

## Armed Forces and Marine Corps Expeditionary Medals

The **Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM)** is a military award of the United States military which was first created on 4 December 1961 by the Executive Order 10977 of President John F. Kennedy.

Additional awards of the medal are denoted by service stars. Such arrowhead devices are authorized for United States Army personnel who are awarded the medal through participation in an airborne or amphibious assault. The Fleet Marine Force combat operation insignia is also authorized for certain sailors.<sup>[1]</sup>



### Criteria for issuance includes:

- a. The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal may be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who after 1 July 1958 participate as members of U.S. military units in a U.S. military operation in which service members of any Military Department participate, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), in significant numbers and encounter during such participation foreign armed opposition, OR are otherwise placed in such a position that in the opinion of the JCS, **hostile action by foreign armed forces was imminent even though it does not materialize.**
- b. **The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal may be authorized for three categories of operations: U.S. military operations; U.S. military operations in direct support of the United Nations; and U.S. operations of assistance to friendly foreign nations.**
- c. **The medal shall be awarded only for operations for which no other U.S. campaign medal is approved.**

**History** - Since its original conception over fifty years ago, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal has been awarded for United States participation in over forty five designated military campaigns. The first campaign of the AFEM was the Cuban Missile Crisis and the award was issued for military service between October 1962 and June 1963. Following this original issuance, the AFEM was made retroactive to 1958 and issued for actions in Quemoy and Matsu, Lebanon, Taiwan, Vietnam, **Republic of the Congo**, Laos and for duty in Berlin between 1961 and 1963.<sup>[2]</sup>

During the early years of the Vietnam “War,” the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal was issued for initial operations in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal was intended to replace the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal and Navy Expeditionary Medal.<sup>[3]</sup> In 1965, with the creation of the Vietnam Service Medal, the AFEM was discontinued for Vietnam War service. As the Vietnam Service Medal was retroactively authorized, those personnel who had previously received the AFEM were granted the option to exchange the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for the Vietnam Service Medal. In 1968, the AFEM was awarded for naval operations in defense of the USS Pueblo, which was seized by North Korea, as well as for Korean Service, as well as for Thailand and Cambodia operations in 1973. Because of these awards during the Vietnam “War” period, some military personnel have been awarded both the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal & the Vietnam Service Medal. After the close of the Vietnam “War,” the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal was issued for various military operations in Panama, Grenada, and Libya [Operation El Dorado].

The AFEM has been issued for numerous operations in the Persian Gulf, most notably Operation Earnest Will, which began in 1987 and lasted until the eve of Operation Desert Storm.<sup>[4]</sup> Following the close of Desert Storm,<sup>[5]</sup> and the engagement in peacekeeping and sanction missions against Iraq, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal was issued again for several operations such as Operation Northern Watch, Operation Southern Watch and Operation Vigilant Sentinel.

The medal is also authorized for several United Nations actions, such as peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Somalia. In 2003, with the creation of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the AFEM was discontinued for Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. After 18 March 2003, some personnel became eligible for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, as well as the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. Only one medal may be awarded, however, and individuals or units that deployed to the Gulf for Operation Southern Watch, and then immediately transitioned to Operation Iraqi Freedom, are not eligible for both medals.

Beginning in 1992 an effort was begun to phase out the AFEM in favor of campaign specific medals and the newly created Armed Forces Service Medal. To date, however, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal is still listed on official precedence charts and the award is still considered an active service medal.

