such conclusions. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.5. The investigating officer's recommendations for disposition of the case, including reasons for the recommendations. Limit the actions recommended to:
- 29.3.2.9.5.1. Denial of any classification as a conscientious objector. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.5.2. Classification as a conscientious objector and assignment to noncombatant duties (1-A-O). **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.5.3. Classification as a conscientious objector and discharge (1-O). **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.9.5.4. Only address what the applicant is requesting (1-O or 1-A-O). **(T-0)**. For example, if the applicant is requesting discharge (1-O), do not initiate an opinion on the possibility of the applicant being retained in the Air Force or Space Force in a noncombatant status (1-A-O).
- 29.3.2.10. The final record consists of:
- 29.3.2.10.1. The investigating officer's report, along with the member's application. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.10.2. All interviews with chaplains and mental health professionals. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.10.3. Evidence from the investigating officer's hearing. **(T-0)**.
- 29.3.2.10.4. The commander's memorandum of appointment of the investigating officer. **(T-1)**.
- 29.3.2.10.5. Any other items submitted by the applicant in support of applicant's case. **(T-0)**.

29.3.2.11. The investigating officer will base conclusions and recommended disposition on the entire record and not merely on the evidence produced at the hearings. **(T-0)**.

29.3.2.12. The investigating officer must furnish a copy of the record to the applicant when the investigating officer forwards it to the servicing MPF and informs the applicant of the right to submit a rebuttal within 15 calendar days after receipt of a copy of the record. **(T-0)**. The case file must include a statement by the investigating officer, or a copy of a receipt from the applicant, showing the date on which the copy of the record was delivered to the applicant. **(T-0)**.

29.3.2.13. If the applicant submits a rebuttal, the rebuttal must be included in the record. **(T-1)**.

29.4. Guidelines for Approving or Disapproving Applications.

29.4.1. Final Decision Authorities.

29.4.1.1. SecAF is the final decision authority for all applicants regarding conscientious objector status.

29.4.1.2. Decision authorities do not grant noncombatant status (1-A-O) as a compromise or as an attempt to influence an applicant requesting discharge through claiming conscientious objector (1-O) status.

29.4.2. Justification for Approval.

29.4.2.1. To approve a conscientious objection (1-O) classification, the reviewing authorities must find that an applicant's objection is founded on religious training or belief to oppose participation in war in any form and that the applicant holds these beliefs with the strength of traditional religious convictions. **(T-1)**.

29.4.2.2. To approve an assignment to noncombatant training and service based on conscientious objection (1-A-O), the reviewing authorities must find that an applicant's personal beliefs are purely moral or ethical in source or content, and occupy to the service member a place parallel to that filled by more traditional religious convictions to object to participation as a combatant in war in any form; but whose convictions are such as to permit military service in a non-combatant status. **(T-1)**.

29.4.2.3. For either classification, the applicant must show that these moral and ethical convictions; (1) have directed the applicant's life in the way traditional religious convictions of equal strength, depth, and duration have directed the lives of those whose beliefs are clearly found in traditional religious convictions and (2) are the primary controlling force in the applicant's life. **(T-0)**.

29.4.2.4. A primary factor is the sincerity with which the applicant holds the belief. **(T-0)**. Exercise great care in determining whether the applicant honestly and genuinely holds the asserted beliefs. **(T-0)**.

29.4.2.4.1. Determine sincerity by impartially evaluating the applicant's thinking and lifestyle in its totality, past and present. When evaluating the applicant's sincerity, it is appropriate to consider the stated opinions of individuals who interviewed the applicant as well.

- 29.4.2.4.2. Information the applicant presents must clearly establish that expediency or avoidance of military service is not the basis of the claim. **(T-0)**.
- 29.4.2.5. In evaluating applications, carefully examine and weigh the conduct of applicants, in particular their outward manifestation of their beliefs.
- 29.4.2.6. Consider the following relevant factors:
- 29.4.2.6.1. Training in the home and place of worship.
 - 29.4.2.6.2. General demeanor and pattern of conduct.
 - 29.4.2.6.3. Participation in religious activities or other belief system activities.
 - 29.4.2.6.4. Whether the applicant gained ethical or moral convictions through training, study, contemplation, or other activity comparable in rigor and dedication to formulating traditional religious convictions.
 - 29.4.2.6.5. Credibility of the applicant.
 - 29.4.2.6.6. Credibility of persons supporting the claim.
- 29.4.2.7. Particular care must be exercised not to deny the existence of authentic beliefs simply because those beliefs are incompatible with the reviewing authority's belief system. **(T-0)**.
- 29.4.2.7.1. It is not necessary that an applicant belong to a religious organization or adhere to particular theological tenets for the AF or SF to grant separation or assignment to noncombatant training and service.
 - 29.4.2.7.2. The applicant's affiliation with a religious organization or other group that advocates conscientious objection as a tenet of its creed is not necessarily conclusive of an applicant's position or belief.
 - 29.4.2.7.3. Conversely, if an applicant is affiliated with a religious organization or group that does not teach conscientious objection such affiliation does not necessarily rule out an applicant's adherence to conscientious objection beliefs.
- 29.4.2.8. Where an applicant is or has been a member of a religious organization or tradition and where applicant's claim of conscientious objection is related to the membership and the teachings of the church, religious organization, or religious sect, as well as the applicant's religious activity may be considered.
- 29.4.2.8.1. However, the fact that the applicant may disagree with, or not subscribe to, some of the tenets of applicant's church does not necessarily discredit applicant's claim.
 - 29.4.2.8.2. The personal convictions of each member are controlling so long as they derive from moral, ethical, or religious beliefs.
- 29.4.2.9. Do not deny an applicant who is otherwise eligible for conscientious objector status simply because conscientious objection beliefs influence the applicant's views on domestic or foreign policy. **(T-0)**. The task is to decide whether the applicant sincerely holds the beliefs, and whether they govern the applicant's actions in both word and deed.

