

by the Secretary concerned. An officer subject to retirement under section 635 or 636 of this title who is serving in a grade above major general or rear admiral may have his retirement deferred and be continued on active duty by the President.

(3) Any deferral of retirement and continuation on active duty under this subsection shall be for a period not to exceed five years, except as provided under section 1251 or 1253 of this title.

(c) Continuation of an officer on active duty under this section pursuant to the action of a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title is subject to the approval of the Secretary of the military department concerned. The period of the continuation on active duty of an officer under this section may be reduced by the Secretary concerned in the case of any officer as provided in section 638a of this title.

(d) For purposes of this section, a period of continuation on active duty under this section expires or is completed on the earlier of (1) the date originally established for the termination of such period, or (2) the date established for the termination of such period by any shortening of such period under section 638a of this title.

(e) The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe regulations for the administration of this section.

(Added Pub. L. 96-513, title I, §105, Dec. 12, 1980, 94 Stat. 2863; amended Pub. L. 97-22, §4(e), July 10, 1981, 95 Stat. 127; Pub. L. 97-86, title IV, §405(b)(1), Dec. 1, 1981, 95 Stat. 1105; Pub. L. 98-525, title XIV, §1405(15), Oct. 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2622; Pub. L. 99-145, title V, §514(b)(1), Nov. 8, 1985, 99 Stat. 628; Pub. L. 101-510, div. A, title V, §521(b)(1), Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1561; Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title V, §504, Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 95.)

#### AMENDMENTS

2008—Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 110-181 substituted “except as provided under section 1251 or 1253 of this title” for “but such period may not (except as provided under section 1251(b) of this title) extend beyond the date of the officer’s sixty-second birthday”.

1990—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 101-510, §521(b)(1)(A), inserted at end “The period of the continuation on active duty of an officer under this section may be reduced by the Secretary concerned in the case of any officer as provided in section 638a of this title.”

Subsecs. (d), (e). Pub. L. 101-510, §521(b)(1)(B), (C), added subsec. (d) and redesignated former subsec. (d) as (e).

1985—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 99-145 substituted “rear admiral (lower half)” for “commodore”.

1984—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 98-525, §1405(15)(A), substituted “20” for “twenty”.

Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 98-525, §1405(15)(B), substituted “24” for “twenty-four”.

1981—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 97-22, §4(e)(1), substituted “section 633 or 634” for “section 633, 634, 635, or 636”.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 97-86 substituted “commodore” for “commodore admiral”.

Pub. L. 97-22, §4(e)(2), inserted provision that an officer subject to retirement under section 635 or 636 of this title who is serving in the grade of brigadier general, commodore admiral, major general, or rear admiral may, subject to the needs of the service, have his retirement deferred and be continued on active duty by the Secretary concerned and struck out requirement that the deferral of the retirement of an officer subject to retirement under section 635 or 636 of this title serv-

ing in a grade above major general or rear admiral was subject to the needs of the service.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1981 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 97-86 effective Sept. 15, 1981, see section 405(f) of Pub. L. 97-86, set out as a note under section 101 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Subchapter effective Sept. 15, 1981, but the authority to prescribe regulations under this subchapter effective on Dec. 12, 1980, see section 701 of Pub. L. 96-513, set out as an Effective Date of 1980 Amendment note under section 101 of this title.

#### TRANSITION PROVISIONS UNDER DEFENSE OFFICER PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ACT

For provisions to prevent extinction or premature termination of rights, duties, penalties, or proceedings that existed or were begun prior to the effective date of Pub. L. 96-513 and otherwise to allow for an orderly transition to the system of officer personnel management put in place under Pub. L. 96-513, see section 601 et seq. of Pub. L. 96-513, set out as a note under section 611 of this title.

### § 638. Selective early retirement

(a)(1) A regular officer on the active-duty list of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps may be considered for selective early retirement by a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title if the officer is described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (D) as follows:

(A) An officer holding the regular grade of lieutenant colonel or commander who has failed of selection for promotion to the grade of colonel or, in the case of an officer of the Navy, captain two or more times and whose name is not on a list of officers recommended for promotion.

(B) An officer holding the regular grade of colonel or, in the case of an officer of the Navy, captain who has served at least four years of active duty in that grade and whose name is not on a list of officers recommended for promotion.

(C) An officer holding the regular grade of brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half) who has served at least three and one-half years of active duty in that grade and whose name is not on a list of officers recommended for promotion.

(D) An officer holding the regular grade of major general or rear admiral who has served at least three and one-half years of active duty in that grade.

(2) The Secretary of the military department concerned shall specify the number of officers described in paragraphs (1)(A) and (1)(B) which a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title may recommend for early retirement. Such number may not be more than 30 percent of the number of officers considered in each grade in each competitive category.

(3) A regular officer on the active-duty list of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps may also be considered for early retirement under the circumstances prescribed in section 638a of this title.

