

The Bronze Star Medal

1. Description: A Bronze star 1 ½ inches in circumscribing diameter. In the center thereof is a 3/16-inch diameter superimposed bronze star, the center line of all rays of both stars coinciding. The reverse has the inscription "HEROIC OR MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT" and a space for the name of the recipient to be engraved. The star is suspended from the ribbon by a rectangular shaped metal loop with the corners rounded.

2. Ribbon: The ribbon is 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of the following stripes: 1/32 inch White 67101; 9/16 inch Scarlet 67111; 1/32 inch White; center stripe 1/8 inch Ultramarine Blue 67118; 1/32 inch White; 9/16 inch Scarlet; and 1/32 inch White.

3. Criteria: a. The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the military of the United States after 6 December 1941, distinguished himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

b. Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star.

c. Awards may be made to recognize single acts of merit or meritorious service. The required achievement or service while of lesser degree than that required for the award of the Legion of Merit must nevertheless have been meritorious and accomplished with distinction.

4. Components: The following are authorized components of the Bronze Star Medal:

a. Decoration (regular size): MIL -D-3943/22. NSN for decoration set is 8455-00-269-5749. NSN for replacement medal is 8455-00-246-3829.

b. Decoration (miniature size): MIL -D-3943/22. NSN 8455-00-996-5004.

c. Ribbon: MIL-R-11589/18. NSN 8455-00-252-9915.

d. Lapel Button: MIL -R-11484/16. NSN 8455-00-265-4889.

5. Background: a. General George C. Marshall, in a memorandum to President Roosevelt dated February 3, 1944, wrote: "The fact that the ground troops,

Infantry in particular, lead miserable lives of extreme discomfort and are the ones who must close in personal combat with the enemy, makes the maintenance of their morale of great importance. The award of the Air Medal have had an adverse reaction on the ground troops, particularly the Infantry Riflemen who are now suffering the heaviest losses, air or ground, in the Army, and enduring the greatest hardships." The Air Medal had been adopted two years earlier to raise airmen's morale.

b. President Roosevelt authorized the Bronze Star Medal by Executive Order 9419 dated 4 February 1944, retroactive to 7 December 1941. This authorization was announced in War Department Bulletin No. 3, dated 10 February 1944. The Executive Order was amended by President Kennedy, per Executive Order 11046 dated 24 August 1962, to expand the authorization to include those serving with friendly forces.

c. As a result of a study conducted in 1947, the policy was implemented that authorized the retroactive award of the Bronze Star Medal to soldiers who had received the Combat Infantryman Badge or the Combat Medical Badge during World War II. The basis for doing this was that the badges were awarded only to soldiers who had borne the hardships which resulted in General Marshall's support of the Bronze Star Medal. Both badges required a recommendation by the commander and a citation in orders.

d. Order of precedence and wear of decorations is contained in Army Regulation 670-1. Policy for awards, approving authority, supply, and issue of decorations is contained in AR 600-8-22.