

Membership Guidelines

APPROVED:

Kevin Harry, President: _____

John D. Campbell, Secretary: _____

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish the Special Forces Association policy for applying for membership in the Special Forces Association.
2. **SCOPE:** This policy applies to all members within the Association and is governed by Article IV, Membership, Section II of the Special Forces Association Constitution (Qualifications for types of membership).
3. **NEW MEMBERS:** It is important to verify eligibility to join the Special Forces Association and/or to remain a member of the Special Forces Association. The Special Forces Association Constitution, Article IV, Section II, Paragraphs A through D, defines the requirements that individuals applying for membership in the Special Forces Association must satisfy and the supporting documentation required when applying for membership. Personal statements do not constitute documentation for the purpose of becoming a member of the Special Forces Association. The following guidelines are provided:

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION

A. Decade Membership (completed application):

- (1) Must include documentation that reflects without question, award of Special Forces Skill Identifiers "3", "S", "5G", CMF 18/180, or Special Forces Tab. This documentation can be found on DD214, DA Form 20, Officers Record Brief (ORB), Enlisted Records Brief (ERB), Documentation provided must leave no doubt that the applicant is Special Forces qualified.
- (2) Must include documentation that reflects ten (10) years of Special Forces assignments or a combination of Special Forces assignments and Special Forces Association membership. Special Forces Assignments begin after award of Special Forces Skill Identifier or Special Forces Tab. This information can be found on DA Form 20, ORB, ERB, and assignment orders.

- (3) General members who wish to be recognized as decade members must submit a request for change in status to the Special Forces Association.

B. General Membership (completed application):

Must include documentation that reflects without question, award of Special Forces Skill Identifiers “3”, “S”, “5G”, CMF 18/180, or Special Forces Tab. This information can be found on DD214, D A Form 20, ORB, ERB, or award orders. Documentation provided must leave no doubt that the applicant is Special Forces Qualified.

C. Associate Membership (completed application):

- (1) Associate Membership may be granted only to those individuals who have contributed **significantly** to the accomplishment of an OCONUS mission of a deployed Special Forces regimental unit.
- (2) “Significant” is defined as verifiable contributions by a non-Special Forces qualified individual who has served as a member of the United States Armed Forces while assigned or attached as an integral part of an OCONUS deployed Special Forces unit that has a significant effect on the accomplishment of that unit’s mission.
- (3) Associate membership is awarded based on individual actions, support, and must be substantiated, in writing by soldiers who are Special Forces Qualified and served with the applicant in an OCONUS deployed Special Forces unit. Simply being assigned or attached to a Special Forces unit is not sufficient.
 - (a) The Center of Military History, United States Army lists the following units as Special Forces units.
 - (b) The 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, First Regiment, First Special Service Force, a combined Canadian-American organization, activated 9 July 1942 at Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana, disbanded 6 January 1945 in France.
 - (c) Service in accordance with the activation and deactivation history for 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne), Special Forces Group(s), Special Forces Companies, and Special Forces Detachments.
- (4) Applications must include:
 - (a) Verification of service and proof of assignment/attachment to a Special Forces unit (DD 214/215, DA Form 20, ORB, ERB or Deployment Orders). A copy of orders assigning or attaching the applicant to a Special Forces Group are required in the application packet.

- (b) Affidavits or letters of recommendation from two Special Forces Qualified Soldiers (preferably Special Forces Members of the Special Forces Association in good standing) which clearly define the significant contributions provided by the applicant.

- (5) Due to the limitations for membership in the Special Forces Association an IRS 501(c)19 Veteran's Service Organization rules and the make-up of the current membership mix (Decade, General, Associate) all Associate Member applicants must have been a member of the United States Armed Forces (a U.S. Veteran currently serving or who has served honorably). In accordance with the current Internal Revenue Service guidelines for 501(c)19 organizations the number of non-U.S. Armed Forces Veterans cannot exceed 2.5% of the total membership of any organization. A Veteran, for purposes of this policy shall be defined as "anyone who is serving or has served in the United States Armed Forces, and if retired or separated, said retirement or separation is under Honorable Conditions.

- (6) The following time guidelines will be used by the membership committee when evaluating Associate Membership applications for inclusion in the Special Forces Association
 - (a) Performance while assigned or attached to a Special Forces Unit in a combat zone.

 - (b) Performance while assigned or attached to an OCONUS mission of a deployed Special Forces unit.

- (7) Any changes in policy will not affect the status of current Special Forces Association members.

- (8) EXCEPTIONS: Currently, the only exceptions to the foregoing policy pertains to Widows of passed Special Forces Association Members in good standing at the time of death, and Next of Kin of passed Special Forces Association Members in good standing at the time of death.

- (9) Special Instructions:
 - (a) Ensure the social security number of the applicant is provided on all applications. The applicant signs a waiver statement allowing release of information and records bearing on their military service for the purpose of validating membership (a social security number and date of birth is required to do so). Failure to accurately provide all required information renders the application for membership invalid and it will not be further considered by the membership committee.

- (b) Applications for Decade Membership may be processed as General member applications if sufficient documentation is not provided to substantiate Decade eligibility.
 - (c) Membership eligibility (Decade, General, Associate) will be determined in accordance with the Special Forces Constitution Article IV, Membership.
 - (d) New member applications submitted without sufficient documentations will be disapproved. The applicant will be notified and no further action will be taken by the Membership Committee until proper documentation is provided. The suspense time granted for submission of appropriate documentation is thirty (30) calendar days from the date of receipt at Special Forces National Headquarters. Upon expiration of the thirty (30) calendar day grace period, the application will be disapproved and the individual will be notified they must resubmit a complete application for further consideration.
- 4. RENEWAL/REINSTATEMENTS:** Renewal and Reinstatement Applicants must provide **MEMBER NUMBER, PAYMENT FOR ALL DUES REQUIRED,** and include **ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, and EMAIL ADDRESS,** if this information has not changed since the last renewal/reinstatement, this requirement is waived. The dues renewal form is published in the fall and winter DROP and available on the Special Forces Association web site. This form may be used for both renewal and reinstatement purposes.