(b)(1)(A) An officer in a grade below brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half) who is recommended for early retirement under this sec-

tion or section 638a of this title and whose early retirement is approved by the Secretary concerned shall be retired, under any provision of law under which he is eligible to retire, on the date requested by him and approved by the Secretary concerned, which date shall be not later than the first day of the seventh calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approves the report of the board which recommended the officer for early retirement.

(B) If an officer described in subparagraph (A) is not eligible for retirement under any provision of law, the officer shall be retained on active duty until the officer is qualified for retirement under section 3911, 6323, or 8911 of this title, and then be retired under that section, unless the officer is sooner retired or discharged under some other provision of law, with such retirement under that section occurring not later than the later of the following:

(i) The first day of the month beginning after the month in which the officer becomes qualified for retirement under that section.

(ii) The first day of the seventh calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approves the report of the board which recommended the officer for early retirement.

(2) An officer who holds the regular grade of brigadier general, major general, rear admiral (lower half), or rear admiral who is recommended for early retirement under this section and whose early retirement is approved by the Secretary concerned shall be retired, under any provision of law under which he is eligible to retire, on the date requested by him and approved by the Secretary concerned, which date shall be not later than the first day of the tenth calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approved the report of the board which recommended the officer for early retirement.

(3)(A) The Secretary concerned may defer for not more than three months the retirement of an officer otherwise approved for early retirement under this section or section 638a of this title in order to prevent a personal hardship to the officer or for other humanitarian reasons. Any such deferral shall be made on a case-by-case basis considering the circumstances of the case of the particular officer concerned. The authority of the Secretary to grant such a deferral may not be delegated.

(B) An officer recommended for early retirement under paragraph (1)(A) or section 638a of this title, if approved for deferral under subparagraph (A), shall be retired on the date requested by the officer, and approved by the Secretary concerned, which date shall be not later than the first day of the tenth calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approves the report of the board which recommended the officer for early retirement.

(C) The Secretary concerned may defer the retirement of an officer otherwise approved for early retirement under paragraph (1)(B), but in no case later than the first day of the tenth calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approves the report of

the board which recommended the officer for early retirement.

(D) An officer recommended for early retirement under paragraph (2), if approved for deferral under subparagraph (A), shall be retired on the date requested by the officer, and approved by the Secretary concerned, which date shall be not later than the first day of the thirteenth calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approves the report of the board which recommended the officer for early retirement.

(c) So long as an officer in a grade below brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half) holds the same grade, he may not be considered for early retirement under this section more than once in any five-year period.

(d) The retirement of an officer pursuant to this section shall be considered to be an involuntary retirement for purposes of any other provision of law.

(e)(1) The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe regulations for the administration of this section.

(2)(A) Such regulations shall require that when the Secretary of the military department concerned submits a list of officers to a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title to consider officers for selection for early retirement under this section, such list (except as provided in subparagraph (B)) shall include each officer on the active-duty list in the same grade and competitive category whose position on the active-duty list is between that of the most junior officer in that grade and competitive category whose name is submitted to the board and that of the most senior officer in that grade and competitive category whose name is submitted to the board.

(B) A list under subparagraph (A) may not include an officer in that grade and competitive category (i) who has been approved for voluntary retirement under section 3911, 6323, or 8911 of this title, or (ii) who is to be involuntarily retired under any provision of law during the fiscal year in which the selection board is convened or during the following fiscal year.

(C) An officer not considered by a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title by reason of subparagraph (B) shall be retired on the date approved for the retirement of that officer as of the convening date of such selection board unless the Secretary concerned approves a modification of such date in order to prevent a personal hardship for the officer or for other humanitarian reasons.

(Added Pub. L. 96-513, title I, §105, Dec. 12, 1980, 94 Stat. 2864; amended Pub. L. 97-22, §4(f), July 10, 1981, 95 Stat. 127; Pub. L. 97-86, title IV, §405(b)(1), Dec. 1, 1981, 95 Stat. 1105; Pub. L. 99-145, title V, §514(b)(1), Nov. 8, 1985, 99 Stat. 628; Pub. L. 100-456, div. A, title V, §504, Sept. 29, 1988, 102 Stat. 1967; Pub. L. 101-510, div. A, title V, §521(b)(2), Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1561; Pub. L. 102-190, div. A, title V, §503(a), Dec. 5, 1991, 105 Stat. 1355; Pub. L. 103-160, div. A, title V, §506, Nov. 30, 1993, 107 Stat. 1646; Pub. L. 104-106, div. A, title V, §504(b), Feb. 10, 1996, 110 Stat. 295; Pub. L. 113-291, div. A, title V, §502(b), Dec. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 3354.)

