

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES—CONTINUED

Revised section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
831(c)	50:602(c).	
831(d)	50:602(d).	

The word “may” is substituted for the word “shall” throughout the revised section.

§ 832. Art. 32. Preliminary hearing

(a) PRELIMINARY HEARING REQUIRED.—(1) No charge or specification may be referred to a general court-martial for trial until completion of a preliminary hearing, unless such hearing is waived by the accused.

(2) The purpose of the preliminary hearing shall be limited to the following:

(A) Determining whether there is probable cause to believe an offense has been committed and the accused committed the offense.

(B) Determining whether the convening authority has court-martial jurisdiction over the offense and the accused.

(C) Considering the form of charges.

(D) Recommending the disposition that should be made of the case.

(b) HEARING OFFICER.—(1) A preliminary hearing under subsection (a) shall be conducted by an impartial judge advocate certified under section 827(b) of this title (article 27(b)) whenever practicable or, in exceptional circumstances in which the interests of justice warrant, by an impartial hearing officer who is not a judge advocate. If the hearing officer is not a judge advocate, a judge advocate certified under section 827(b) of this title (article 27(b)) shall be available to provide legal advice to the hearing officer.

(2) Whenever practicable, when the judge advocate or other hearing officer is detailed to conduct the preliminary hearing, the officer shall be equal to or senior in grade to military counsel detailed to represent the accused or the Government at the preliminary hearing.

(c) REPORT OF RESULTS.—After conducting a preliminary hearing under subsection (a), the judge advocate or other officer conducting the preliminary hearing shall prepare a report that addresses the matters specified in subsections (a)(2) and (f).

(d) RIGHTS OF ACCUSED AND VICTIM.—(1) The accused shall be advised of the charges against the accused and of the accused’s right to be represented by counsel at the preliminary hearing under subsection (a). The accused has the right to be represented at the preliminary hearing as provided in section 838 of this title (article 38) and in regulations prescribed under that section.

(2) The accused may cross-examine witnesses who testify at the preliminary hearing and present additional evidence in defense and mitigation, relevant to the limited purposes of the hearing, as provided for in paragraph (4) and subsection (a)(2).

(3) A victim may not be required to testify at the preliminary hearing. A victim who declines to testify shall be deemed to be not available for purposes of the preliminary hearing.

(4) The presentation of evidence and examination (including cross-examination) of witnesses

at a preliminary hearing shall be limited to the matters relevant to the limited purposes of the hearing, as provided in subsection (a)(2).

(e) RECORDING OF PRELIMINARY HEARING.—A preliminary hearing under subsection (a) shall be recorded by a suitable recording device. The victim may request the recording and shall have access to the recording as prescribed by the Manual for Courts-Martial.

(f) EFFECT OF EVIDENCE OF UNCHARGED OFFENSE.—If evidence adduced in a preliminary hearing under subsection (a) indicates that the accused committed an uncharged offense, the hearing officer may consider the subject matter of that offense without the accused having first been charged with the offense if the accused—

(1) is present at the preliminary hearing;

(2) is informed of the nature of each uncharged offense considered; and

(3) is afforded the opportunities for representation, cross-examination, and presentation consistent with subsection (d).

(g) EFFECT OF VIOLATION.—The requirements of this section are binding on all persons administering this chapter, but failure to follow the requirements does not constitute jurisdictional error.

(h) VICTIM DEFINED.—In this section, the term “victim” means a person who—

(1) is alleged to have suffered a direct physical, emotional, or pecuniary harm as a result of the matters set forth in a charge or specification being considered; and

(2) is named in one of the specifications.

(Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 48; Pub. L. 97–81, §4(a), Nov. 20, 1981, 95 Stat. 1088; Pub. L. 104–106, div. A, title XI, §1131, Feb. 10, 1996, 110 Stat. 464; Pub. L. 113–66, div. A, title XVII, §1702(a)(1), Dec. 26, 2013, 127 Stat. 954; Pub. L. 113–291, div. A, title V, §531(a)(4)(A), Dec. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 3363; Pub. L. 114–328, div. E, title LVI, §5203(a)–(d), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2905, 2906.)

AMENDMENT OF SECTION

Pub. L. 114–328, div. E, title LVI, §5203(a)–(d), title LXIII, §5542, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2905, 2906, 2967, made amendments to this section 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. After such effective date, this section will read as follows:

§832. Art. 32. Preliminary hearing required before referral to general court-martial

(a) IN GENERAL.—(1)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a preliminary hearing shall be held before referral of charges and specifications for trial by general court-martial. The preliminary hearing shall be conducted by an impartial hearing officer, detailed by the convening authority in accordance with subsection (b).

