

# Vietnam Service Medal



## 2-13. Vietnam Service Medal

*a.* The Vietnam Service Medal (VSM) was established by EO 11231, 8 July 1965, as amended by EO 13286, 2 February 2003. It is awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving in Vietnam and contiguous waters or airspace there over, after 3 July 1965 through 28 March 1973. Members of the Armed Forces of the United States in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspace there over, during the same period and serving in direct support of operations in Vietnam are also eligible for this award.

*b.* To qualify for award of the VSM an individual must meet one of the following qualifications:

- (1) Be attached to or regularly serve for 1 or more days with an organization participating in or directly supporting military operations.
- (2) Be attached to or regularly serve for 1 or more days aboard a Naval vessel directly supporting military operations.
- (3) Actually participate as a crewmember in one or more aerial flights into airspace above Vietnam and contiguous waters directly supporting military operations.
- (4) Serve on temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days in Vietnam or contiguous areas, except that time limit may be waived for personnel participating in actual combat operations.

*c.* No person will be entitled to more than one award of the VSM.

*d.* Individuals qualified for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for reason of service in Vietnam between 1 July 1958 and 3 July 1965 (inclusive) will remain qualified for that medal. Upon request (unit personnel officer) any such individual may be awarded the VSM instead of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. In such instances, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal will be deleted from the list of authorized medals in personnel records. No person will be entitled to both awards for Vietnam service.

*e.* Service members who earned the AFEM for Operation FREQUENT WIND between 29 and 30 April 1975, may elect to receive the Vietnam Service Medal instead of the AFEM. No service member may be issued both medals for service in Vietnam.

*f.* Vietnam and contiguous waters, as used herein, is defined as an area which includes Vietnam and the water adjacent thereto within the following specified limits: From a point on the East Coast of Vietnam at the juncture of Vietnam with China southeastward to 21 degrees N. latitude, 108 degrees; 15'E. Longitude; thence, southward to 18 AR 600-8-22 • 11 December 2006 27 degrees; N. latitude, 108 degrees; 15'E. Longitude; thence southeastward to 17 degrees 30'N. latitude, 111 degrees E. longitude; thence southward to 11 degrees N. latitude; 111 degrees E. longitude; thence southwestward to 7 degrees N. latitude, 105 degrees E. longitude; thence westward to 7 degrees N. latitude, 103 degrees; E. longitude; thence northward to 9 degrees 30' N. latitude, 103 degrees E. longitude, thence northeastward to 10 degrees 15'N. Latitude, 104 degrees 27'E. Longitude; thence northward to a point on the West Coast of Vietnam at the juncture of Vietnam with Cambodia.

*g.* The VSM may be awarded posthumously.

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- h.* The boundaries of the Vietnam combat zone for campaign participation credit are as defined in *f* above.
- i.* One bronze service star is authorized for each campaign under the following conditions:
- (1) Assigned or attached to and present for duty with a unit during the period in which it participated in combat.
  - (2) Under orders in the combat zone and in addition meets any of the following requirements:
    - (a) Awarded a combat decoration.
    - (b) Furnished a certificate by a commanding general of a corps, higher unit, or independent force that Soldier actually participated in combat.
    - (c) Served at a normal post of duty (as contrasted to occupying the status of an inspector, observer, or visitor).
    - (d) Aboard a vessel other than in a passenger status and furnished a certificate by the home port commander of the vessel that he served in the combat zone.
  - (3) Was an evadee or escapee in the combat zone or recovered from a prisoner-of-war status in the combat zone during the time limitations of the campaign. Prisoners of war will not be accorded credit for the time spent in confinement or while otherwise in restraint under enemy control.
- j.* The Vietnam campaigns are listed in appendix B. (Service stars are described in para 6–8.)

### **(Extract from Appendix B) Campaigns, Service Requirements, and Inscriptions Prescribed for Streamers— Vietnam Conflict**

Vietnam Advisory Campaign 15 March 1962 – 7 March 1965 VIETNAM ADVISORY 1962 – 1965  
Vietnam Defense Campaign 8 March 1965 – 24 December 1965 VIETNAM DEFENSE 1965  
Vietnam Counteroffensive 25 December 1965 – 30 June 1966 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE 1965 –1966  
Vietnam Counteroffensive, Phase II 1 July 1966 – 31 May 1967 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE, PHASE II, 1966 – 1967 see note 2.  
Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase III 1 June 1967 – 29 January 1968 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE, PHASE III, 1967 – 1968  
Tet Counteroffensive 30 January 1968 – 1 April 1968 TET COUNTEROFFENSIVE 1968  
Vietnam Counteroffensive, Phase IV 2 April 1968 – 30 June 1968 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE PHASE IV, 1968  
Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase V 1 July 1968 – 1 November 1968 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE, PHASE V, 1968  
Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase VI 2 November 1968 – 22 February 1969 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE PHASE VI, 1968 – 1969  
Tet 69 Counteroffensive, 1969 23 February 1969 – 8 June 1969 TET 69 COUNTEROFFENSIVE, 1969  
Vietnam Summer – Fall 1969 9 June 1969 – 31 October 1969 VIETNAM SUMMER – FALL 1969  
Vietnam Winter-Spring 1970 1 November 1969 – 30 April 1970 VIETNAM WINTER – SPRING 1970  
Sanctuary Counteroffensive 1 May 1970 – 30 June 1970 SANCTUARY COUNTEROFFENSIVE 1970

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Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase VII 1 July 1970 – 30 June 1971 VIETNAM COUNTEROFFENSIVE, PHASE VII, 1970 – 1971  
Consolidation I 1 July 1971– 30 November 1971 CONSOLIDATION I 1971  
Consolidation II 1 December 1971– 29 March 1972 CONSOLIDATION II 1971 – 1972  
VIETNAM CEASE–FIRE 30 March 1972 – 28 January 1973 VIETNAM CEASE–FIRE 1972 – 1973

**Note 2.** Arrowhead is authorized only for members of the 173d Airborne Brigade who actually participated in a landing in the vicinity of Katum, RVN, between the hours of 0900–0907, inclusive, on 22 February 1967. A bronze service star affixed to the Parachutist Badge is authorized for the 173d Airborne Brigade for participating in a combat parachute jump on 22 February 1967 per Department of the Army General Orders (DAGO) 18, 1979.