### Ever amended “Approved operations:” <sup>[6]</sup>

- [Quemoy and Matsu Islands](#): 23 August 1956 - 1 June 1963
- [Lebanon](#): 1 July - 1 November 1958
- Taiwan Straits: 23 August 1958 - 1 January 1959
- Vietnam (General Service): 1 July 1958 - 3 July 1965
- [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#): 14 July 1960 - 1 September 1962
- Laos: 19 April 1961 - 7 October 1962
- Berlin: 14 August 1961 - 1 June 1963
- [Cuba](#): 24 October 1962 - 1 June 1963
- Congo: 23 - 27 November 1964
- Dominican Republic: 28 April 1965 - 21 September 1966
- Korea: 1 October 1966 - 30 June 1974; also eligible for the [Korean Defense Service Medal](#) for same timeframe as a DOD exception to policy
- Cambodia (Vietnam Support Operations): 29 March - 15 August 1973
- Cambodia (Evacuation-Operation Eagle Pull): 11 - 13 April 1975
- Thailand (Cambodia Support Operations): 29 March - 15 August 1973
- Vietnam (Evacuation [Operation Frequent Wind](#)): 29 - 30 April 1975; may exchange AFEM for [Vietnam Service Medal](#)
- [Mayagüez Operation](#): 15 May 1975
- El Salvador: 1 January 1981 - 1 February 1992
- Lebanon: 1 June 1983 - 1 December 1987
- Grenada ([Operation Urgent Fury](#)): 23 October - 21 November 1983
- Libya ([Operation El Dorado Canyon](#)): 12 - 17 April 1986
- Persian Gulf ([Operation Earnest Will](#)): 24 July 1987 - 1 August 1990
- Panama ([Operation Just Cause](#)): 20 December 1989 - 31 January 1990
- Somalia ([Operation Restore Hope](#), [Operation United Shield](#)): 5 December 1992 - 31 March 1995
- Haiti ([Operation Uphold Democracy](#)): 16 September 1994 - 31 March 1995
- Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia: 1 June 1992 - 20 June 1998
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, and Hungary ([Operation Joint Guard](#)): 20 December 1996 - 20 June 1998; also entitled to [Armed Forces Service Medal](#) for above same timeframe as an exception to policy
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Hungary, [former Yugoslavia](#), ([Operation Joint Endeavor](#)): 20 November 1995 - 19 December 1998; also entitled to [Armed Forces Service Medal](#) for same timeframe as a DOD exception to policy
- Southwest Asia ([Operation Southern Watch](#)): 1 December 1995 - 18 March 2003
- Southwest Asia (Maritime Intercept Operation): 1 December 1995 - 18 March 2003
- Southwest Asia ([Operation Vigilant Sentinel](#)): 1 December 1995 - 15 February 1997
- Southwest Asia ([Operation Northern Watch](#)): 1 January 1997 - 18 March 2003
- Southwest Asia ([Operation Desert Thunder](#)): 11 November - 22 December 1998
- Southwest Asia ([Operation Desert Fox](#)): 16 - 22 December 1998
- Southwest Asia ([Operation Desert Spring](#)): 31 December 1998 - 18 March 2003

- Yugoslavia ([Operation Joint Forge](#)): 21 June 1998 - 2 December 2004
- Haiti ([Operation Secure Tomorrow](#)): 29 February - 15 June 2004

**Similar awards** - The United States Navy equivalent of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal is known as the Navy Expeditionary Medal. In the modern age, service members authorized one of these medals are occasionally permitted to choose between receipt of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or the service specific expeditionary medal. The AFEM and the Navy/Marine Expeditionary Medal cannot be bestowed simultaneously for the same action.

## References

1. [Institute of Heraldry Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal](#)
2. [Air Force Personnel Center Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal](#)
3. [Service Medals and Campaign Credit of the United States Navy, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal](#)
4. Army Regulations 600-8-27 p. 26 paragraph 9-14
5. Army Regulations 600-8-27 p. 26 & 28
6. [578.25 Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal](#)
2. (US) Army Regulations 600-8-27 dated 2006

Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed\\_Forces\\_Expeditionary\\_Medal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed_Forces_Expeditionary_Medal)" and modified 12Jun2011.

The **Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal** is a decoration of the United States Marine Corps which was first created on 8 May 1919. Originally known as the *Marine Corps Expeditionary Ribbon*, a full-sized medal was authorized in July 1921 by Presidential Order of Warren G. Harding. The Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal is therefore one of the oldest decorations of the United States military which is still issued to active duty personnel.<sup>[1]</sup>

To be awarded the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal, personnel must have engaged in a landing on foreign territory, participated in combat operations against an opposing force, **OR must have participated in a designated operation for which no other service medal is authorized. After 1961, some commands permitted eligible personnel to choose between the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal OR the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal depending on the nature of the operation in question.**

Subsequent awards of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal were originally denoted by award numerals. After 1921, multiple awards were denoted by service stars. The Wake Island Device is authorized for any personnel who were awarded the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal as part of the defense of Wake Island during the opening days of the Second World War.