29.5. Final Disposition.

29.5.1. Discharging the Member. Members determined to be conscientious objectors (1-O or 1-A-O where further service is not desired by the AF or SF) will be processed for discharge in accordance with this publication. **(T-1)**. This is a convenience of the government discharge (enlisted members) and a request to resign for the convenience of the government (officer members.). SecAF's decision to approve 1-O classification will be construed as the direction to separate the member. **(T-0)**. SAFPC's decision to approve a 1-A-O classification must be accompanied by a direction to either assign the member to noncombat duty or discharge the member. **(T-0)**. The AF or SF goal is to discharge conscientious objectors (1-O or 1-A-O where further service is not desired by the AF or SF) within 10 duty days of the approval of the member's application. Pending separation:

29.5.1.1. The applicant continues to perform duties that conflict as little as possible with professed beliefs, conform to the normal requirements of military service, and satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

29.5.1.2. Disciplinary authorities handle violations of the UCMJ by these members as in any other situation

29.5.2. Noncombatant Status (1-A-O).

29.5.2.1. When applicant is granted noncombatant status the applicant is either:

29.5.2.1.1. Assigned to noncombatant duty, or

29.5.2.1.2. Discharged from military service in accordance with AF or SF policy.

29.5.2.2. Noncombatant duty will only be performed for the remainder of the TOE (for enlisted) or the remainder of the furthest ADSC or reserve service commitment date at the time the conscientious objector application is submitted (for officers). **(T-1)**. Enlisted members with an unspecified DOS will be allowed to serve until the expiration of the furthest remaining ADSC or reserve service commitment at the time the conscientious objector application is submitted. **(T-1)**. If no remaining ADSC or reserve service commitment exist at the time of application, the enlisted member may serve a maximum of 3 years from the date of approval for non-combatant duties. **(T-1)**. AFPC/DP2ST or ARPC/DPTTS updates the DOS and members separate as a conscientious objector upon completion of their TOE or ADSC or reserve service commitment. Approved conscientious objector noncombatants will not be allowed to extend their term of service or accumulate additional ADSCs or reserve service commitments past their established DOS. **(T-0)**.

29.5.2.3. Assignment Limitation. Upon approval of individuals for noncombatant service, AFPC/DP2ST or ARPC/DPTTS will ensure that all appropriate assignment limitation and/or availability codes are updated into the MilPDS. **(T-0)**.

29.5.2.4. If the approved conscientious objector noncombatant is serving in an overseas location, the member may be reassigned to a location in the CONUS to serve-out the remaining TOE or ADSC to perform noncombatant duties until separation from the service. The determination for assignment actions will be made by AFPC/DP3AM. **(T-0)**.

29.5.2.5. Conscientious objectors assigned to noncombatant duties must conform to the normal requirements of military service and satisfactorily perform their assigned duties. **(T-0)**.

29.5.2.6. Disciplinary authorities handle misconduct or failure to meet standards by these members as in any other situation.

29.5.3. Disapproved Applicant.

29.5.3.1. Members assigned to normal military duties because of disapproval of their application must conform to the normal requirements of military service and satisfactorily perform their assigned duties. **(T-0)**.

29.5.3.2. Disciplinary authorities handle misconduct or failure to meet standards by these members as in any other situation.

29.5.3.3. The applicant is entitled to know why the AF or SF rejected the applicant's conscientious objector request. The rationale behind a conscientious objector rejection must be part of the record. **(T-0)**.

29.5.4. Notifying Selective Service When a Conscientious Objector Member Has Not Completed 180 Days of Active Duty. During conscription, discharge of bona fide conscientious objectors (1-O classification or 1-A-O, with directed discharge in accordance with [paragraph 29.5.1](#)) with less than 180 days of service is early enough to permit them to serve their remaining service time in the civilian work program administered by Selective Service System.

29.5.4.1. The FSS or Career Development Element of the MPF promptly notifies the Selective Service System of the date of discharge from military service and of the fact that the individual has not completed 180 days of active duty. **(T-0)**.

29.5.4.2. The FSS or Career Development Element of the MPF prepares the discharge notification for the immediate commander's signature and sends it to the Director of the Selective Service System, National Headquarters, Selective Service System, Washington DC 20435. **(T-0)**.

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