Hidden on practically every veteran’s DD-214 discharge papers are secret code letters and numbers called Separation Program Numbers (SPN numbers) that might make obtaining veterans benefits difficult if not impossible. Here are these secret numeric codes that may make a difference in your future.

These codes are contained in your military records and may be annotated on various military separation documents. These codes are subject to change, and the Department of Defense will no longer allow the military services to release the meanings of these codes to the general public. The below definitions were obtained before this prohibition went into effect.

201 – Enlisted Personnel – Expiration of term of service (includes personnel on ADT as initial trainees)
21L – Enlisted Personnel – Separation for good & sufficient reason when determined by secretarial authority
21T – Enlisted Personnel – Release of REP 63 trainees due to emergency conditions. (Does not apply to active duty.)
21U – Separation for failure to demonstrate adequate potential for promotion
202 – Expiration of term of enlistment
203 – Expiration of term of active obligated service
205 – Release from active & transferred to reserve
209 – Release from Active Duty within 3 mos of expiration of USN service
210 – Separation for failure to demonstrate adequate potential for promotion
212 – Honorable wartime service subsequent to desertion
213 – Discharge for retirement as an officer
214 – To accept commission as an officer in the Army, or to accept recall to active duty as an Army Reserve officer
215 – To accept appointment as warrant officer in the Army or to accept recall to active duty as Army Reserve warrant officer
217 – To accept commission or appointment in the Armed Forces of the United States (other than Army)
219 – Erroneous induction
220 – Marriage, female only
221 – Pregnancy
222 – Parenthood
225 – Minority/under age
226 – Dependency
227 – Hardship
229 – Sole surviving son and surviving family members
230 – Retirement after 20 years but less than 30 years active federal service
231 – Retirement after 30 years active federal service
238 – Service retirement in lieu of other administrative action
239 – Surviving family members
240 – Unconditional resignation of enlisted personnel serving on unspecified enlistment
241 – Resignation of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment in lieu of resignation for misconduct or inefficiency
242 – Resignation of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment for the good of the service
243 – Resignation of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment in lieu of board of action when based on unfitness
244 – Resignation of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment in lieu of board action when based on unsuitability
245 – Resignation of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment in lieu of separation for disloyalty or subversion
246 – Discharge for the good of the service
247 – Unsuitability, multiple reasons
248 – Unsuitability
249 – Resignation (Class II homosexual) of personnel on unspecified enlistment
250 – Punitive discharge. Class I homosexual – general court martial
251 – Punitive discharge. Class I homosexual – general court martial
252 – Punitive discharge. Class I homosexual – general or special court martial
253 – Homosexual – board action
255 – Retirement in lieu of discharge under AR 635-89 (homosexuality). Rescinded

OR

255 – Punitive discharge. Class II homosexual – general court martial
256 – Homosexual, acceptance of discharge in lieu of board action
257 – Unfitness, homosexual acts
258 – Unfitness, ineptitude
258 – Unfitness, multiple reasons
260 – Unsuitability, inaptitude
261 – Inaptitude — illiterate

OR

261 – Psychiatric or psychoneurotic disorder
262 – Behavioral disorder, Bedwetter
263 – Bedwetter
264 – Unsuitability, character and behavioral disorders
265 – Unsuitability, character disorder
270 – Placed on temporary disability retired list

OR

270 – Release from EAD and revert to retired list at ETS
271 – Permanently retired by reason of physical disability
273 – Physical disability with entitlement to receive severance pay
274 – Physical disability resulting from international misconduct or willful neglect or incurred during period of unauthorized absence. Not entitled to severance pay
276 – Released from EAD & revert to retired list prior to ETS
277 – Physical disability, EPTS (existing prior to service), established by medical board. Discharged by reason of physical disability upon application by individual. Not entitled to severance pay
278 – Physical disability, EPTS, established by physical evaluation board proceedings. Not entitled to severance pay
279 – Release from EAD & revert to retired list at ETS
28B – Unfitness, frequent involvement in incidents of a discreditable nature with civil or military authorities
28E – Financial irresponsibility
28F – Established pattern for showing dishonorable failure to pay just debts
28G – Unfitness, an established pattern for showing dishonorable failure to contribute adequate support to dependents or failure to comply with order, decrees, or judgment of a civil court concerning support of dependents
280 – Misconduct/fraudulent entry into the Army (enlistee not revealing criminal record)