The United States Navy equivalent of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal is known as the Navy Expeditionary Medal.



SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGES. The first is GSA form 6994 dated 8Sep71, showing eligibility for the awards in question. The second is an EXAMPLE of the form you would now receive, and initiated in July 1991, indicating compliance with NAVPERS 1650/65. Entitlement is indicated by a check mark found within in the box adjacent to the medal or ribbon.

TRANSMITTAL OF AND/OR ENTITLEMENT TO AWARDS

DATE SEP 8, 71  
BRANCH OF SERVICE

NAME SERVICE NO./SSAN

SHEA, EDWARD JOSEPH 184 18 70

MARINE CORPS

- THE RECORDS SHOW THAT THE PERSON NAMED ABOVE IS ENTITLED TO THE FOLLOWING MEDALS.  
 THE FOLLOWING MEDALS AUTHORIZED FOR ISSUANCE ARE ENCLOSED.

	OAK LEAF CLUSTER		
	BRONZE	SILVER	
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS			AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL (Note 1)
BRONZE STAR MEDAL			ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN MEDAL (Note 1)
W/LETTER "V" DEVICE			EUROPEAN-AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN CAMPAIGN MEDAL (Note 1)
AIR MEDAL			WW II VICTORY MEDAL
PURPLE HEART			ARMY OF OCCUPATION MEDAL WITH GERMANY JAPAN CLASP BERLIN AIRLIFT DEVICE
			NAVY OCCUPATION MEDAL EUROPE ASIA CLASP
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL (Note 1)
			KOREAN SERVICE MEDAL (Note 1)
			UNITED NATIONS SERVICE MEDAL
DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION			VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL (Note 1)
AIR FORCE LONGEVITY SERVICE AWARD RIBBON			CHINA SERVICE MEDAL (EXTENDED)
AIR FORCE OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARD			ARMED FORCES RESERVE MEDAL WITH HOUR GLASS DEVICE(S)
PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION			NAVAL RESERVE MEDAL
			ORGANIZED MARINE CORPS RESERVE MEDAL
NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION			MARINE CORPS RESERVE RIBBON
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL (Note 1) <u>CONGO*</u>
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARMED FORCES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARINE CORPS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NAVY
GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL AIR FORCE ARMY (See Note 5)			GOLD STAR LAPEL BUTTON PIN CLUTCH
COAST GUARD MARINE CORPS NAVY			PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (Note 2)
LOOPS: BRONZE SILVER			REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL (Note 3)
STARS: BRONZE SILVER (Note 1)			PHILIPPINE RIBBON (Note 4)
OAKLEAF CLUSTERS:			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>SHARPSHOOTER RIFLEMAN BADGE</u>
AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL WITH FLEET CLASP			
BASE CLASP BRONZE LETTER "A" (Note 1)			
FOREIGN SERVICE CLASP			

- NOTE: 1. Clasps and/or Stars for these awards are not issued by this Center but may be purchased from stores which sell military supplies.
2. This is an award of the Philippine/Korean/Vietnam government and is not issued by the United States government. There is no medal which accompanies this award, The ribbons may be purchased from the stores which sell military supplies.
3. This is an award of the Vietnam government. The medal is not issued by the United States government but may be purchased from stores selling military supplies.
4. This ribbon is not available for issuance by this Center, however, you may purchase it from stores which sell military supplies.
5. Air Force enlisted personnel who qualified for the award of the Good Conduct Medal on or before May 31, 1963, is awarded the Army Good Conduct Medal. The Air Force Good Conduct Medal is awarded for qualifying service completed on or after June 1, 1963. Since the above named person qualified for the Good Conduct Medal before June 1, 1963, he is entitled only to the Army Good Conduct Medal.

MEDALS THAT HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY ISSUED ARE INDICATED BY AN ASTERISK.

