

# Launching Your Reserve Judge Advocate Career

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At this time, the U.S. Navy Reserve does not offer direct appointments for Judge Advocate General (JAG) Officers directly into the Reserve. If you are currently a judge advocate, you may qualify to become a reserve judge advocate. Read these frequently asked questions for more information.

## **Release from Active Duty**

*As a USNR JAG Lieutenant just released from active duty, what is my reserve status?*

Navy Judge Advocate lieutenants enter the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) upon release from active duty. You are not required to drill. You can earn "points" toward retirement in the IRR, by correspondence courses and periods of annual training.

*Will I be considered for promotion while in the IRR?*

Yes. You are on the Reserve lineal list, whether you stay in the IRR or join a Reserve unit. Promotion zones for the next fiscal year are announced each December. The LT/LCDR JAG reserve selection board meets in September. When in zone, your record -- active and reserve -- goes before the board. You compete with all other IRR and drilling Reserve JAGs in the zone, as well as those above zone. If you stay in the IRR and do not actively drill, you are at a disadvantage in selection for promotion.

## **Becoming a Drilling Reservist**

*My civilian job is very demanding. What requirements must I meet as a drilling reservist?*

As a rule, Reserve drills last four hours. Four drills fill a typical drill weekend, Saturday and Sunday, 0730-1630. You drill the equivalent of one weekend a month (48 drills per fiscal year). In a pay billet, you may also be required to accomplish two weeks of annual training (AT) each fiscal year.

*Am I paid for drills?*

Some JAG billets are Selected Reserve "pay billets," where you are paid for drills and annual training. Pay for one drill equals basic pay for one active duty day, which means a day with two drills merits pay for two active duty days. Annual training authorizes day-for-day basic pay and allowances. When pay billets are not available, you can fully

participate in the Reserve and earn retirement points by joining a VTU (Volunteer Training Unit), which drills regularly like a Selected Reserve unit. During your Reserve career, you may be in and out of pay status several times.

*How do I change from IRR status to drilling status?*

Reserve recruiters -- assigned at most reserve centers -- process transfers from IRR to drilling status. Currently, most JAGs first join a VTU unit and when a pay billet opens, they transfer to a pay unit.

*How can I learn about available JAG billets?*

Contact the Staff Judge Advocate for the appropriate regional readiness command. The SJA is both counsel to the Readiness Commander and the JAG program manager for the region. You can also contact the COs of JAG reserve units. Both the active and reserve JAG directories list these SJAs and COs.

*Am I reimbursed for travel to drills?*

Travel from home to drills is not reimbursed (unless specifically authorized by orders). If you live over 50 miles from the drill site, you may use Navy-paid "contract berthing", usually sharing a hotel room with another reservist.

*Where are drills performed?*

To the maximum extent, JAG units drill on-site at their "gaining command", the active duty command where unit members would mobilize. Pay units may travel regularly for 4-day or 6-day weekends. These extended weekends enable reservists to work directly with active duty JAGs, while fulfilling drill requirements for two or three months. In the future, more units will have "flexible drills" where members drill during the normal workweek for several days at a time.

*Am I reimbursed for travel to my gaining command for drills?*

Travel away from the Reserve Center to the gaining command for drills are "IDTT" (inactive duty training/travel). Funded IDTT includes reimbursement for travel. "No cost" IDTT does not reimburse travel expenses, but a reservist is never required to accept no-cost travel orders.

*Am I limited to billets in the region where I live?*

No. If you will pay for your own travel to the drill site, you can be considered for any billet.

## **Earning Drill Credit**

*If I complete 20 "good" years in the Reserve, when do retirement payments begin?*

At age 60. Full-time active duty time, of course, also counts toward retirement.

*What is a "good" year for reserve retirement?*

To have a "good" or "qualifying" year for retirement purposes, you must earn at least 50 points during your anniversary year.

*Is my anniversary year the same as a fiscal year?*

No. Your anniversary year starts on the day and month you first affiliated with the Naval Reserve. If you have been USNR throughout your career, this date will likely match your Pay Entry Base Date.

*How do I earn retirement points?*

You receive 15 gratuitous points each year just for being in the Reserve. The remaining minimum 35 points can be earned by: 1) drills (pay or non-pay); 2) correspondence courses; or, 3) periods of active duty (such as annual training). Each drill earns one point. One day of active duty earns one point. Correspondence courses vary in point value.

*What is the maximum number of points I can earn in a year?*

The maximum from drills and correspondence courses is 75 points per anniversary year. Active duty has no point ceiling by category, but the maximum from all sources is 365 points per anniversary year.