

If you are a veteran who has been honorably discharged from service you may file your separation papers (commonly referred to as a DD214) with the Suffolk County Clerk. There is no fee to file this paper with the County Clerk. Pursuant to law, certified copies of your papers are accepted in New York State instead of an original. There is no cost to obtain one certified copy of the DD214.

Veterans wishing to file or access a previously filed DD214 must go to the Court Actions Department of the Suffolk County Clerk's Office located at 310 Center Drive, Riverhead, New York 11901. The original DD214 must be presented to the County Clerk when filing same. If your DD214 was already filed in another county in New York State, it may not be filed again in Suffolk or any other county in New York State.

A change in Military Law § 250 in 2005 prohibits public access to the DD214 of veterans or the contents of those papers. Because of this change, only certain individuals may access and obtain copies of the DD214. Those persons are:

1. the veteran;
2. the parent of the veteran;
3. the spouse, dependent or child of the veteran;
4. the representative of the estate of a deceased veteran;
5. a public official, acting within the scope of his or her employment; or
6. a person authorized in writing by the veteran.

Pursuant to Civil Rights Law § 79-g, a veteran may also request that the County Clerk seal their DD214. This request must be made in writing. In the event this request is made, the only persons who may access and obtain copies of the DD214 of the veteran are:

1. the veteran;
2. a duly authorized agent or representative of such veteran; or
3. the representative of the estate of a deceased veteran.

To obtain access to or copies of a DD214, the person requesting must provide the following:

1. the veteran shall provide valid photo identification issued by a government agency.
2. the parent of the veteran shall provide a certified copy of the death certificate of the veteran (only if the veteran is deceased), a certified copy of the birth certificate of the veteran and valid photo identification issued by a government agency.
3. the spouse of a veteran shall provide a certified copy of the death certificate of the veteran (only if the veteran is deceased), a certified copy of the marriage certificate with the veteran and valid photo identification issued by a government agency.
4. a child of a veteran shall provide a certified copy of the death certificate of the veteran (only if the veteran is deceased), a certified copy of the birth certificate of the child or an order or other proof of adoption of the child by the veteran (as applicable), and valid photo identification issued by a government agency.

5. a dependent shall provide a certified copy of the death certificate of the veteran (only if the veteran is deceased), proof the person requesting is a dependent of the veteran and valid photo identification issued by a government agency.
6. the representative of the estate of the veteran shall provide a certified copy of the death certificate of the veteran, letters testamentary or administration or other court order appointing the person as the representative of the estate of the veteran and valid photo identification issued by a government agency.
7. a public official shall provide proof of employment as such, the reason access is being sought and that same is within their scope of employment and valid photo identification issued by a government agency.
8. an authorized individual shall present an original notarized document executed by the veteran authorizing the individual to access or obtain copies of the DD214 (for example, a power of attorney) and valid photo identification issued by a governmental agency.

Where time is of the essence and a parent is seeking a copy of their child's DD214, copies of two (2) of the following must be provided:

- 1) Birth certificate of the veteran;
- 2) Death Certificate of the veteran;
- 3) Baptismal certificate of the veteran;
- 4) Marriage certificate or marriage license of the veteran (only if includes parental information);
- 5) Court Order or Judgment establishing paternity, child support, custody, adoption or name change of the veteran as an infant;
- 6) Signed beneficiary designation form, including social security number and/or date of birth of the veteran and requester, expressly indicating that the requester is the parent of the veteran;
- 7) Will, health care proxy or power of attorney which expressly indicates that the requester is the parent of the veteran;
- 8) Police Report indicating requester is the parent of the veteran;
- 9) School enrollment documents.

If the photo identification of the requester does not match the name in a certificate or other proof of relationship submitted, **additional proof must** be provided showing that the requester is the person named in the certificate(s). A spouse, in this case, must also provide proof they are still married to the veteran.

Proof of a requester's social security number will also be needed for verification of the requester's identity whenever any document submitted as proof of relationship contains the social security number of the requester as an identifier.

Should you have any questions, please contact the County Clerk at 631-852-2000 x852.