OR

281 – Unsanitary habits
282 – Misconduct/prolonged unauthorized absence for more than one year desertion
283 – Misconduct/AWOL trial waived or deemed inadvisable
284 – Misconduct/convicted or adjudged a juvenile offender by a civil court during current term of active military service
285 – Initially adjudged a juvenile offender by a civil court during current term of active military service. Rescinded.
290 – Desertion (court martial)
293 – Other than desertion (court martial)
293 – General court martial
294 – Special court martial
311 – Alien without legal residence in the United States
312 – Separation of members of Reserve components on active duty who, due to age, would be precluded from attaining eligibility pay as provided by 10 USC 1331.1337
313 – To immediately enlist or reenlist
314 – Importance to national health, safety or interest
316 – Release, lack of jurisdiction
318 – Conscientious objection
319 – Erroneous enlistment
320 – To accept employment law enforcement agency
333 – Discharge of Cuban volunteers upon completion of specified training. Rescinded.
344 – Release of Cuban volunteers upon completion of specified training. Rescinded.
367 – Aggressive reaction
370 – Released from EAD by reason of physical disability & revert to inactive status for the purpose of retirement under Title 10. USC Sections 1331 – 1337, in lieu of discharge with entitlement to receive severance pay
375 – Discharge because of not meeting medical fitness standards at time of enlistment
376 – Release from military Control (void Inductions) because of not meeting medical fitness standards at time of induction
377 – Non – fulfillment of enlistment commitment
38A – Desertion/trial deemed inadvisable (WW2) Rescinded
38B – Desertion/trial deemed inadvisable (peacetime desertion) Rescinded
38C – Desertion/trial deemed inadvisable (Korean War). Rescinded
380 – Desertion/trial barred by 10 USC Section 834 (Art 34 UCMJ). Rescinded
351 – Desertion/trial deemed inadvisable (Spanish – American War/ WWII). Rescinded
383 – Criminalism
41A – Apathy, lack of interest
41C – To accept a teaching position
41D – Discharge of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment who completed 20 years active federal service, do not submit application for retirement: commander determines discharge will be in best interest of the government
41E – Obesity
411 – Early separation of overseas returnee
412 – Enlisted members of medical holding detachments or units who, upon completion of hospitalization, do not intend to immediately enlist or reenlistment in the regular Army
413 – To enter or return to college, university, or equivalent institution
414 – To accept or return to employment of a seasonal nature
415 – Early release of inductees who have served on active duty prior their present tour of duty
416 – Physical disqualification for duty in MOS
418 – Discharge of enlisted personnel in unspecified enlistment who complete 30 years active federal service and do not submit application for retirement

419 – Discharge of enlisted personnel on unspecified enlistment over 55 years of age who have completed 20 years active federal service & do not submit application for retirement

420 – Discharge or release of individuals with less than 3 months remaining to serve who fail to continue as students (academic failure) at service academies

421 – Early release at Christmas will be issued as appropriate by Army & has been included in separation edit table. Rescinded

422 – Early release at original ETS of enlisted personnel who have executed a voluntary extension. Rescinded

423 – Early release after original ETS of personnel serving on voluntary extension. Rescinded

424 – Separation at ETS after completing a period of voluntary extension. Rescinded

425 – Discharge (Inductees) to enlist as Warrant Officer Flight Training

426 – Discharge (Inductees) to enlist to attend critical MOS school

427 – Discharge (Inductees) to enlist for Officer Candidate School

428 – Discharge for failure to complete Officer Candidate School. School

429 – Discharged because of not meeting medical fitness standards for Flight training

430 – Early separation of personnel denied reenlistment under Qualitative Management Program

431 – Reduction in authorized strength

432 – Early release to serve 1 year in an ARNG or USAR unit

433 – Involuntary release of personnel on compassionate assignment

434 – Early release of AUS & first team RA Personnel – phase down release programs (Early – out from V’nam)

436 – Reduction in strength a USASA option/First Team

437 – AUS, RA First Team, exempted from 90 day suspension of Early Release Program for reasons for intolerable personal problems

440 – Separation for concealment of serious arrest record

46A – Unsuitability, apathy, defective attitudes & inability to extend effort constructively