(B) Under regulations prescribed by the President, a preliminary hearing need not be held if the accused submits a written waiver to the convening authority and the convening authority determines that a hearing is not required.

(2) The purpose of the preliminary hearing shall be limited to determining the following:

(A) Whether or not the specification alleges an offense under this chapter.

(B) Whether or not there is probable cause to believe that the accused committed the offense charged.

(C) Whether or not the convening authority has court-martial jurisdiction over the accused and over the offense.

(D) A recommendation as to the disposition that should be made of the case.

(b) HEARING OFFICER.—(1) A preliminary hearing under this section shall be conducted by an impartial hearing officer, who—

(A) whenever practicable, shall be a judge advocate who is certified under section 827(b)(2) of this title (article 27(b)(2)); or

(B) when it is not practicable to appoint a judge advocate because of exceptional circumstances, is not a judge advocate so certified.

(2) In the case of a hearing officer under paragraph (1)(B), a judge advocate who is certified under section 827(b)(2) of this title (article 27(b)(2)) shall be available to provide legal advice to the hearing officer.

(3) Whenever practicable, the hearing officer shall be equal in grade or senior in grade to military counsel who are detailed to represent the accused or the Government at the preliminary hearing.

(c) REPORT TO CONVENING AUTHORITY.—After a preliminary hearing under this section, the hearing officer shall submit to the convening authority a written report (accompanied by a recording of the preliminary hearing under subsection (e)) that includes the following:

(1) For each specification, a statement of the reasoning and conclusions of the hearing officer with respect to determinations under subsection (a)(2), including a summary of relevant witness testimony and documentary evidence presented at the hearing and any observations of the hearing officer concerning the testimony of witnesses and the availability and admissibility of evidence at trial.

(2) Recommendations for any necessary modifications to the form of the charges or specifications.

(3) An analysis of any additional information submitted after the hearing by the parties or by a victim of an offense, that, under such rules as the President may prescribe, is relevant to disposition under sections 830 and 834 of this title (articles 30 and 34).

(4) A statement of action taken on evidence adduced with respect to uncharged offenses, as described in subsection (f).

(d) RIGHTS OF ACCUSED AND VICTIM.—(1) The accused shall be advised of the charges against the accused and of the accused's right to be represented by counsel at the preliminary hearing under this section. The accused has the right to be represented at the preliminary hearing as provided in section 838 of this title (article 38) and in regulations prescribed under that section.

(2) The accused may cross-examine witnesses who testify at the preliminary hearing and present additional evidence that is relevant to the issues for determination under subsection (a)(2).

(3) A victim may not be required to testify at the preliminary hearing. A victim who declines to testify shall be deemed to be not available for purposes of the preliminary hearing. A declination under this paragraph shall not serve as the sole basis for ordering a deposition under section 849 of this title (article 49).

(4) The presentation of evidence and examination (including cross-examination) of witnesses at a preliminary hearing shall be limited to the matters relevant to determinations under subsection (a)(2).

(e) RECORDING OF PRELIMINARY HEARING.—A preliminary hearing under subsection (a) shall be recorded by a suitable recording device. The victim may request the recording and shall have access to the recording under such rules as the President may prescribe.

(f) EFFECT OF EVIDENCE OF UNCHARGED OFFENSE.—If evidence adduced in a preliminary hearing under subsection (a) indicates that the accused committed an uncharged offense, the hearing officer may consider the subject matter of that offense without the accused having first been charged with the offense if the accused—

(1) is present at the preliminary hearing;

(2) is informed of the nature of each uncharged offense considered; and

(3) is afforded the opportunities for representation, cross-examination, and presentation consistent with subsection (d).

(g) EFFECT OF VIOLATION.—The requirements of this section are binding on all persons administering this chapter, but failure to follow the requirements does not constitute jurisdictional error. A defect in a report under subsection (c) is not a basis for relief if the report is in substantial compliance with that subsection.

(h) VICTIM DEFINED.—In this section, the term “victim” means a person who—

(1) is alleged to have suffered a direct physical, emotional, or pecuniary harm as a result of the matters set forth in a charge or specification being considered; and

(2) is named in one of the specifications.

See 2016 Amendment notes below.

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
832(a)	50:603(a).	May 5, 1950, ch. 169, §1 (Art. 32), 64 Stat. 118.
832(b)	50:603(b).	
832(c)	50:603(c).	
832(d)	50:603(d).	

In subsection (a), the word “may” is substituted for the word “shall”. The words “consideration of the” and “a recommendation as to” are inserted in the interest of accuracy and precision of statement.

In subsection (b), the word “detailed” is substituted for the word “appointed”, since the filling of the position involved is not appointment to an office in the constitutional sense.

