

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1968 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 90-632 effective first day of tenth month following October 1968, see section 4 of Pub. L. 90-632, set out as a note under section 801 of this title.

SUBCHAPTER VIII—SENTENCES

Sec.	Art.	
855.	55.	Cruel and unusual punishments prohibited.
856.	56.	Maximum and minimum limits.
856a.	56a.	Sentence of confinement for life without eligibility for parole.
857.	57.	Effective date of sentences.
857a.	57a.	Deferment of sentences.
858.	58.	Execution of confinement.
858a.	58a.	Sentences: reduction in enlisted grade upon approval.
858b.	58b.	Sentences: forfeiture of pay and allowances during confinement.

AMENDMENT OF ANALYSIS

*Pub. L. 114-328, div. E, title LXIII, §§ 5541(5), 5542, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2966, 2967, provided that, effective on the date designated by the President, not later than the first day of the first calendar month beginning two years after Dec. 23, 2016, with implementing regulations prescribed by the President not later than one year after Dec. 23, 2016, and with provisions relating to applicability to various situations, this analysis is amended by striking items 856, 856a, and 857a and inserting the following new item:*

Sec.	Art.
856.	56. Sentencing.

See 2016 Amendment note below.

AMENDMENTS

2016—Pub. L. 114-328, div. E, title LXIII, § 5541(5), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2966, substituted “Sentencing” for “Maximum and minimum limits” in item 856 and struck out items 856a “Art. 56a. Sentence of confinement for life without eligibility for parole” and 857a “Art. 57a. Deferment of sentences”.

2013—Pub. L. 113-66, div. A, title XVII, § 1705(a)(2)(B), Dec. 26, 2013, 127 Stat. 959, substituted “Maximum and minimum limits” for “Maximum limits” in item 856.

1997—Pub. L. 105-85, div. A, title V, § 581(a)(2), Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1760, added item 856a.

1996—Pub. L. 104-106, div. A, title XI, §§ 1122(a)(2), 1123(b), Feb. 10, 1996, 110 Stat. 463, 464, added items 857a and 858b.

1960—Pub. L. 86-633, § 1(2), July 12, 1960, 74 Stat. 468, added item 858a.

**§ 855. Art. 55. Cruel and unusual punishments prohibited**

Punishment by flogging, or by branding, marking, or tattooing on the body, or any other cruel or unusual punishment, may not be adjudged by any court-martial or inflicted upon any person subject to this chapter. The use of irons, single or double, except for the purpose of safe custody, is prohibited.

(Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 56.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
855 .....	50:636.	May 5, 1950, ch. 169, § 1 (Art. 55), 64 Stat. 126.

The word “may” is substituted for the word “shall”.

**§ 856. Art. 56. Maximum and minimum limits**

(a) The punishment which a court-martial may direct for an offense may not exceed such limits as the President may prescribe for that offense.

(b)(1) While a person subject to this chapter who is found guilty of an offense specified in paragraph (2) shall be punished as a general court-martial may direct, such punishment must include, at a minimum, dismissal or dishonorable discharge, except as provided for in section 860 of this title (article 60).

(2) Paragraph (1) applies to the following offenses:

(A) An offense in violation of subsection (a) or (b) of section 920 of this title (article 120(a) or (b)).

(B) Rape and sexual assault of a child under subsection (a) or (b) of section 920b of this title (article 120b).

(C) Forcible sodomy under section 925 of this title (article 125).

(D) An attempt to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) that is punishable under section 880 of this title (article 80).

(Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 56; Pub. L. 113-66, div. A, title XVII, § 1702(a)(1), (2)(A), Dec. 26, 2013, 127 Stat. 959; Pub. L. 114-328, div. E, title LVIII, § 5301(a), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2919.)

AMENDMENT OF SECTION

*Pub. L. 114-328, div. E, title LVIII, § 5301(a), title LXIII, § 5542, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2919, 2967, provided that, effective on the date designated by the President, not later than the first day of the first calendar month beginning two years after Dec. 23, 2016, with implementing regulations prescribed by the President not later than one year after Dec. 23, 2016, and with provisions relating to applicability to various situations, this section is amended to read as follows:*

**§ 856. Art. 56. Sentencing**

(a) SENTENCE MAXIMUMS.—The punishment which a court-martial may direct for an offense may not exceed such limits as the President may prescribe for that offense.

(b) SENTENCE MINIMUMS FOR CERTAIN OFFENSES.—(1) Except as provided in subsection (d) of section 853a of this title (article 53a), punishment for any offense specified in paragraph (2) shall include dismissal or dishonorable discharge, as applicable.

(2) The offenses referred to in paragraph (1) are as follows:

(A) Rape under subsection (a) of section 920 of this title (article 120).

(B) Sexual assault under subsection (b) of such section (article).

(C) Rape of a child under subsection (a) of section 920b of this title (article 120b).

(D) Sexual assault of a child under subsection (b) of such section (article).

(E) An attempt to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) that is punishable under section 880 of this title (article 80).

(F) Conspiracy to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) that is