ENCLOSURE

NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER, GSA  
(Military Personnel Records)  
9700 Page Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63132

NCPM CG/ABG

P312STL

September 22, 1977

**EXAMPLE RECEIVED**

SHEA, EDWARD J

SERVICE NO./SSN

1841

BRANCH

USMC

RECORD GROUP

- A REVIEW OF THE RECORD INDICATES ENTITLEMENT TO THE FOLLOWING AWARDS.
- THE FOLLOWING AUTHORIZED AWARDS ARE ENCLOSED.
- PREVIOUSLY ISSUED AWARDS ARE INDICATED BY AN ASTERISK.
- SIGNATURE OF VETERAN IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF AWARDS.

- DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
- AIR MEDAL
- BRONZE STAR MEDAL
- PURPLE HEART MEDAL
- COMMENDATION MEDAL (NAVY/USCG)
- ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL (NAVY/USCG)
- LEGION OF MERIT MEDAL
- NAVY CROSS
- SILVER STAR MEDAL
- MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
- NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL

- GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

- NAVY
- MARCOR
- USCG

- WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL
- AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL (w/CLASP)
- AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL
- ASIATIC PACIFIC CAMPAIGN MEDAL
- EUROPEAN-AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN CAMPAIGN MEDAL
- NAVY OCCUPATION SERVICE MEDAL (w/CLASP)
- CHINA SERVICE MEDAL (EXTENDED)

- NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL
- SOUTHWEST ASIA SERVICE MEDAL
- KOREAN SERVICE MEDAL
- UNITED NATIONS SERVICE MEDAL
- EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL
- ARMED FORCES
- NAVY
- MARCOR Congo
- KOREAN DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

- VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL
- HUMANITARIAN SERVICE MEDAL

- PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION RIBBON
- NAVY/USCG UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON
- MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON
- NAVY "E" RIBBON
- COMBAT ACTION RIBBON
- GOLD STAR LAPEL BUTTON
- NAVY EXPERT RIFLE/PISTOL MEDAL

- ANARCTICA SERVICE MEDAL
- SELECTED MARINE CORPS RESERVE MEDAL
- PRISONER OF WAR MEDAL
- ARMED FORCES SERVICE MEDAL
- HONORABLE SERVICE LAPEL PIN (RUPTURED DUCK)
- DISCHARGE BUTTON

- USCG RESERVE GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL
- NAVAL REERVE MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL
- RESERVE MEDAL (ARMED FORCES/NAVY/MARCOR/CG)
- KUWAIT LIBERATION MEDAL (KUWAIT)
- PEARL HARBOR COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL
- REPUBLIC OF KOREA WAR SERVICE MEDAL

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR ISSUANCE

- SEA SERVICE DEPLOYMENT RIBBON
- BADGE
- NAVY/MARCOR OVERSEAS SERVICE RIBBON
- JOINT SERVICE MEDALS
- INSIGNIAS
- USCG EXPERT SHOT MEDAL
- USCG MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION
- USCG SPECIAL OPERATION SERVICE RIBBON
- USN / USCG ARCTIC SERVICE MEDAL

FOREIGN AWARDS

- PHILIPPINE RIBBON
- DEFENSE
- LIBERATION
- INDEPENDENCE
- PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (FOREIGN)
- PHILIPPINE
- REPUBLIC OF KOREA
- VIETNAM
- REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL
- REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM MERITORIOUS UNIT CITATION (Gallantry Cross Medal Color With Palm)
- REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM MERITORIOUS UNIT CITATION (Civil Actions Medal, First Class Color w/Palm)
- KUWAIT LIBERATION MEDAL (SAUDI)

COMMENTS: If medal is "Not In Stock", please resubmit your request after 90 days.

FOREIGN AWARDS, STAR ATTACHMENTS, BADGES AND SOME RIBBONS ARE NOT STOCKED/ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY, BUT MAY BE OBTAINED FROM A CIVILIAN DEALER OF MILITARY SUPPLIES. WE ARE ENCLOSED A LIST OF COMMERCIAL STORES THAT THE REQUESTOR MAY CONTACT FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE.

## REQUESTOR:

EDWARD SHEA

ST JAMES NY 11780

NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND  
 RETIRED RECORDS SECTION  
 PERS 312D2  
 9700 PAGE AVENUE  
 ST LOUIS MO 63132-5000