In subsection (c), the word “before” is substituted for the words “prior to the time”. The words “of this section” are omitted as surplusage.

In subsection (d), the word “are” is substituted for the words “shall be.” The word “does” is substituted for the words “in any case shall”.

AMENDMENTS

2016—Pub. L. 114-328, §5203(a), substituted “Preliminary hearing required before referral to general court-

martial” for “Preliminary hearing” in section catchline.

Subsecs. (a) to (c). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(a), added subsecs. (a) to (c) and struck out former subsecs. (a) to (c) which related to requirement of preliminary hearing, hearing officer, and report of hearing results, respectively.

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(b)(1), substituted “this section” for “subsection (a)”.

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(b)(2), substituted “that is relevant to the issues for determination under subsection (a)(2).” for “in defense and mitigation, relevant to the limited purposes of the hearing, as provided for in paragraph (4) and subsection (a)(2).”

Subsec. (d)(3). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(b)(3), inserted at end “A declination under this paragraph shall not serve as the sole basis for ordering a deposition under section 849 of this title (article 49).”

Subsec. (d)(4). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(b)(4), substituted “determinations under subsection (a)(2)” for “the limited purposes of the hearing, as provided in subsection (a)(2)”.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(c), substituted “under such rules as the President may prescribe” for “as prescribed by the Manual for Courts-Martial”.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 114-328, § 5203(d), inserted at end “A defect in a report under subsection (c) is not a basis for relief if the report is in substantial compliance with that subsection.”

2014—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 113-291 inserted “, unless such hearing is waived by the accused” after “preliminary hearing”.

2013—Pub. L. 113-66 substituted “Preliminary hearing” for “Investigation” in section catchline and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, section provided that no charge or specification may be referred to general court-martial for trial until thorough and impartial investigation of all the matters had been made.

1996—Subsecs. (d), (e). Pub. L. 104-106 added subsec. (d) and redesignated former subsec. (d) as (e).

1981—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 97-81 substituted “The accused has the right to be represented at that investigation as provided in section 838 of this title (article 38) and in regulations prescribed under that section” for “Upon his own request he shall be represented by civilian counsel if provided by him, or military counsel of his own selection if such counsel is reasonably available, or by counsel detailed by the officer exercising general court-martial jurisdiction over the command”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2016 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 114-328 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, see section 5542 of Pub. L. 114-328, set out as a note under section 801 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2013 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 113-66 effective on the later of Dec. 26, 2014, or the date of the enactment of the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Dec. 19, 2014) and applicable with respect to preliminary hearings conducted on or after that effective date, see section 1702(d)(1) of Pub. L. 113-66, set out as a note under section 802 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1981 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 97-81 to take effect at end of 60-day period beginning on Nov. 20, 1981, and to apply with respect to investigations under this section that begin on or after that date, see section 7(a) and (b)(3) of Pub. L. 97-81, set out as an Effective Date note under section 706 of this title.

§ 833. Art. 33. Forwarding of charges

When a person is held for trial by general court-martial the commanding officer shall, within eight days after the accused is ordered into arrest or confinement, if practicable, forward the charges, together with the investigation and allied papers, to the officer exercising general court-martial jurisdiction. If that is not practicable, he shall report in writing to that officer the reasons for delay.

(Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 49; Pub. L. 114-328, div. E, title LVI, § 5204, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2906.)

AMENDMENT OF SECTION

Pub. L. 114-328, div. E, title LVI, § 5204, title LXIII, § 5542, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2906, 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:

§ 833. Art 33. Disposition guidance

The President shall direct the Secretary of Defense to issue, in consultation with the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, non-binding guidance regarding factors that commanders, convening authorities, staff judge advocates, and judge advocates should take into account when exercising their duties with respect to disposition of charges and specifications in the interest of justice and discipline under sections 830 and 834 of this title (articles 30 and 34). Such guidance shall take into account, with appropriate consideration of military requirements, the principles contained in official guidance of the Attorney General to attorneys for the Government with respect to disposition of Federal criminal cases in accordance with the principle of fair and evenhanded administration of Federal criminal law.

See 2016 Amendment note below.

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
833	50:604.	May 5, 1950, ch. 169, § 1 (Art. 33), 64 Stat. 119.

AMENDMENTS

2016—Pub. L. 114-328 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “When a person is held for trial by general court-martial the commanding officer shall, within eight days after the accused is ordered into arrest or confinement, if practicable, forward the charges, together with the investigation and allied papers, to the officer exercising general court-martial jurisdiction. If that is not practicable, he shall report in writing to that officer the reasons for delay.”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2016 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 114-328 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 pre-