## AMENDMENTS

2014—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 113-291, § 502(b)(1), added par. (1) and struck out former par. (1) which read as follows: “An officer in a grade below brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half) who is recommended for early retirement under this section or section 638a of this title and whose early retirement is approved by the Secretary concerned shall—

“(A) be retired, under any provision of law under which he is eligible to retire, on the date requested by him and approved by the Secretary concerned, which date shall be not later than the first day of the seventh calendar month beginning after the month in which the Secretary concerned approves the report of the board which recommended the officer for early retirement; or

“(B) if the officer is not eligible for retirement under any provision of law, be retained on active duty until he is qualified for retirement under section 3911, 6323, or 8911 of this title, and then be retired under that section, unless he is sooner retired or discharged under some other provision of law.”

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 113-291, § 502(b)(2), designated existing provisions as subpar. (A), substituted “three months” for “90 days”, and added subpars. (B) to (D).

1996—Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 104-106 added par. (3).

1993—Subsec. (e)(2)(B). Pub. L. 103-160 inserted “(i)” after “grade and competitive category”, inserted “(ii)” after “of this title, or”, and struck out comma after “any provision of law”.

1991—Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 102-190 designated existing provisions as pars. (1) and (2)(A), in par. (2)(A) inserted “(except as provided in subparagraph (B))” after “under this section, such list”, and added subpars. (B) and (C).

1990—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 101-510, § 521(b)(2)(A), added par. (3).

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 101-510, § 521(b)(2)(B), inserted “or section 638a of this title” after “under this section”.

1988—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 100-456 amended subsec. (a) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (a) read as follows: “A regular officer on the active-duty list of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps—

“(1) who holds the regular grade of lieutenant colonel or commander and has failed of selection for promotion to the grade of colonel or, in the case of an officer of the Navy, captain two or more times and whose name is not on a list of officers recommended for promotion;

“(2) who holds the regular grade of colonel or, in the case of an officer of the Navy, captain and has served at least four years of active duty in that grade and whose name is not on a list of officers recommended for promotion;

“(3) who holds the regular grade of brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half) and has served at least three and one-half years of active duty in that grade and whose name is not on a list of officers recommended for promotion; or

“(4) who holds the regular grade of major general or rear admiral and has served at least three and one-half years of active duty in that grade,

may be considered for early retirement by a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title. The Secretary of the military department concerned shall specify the number of officers described in clauses (1) and (2) which such a board may recommend for early retirement, but such number may not be more than 30 percent of the number of officers considered in each grade in each competitive category.”

1985—Subsecs. (a)(3), (b), (c). Pub. L. 99-145 substituted “rear admiral (lower half)” for “commodore” wherever appearing.

1981—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 97-86 substituted “commodore” for “commodore admiral”.

Subsec. (a)(3), (4). Pub. L. 97-22 substituted “three and one-half years of active duty” for “four years of active duty”.

Subsecs. (b), (c). Pub. L. 97-86 substituted “commodore” for “commodore admiral” wherever appearing.

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1981 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 97-86 effective Sept. 15, 1981, see section 405(f) of Pub. L. 97-86, set out as a note under section 101 of this title.

**§ 638a. Modification to rules for continuation on active duty; enhanced authority for selective early retirement and early discharges**

(a)(1) The Secretary of Defense may authorize the Secretary of a military department to take any of the actions set forth in subsection (b) with respect to officers of an armed force under the jurisdiction of that Secretary.

(2) Any authority provided to the Secretary of a military department under paragraph (1) shall expire on the date specified by the Secretary of Defense, but such expiration date may not be later than December 31, 2018.

(b) Actions which the Secretary of a military department may take with respect to officers of an armed force when authorized to do so under subsection (a) are the following:

(1) Shortening the period of the continuation on active duty established under section 637 of this title for a regular officer who is serving on active duty pursuant to a selection under that section for continuation on active duty.

(2) Providing that regular officers on the active-duty list may be considered for early retirement by a selection board convened under section 611(b) of this title in the case of officers described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (C) as follows:

(A) Officers in the regular grade of lieutenant colonel or commander who have failed of selection for promotion at least one time and whose names are not on a list of officers recommended for promotion.

(B) Officers in the regular grade of colonel or, in the case of the Navy, captain who have served on active duty in that grade for at least two years and whose names are not on a list of officers recommended for promotion.

(C) Officers, other than those described in subparagraphs (A) and (B), holding a regular grade below the grade of colonel, or in the case of the Navy, captain, who are eligible for retirement under section 3911, 6323, or 8911 of this title, or who after two additional years or less of active service would be eligible for retirement under one of those sections and whose names are not on a list of officers recommended for promotion.

(3) Convening selection boards under section 611(b) of this title to consider for discharge regular officers on the active-duty list in a grade below lieutenant colonel or commander—

(A) who have served at least one year of active duty in the grade currently held;

(B) whose names are not on a list of officers recommended for promotion; and

(C) who are not eligible to be retired under any provision of law (other than by reason of eligibility pursuant to section 4403 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993) and are not within two years of becoming so eligible.

(c)(1) In the case of an action under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary of the military department