46B Sexual deviate

46C – Apathy/obesity

460 – Emotional instability reaction

461 – Inadequate personality

463 – Paranoid personality

464 – Schizoid personality

469 – Unsuitability

480 – Personality disorder

482 – Desertion/trial barred by 10, USC, Sec. 843 (Art 43 UCMJ) Rescinded
488 – Unsuitability (general discharge separation)
489 – Military Personnel Security Program (disloyal or subversive)
500 – Resignation – hardship
501 – Resignation – national health, safety, or interest
502 – Resignation – completion of required service
503 – Resignation – enlistment in the regular Army – regular officer
504 – Resignation – withdrawal of ecclesiastical endorsement
505 – Resignation – serving under a suspended sentence or dismissal
508 – Resignation – to attend school
510 – Resignation – Interest of national security (in lieu of elimination)
51B – Resignation – In lieu of elimination because of unfitness or unacceptable conduct
522 – Resignation in lieu of elimination because of conduct triable by court martial or in lieu thereof
524 – Resignation – unqualified other miscellaneous reasons
528 – Resignation – marriage
529 – Resignation – pregnancy
530 – Resignation – parenthood (minor children)
536 – Voluntary discharge substandard performance of duty
539 – Voluntary discharge – termination of RA or AUS warrant to retire commissioned status
545 – Voluntary discharge – failure of selection for permanent promotion (commissioned officers)
546 – Involuntary discharge a failure of selection for permanent promotion (warrant officer)
550 – Involuntary discharge – reasons as specified by HDQA
551 – Involuntary discharge – administrative discharge GCM
554 – Dismissal – General court martial
555 – Involuntary discharge – failure to complete basic, Company officer or associate company officer course – USAR officers
556 – Failure to complete basic, company officer or associate company officer course – ARNGUS officers
558 – Voluntary discharge – conscientious objection
586 – Involuntary discharge – for reasons involving board action or in lieu thereof (homosexuality),
588 – Involuntary discharge – reasons involving board action, or in lieu thereof – unfitness or unacceptable conduct
589 – Voluntary discharge – reasons involving board action or in lieu thereof, due to substandard performance of duty
590 – Involuntary discharge – interest of national security
595 – Involuntary discharge pregnancy
596 – Involuntary discharge – parenthood (minor children)
597 – Voluntary discharge – administrative
599 – Voluntary REFRAD – lack of jurisdiction
600 – Voluntary REFRAD – to enlist an regular Army
601 – Voluntary REFRAD – to enlist in regular Army for purpose of retirement
602 – Voluntary REFRAD – national health, safety, or interest
603 – Involuntary REFRAD – due to disapproval of request for extension of service
604 – Voluntary REFRAD – hardship
606 – Voluntary REFRAD – dual status officer to revert to regular Warrant Officer
609 – Voluntary REFRAD – to attend school or accept a teaching position
610 – Voluntary REFRAD – marriage
611 – Voluntary REFRAD – expiration of the duty commitment voluntarily serving on active duty
612 – Voluntary REFRAD – expiration active duty commitment involuntary serving on active duty
616 – Voluntary REFRAD – selection for entrance to a service academy
618 – Voluntary REFRAD – In lieu of serving in lower grade than reserve grade
619 – Voluntary REFRAD – by request includes MC & DC officers
620 – Voluntary REFRAD – interde part mental transfer of other than medical officers
621 – Voluntary REFRAD – in lieu of unqualified resignation
623 – Voluntary REFRAD – interdepartmental transfer of medical officers
624 – Voluntary REFRAD – release from ADT to enter on 24 months active duty
625 – Voluntary REFRAD – annual screening, voluntary release prior to 90th day subsequent to receipt of notification
627 – Involuntary REFRAD – maximum age
631 – Involuntary REFRAD – failure of selector for permanent reserve promotion (discharged)
632 – Involuntary REFRAD – failure of selection for permanent reserve promotion (commission retained)
633 – Involuntary REFRAD – failures of selection for promotion, temporary
640 – Involuntary REFRAD – commissioned officer under sentence of dismissal & warrant officer discharge awaiting appellate review
644 – Voluntary & Involuntary REFRAD – convenience of government or as specified by Secretary of the Army
645 – Involuntary REFRAD – annual screening, release on 90th day subsequent to receipt of notification
646 – Involuntary REFRAD – maximum service, warrant officers
647 – Involuntary REFRAD – maximum service, commissioned officers
648 – Involuntary REFRAD – completion of prescribed years of service
649 – Involuntary REFRAD – withdrawal of ecclesiastical endorsement
650 – Involuntary REFRAD – physically disqualified upon order to active duty
651 – Involuntary REFRAD – release of reserve unit & return to reserve status
652 – Involuntary REFRAD a release of unit of NG or NG(US) & return to state control
655 – Involuntary REFRAD – revert to retired list, not by reason of physical disability
657 – Involuntary REFRAD – physical disability. Revert to inactive status for purpose of retirement under Chapter 67. 10 USC in lieu of discharge with entitlement to receive disability severance pay
660 – Physical disability discharge – entitlement to severance pay
661 – Physical disability discharge – disability resulting from intentional misconduct or willful neglect or incurred during a period of unauthorized absence. Not entitled to receive disability severance pay
662 – Physical disability discharge – EPTS, established by physical evaluation board. Not entitled to disability severance pay
668 – Dropped from rolls – AWOL conviction & confinement by civil authorities
669 – Dropped from rolls – AWOL desertion
672 – Involuntary REFRAD – medical service personnel who receive unfavorable background investigation and/or National Agency Check
681 – Voluntary REFRAD – to accept employment with a legally established law enforcement agency
685 – Resignation – failure to meet medical fitness standards at time of appointment
686 – Involuntary discharge – failure to resign under Chapter 16 – AR 535 – 120. when determined to be in the best interest of the government and the individual
689 – Voluntary REFRAD – reduction in strength, voluntary release prior to 90th day subsequent to receipt of notification
690 – Involuntary REFRAD – reduction in strength, release on 90th day subsequent to receipt of notification
70A – mandatory retirement – 35 years service/five years In grade. Regular army major general
70B – Mandatory retirement – age 62, regular army major general
70C – Mandatory retirement 60, regular Army mayor general whose retirement has been deferred
70D – Mandatory retirement – age 64, regular Army major general whose retirement has been deferred & each permanent professor and the registrar of the US Military Academy
70E – Mandatory retirement – 30 years service/five years in grade, regular army brigadier general
70F – Mandatory retirement 30 years of service/five years In grade, regular colonels
70G – Mandatory retirement – 28 years service. Regular Lt. Colonels
70J – Mandatory retirement – age 60, regular commissioned officer below major general
70K – Mandatory retirement – more than 30 years active service, professors US military Academy
70L – mandatory retirement – 30 years of more active service, regular warrant officers
70M – Mandatory retirement – age 62 regular warrant officers
701 – Enlisted separation – early release of personnel assigned to installations or units scheduled for inactivation, permanent change of station, or demobilization
741 – Mandatory retirement – failure of selection for promotion, established retirement date, commissioned officer
742 – Mandatory retirement – failure of selection for promotion, estab’d retirement date. warrant officer
743 – Enlisted separation – early release of personnel from release of unit of the ARNG or the ARNGUS from active federal service & return to state control
744 – Mandatory retirement – failure of selection for promotion, early retirement date, commissioned officer
745 – Mandatory retirement – failure of selection for promotion, early retirement date, warrant officers
747 – Mandatory retirement – failure of selection for promotion, retained for retirement, commissioned officers.
748 – Mandatory retirement – failure of selection for promotion, retained for retirement, warrant officer
749 – Enlisted separation – early release of Puerto Rican personnel who will to qualify for training
753 – Enlisted separation – early release of reserve personnel upon release of reserve units
764 – Enlisted separation – release of REP 63 trainees upon completion of MOS training
77E – Mandatory retirement – surplus in grade after 30 years service. Removal from acting list (regular Army)
77J – Voluntary retirement – placement on retired list at age 60
77M – Mandatory retirement – permanent retirement by reason by physical disability
77N – Mandatory retirement – paced on temporary mandatory solemnity retired list
77P – Voluntary retirement in lieu of or as a result of elimination board proceedings. Regular Army & reserve commissioned officers and Warrant officers
77C – andatory retirement – temporary disability retirement in lieu of or as a result of elimination proceedings
77R – Mandatory retirement – permanent disability retirement in lieu of or as a result or elimination proceedings
77S – Voluntary retirement a regular Army & reserve commissioned officers
77T – Voluntary retirement – regular Army and reserve warrant officer
77U – Voluntary retirement – regular Army commissioned officers with 30 or more years of service
77V – Voluntary retirement – enlisted personnel, voluntarily retired as commissioned officer
77W – Voluntary retirement – enlisted personnel, voluntarily retired as a warrant officer
77X – Voluntary retirement a warrant officer voluntarily retired as a commissioned officer
77Y – Mandatory retirement – retirement a director of music, USMA, as the President may direct
77Z – Mandatory retirement – commissioned officers, unfitness or substandard performance of duty
78A – Mandatory retirement a formerly retired other than for disability who while on active duty incurred a disability of at least 30%
78B – Mandatory retirement a formerly retired for disability who where on active duty suffered aggravation of disability for which he was formerly retired
79A – Voluntary REFRAD – as USAR warrant officer (aviator) to accept USAR commission (aviator) with concurrent active duty
79B – Resignation – as RA a WO (aviator) to accept USAR commission (aviator) with concurrent active duty
941 – Dropped from rolls (as deserter)
942 – Dropped from rolls (as military prisoner)
943 – Dropped from rolls (as missing or captured)
944 – Battle casualty
945 – Death (non – battle – resulting from disease)
940 – Death (non – battle – resulting from other than disease)
947 – (Current term of service voided as fraudulent enlisted, while AWOL from prior service
94B – To enter US military Academy
949 – To enter any area of the service academies (other than USMA)
971 – Erroneously reported as returned from dropped from rolls as a deserter (previously reports under
transaction GA)
972 – Erroneously reported as restored to duty from dropped from rolls of military prisoner previously
reported under transaction code GB)
973 – Erroneously reported as returned from dropped from rolls or missing or captured (previously
reported under transaction code GC)
976 – Minority. Void enlistment or induction – enlisted personnel