

PSYCHO WAIVER BLOOPERS



Waiver Bloopers is a new item we will feature at least twice a year (or until you guys invalidate the need by sending in perfect waiver packages!). It is our responsibility to teach each of you about what is required for a complete waiver package. If the package is not complete or does not stand on its own, a decision cannot be made. Any delay at this end due to an oversight at your end negatively affects your mission - which is to assist the aviator safely return to flying as soon as possible. It also doesn't make anyone's day by having Mr. Kopyy call you and ask, "You didn't really mean that did you. . .?" ☹️☹️☹️

There are seven different categories of problems identified over the past year. These are:

1. INCOMPLETE PACKAGES

→ these are usually for ETOH waivers that don't have one or more of the requisite supporting documents (e.g. member's request, flight surgeon statement, DAPA statement, CO's endorsement, psych eval, treatment summary) This is the number one problem that heads the list. Additionally, even if all required documents are present, the information is not (e.g. neither the member's letter nor the flight surgeon statement mentions the member's unqualified acceptance of their diagnosis or their commitment to abstinence IAW BUMEDINST 5300.8, or the DAPA statement does not make any reference to the frequency of AA attendance, etc.).

→ a determination without the specialist evaluation (e.g. diagnosis of a personality disorder without the psych eval)

→ package doesn't address higher authority guidance requirements (e.g. sleepwalking waiver request without addressing MILPERSMAN guidance)

2. INTERNAL INCONSISTENCY

→ front of SF93 doesn't match back (AA – "favorable" with NAA recommendation)

→ diagnosed with a condition that is not considered disqualifying (e.g. Adjustment Disorder) and recommends waiver)

→ diagnosed with a condition that is considered disqualifying and not marked NPQ – or trying to slip in a second condition on a waiver request for another disorder without additional info (e.g. Depressive Disorder listed on SF 93 but only requests waiver for ETOH)

→ a Local Board of Flight Surgeons recommending a waiver for an aviator with alcohol abuse (and granting an up chit) with the member's statement saying "I understand the importance of drinking *in moderation*."

3. UNSUPPORTED/INVALID DIAGNOSES

→ marked NPQ for “stress-induced dermatitis” – there is no such bird (and no supporting specialist evaluations)

→ recommends permanent grounding for “poor stress tolerance” – again, no such puppy

4. INCORRECT DIAGNOSIS

→ diagnosed with alcohol abuse with clear documentation supporting dependence

and, on the other end of things. . . .

→ diagnosed with alcohol abuse with no data other than one alcohol-related incident (which doesn’t require a waiver)

→ diagnosed with adjustment disorder when the initial diagnosis was panic disorder with a classic supporting history of same. Always call it as you see it and request a waiver when appropriate.

5. UNSUPPORTED RECOMMENDATIONS

→ NAA for maladaptive traits with no documentation of how these traits are maladaptive and negatively affect safety, mission completion, or aircrew coordination.

6. INCORRECT RECOMMENDATIONS

→ generally mixing up the NPQ/NAA determinations (please see my article from the summer newsletter for a quick and simple review on this issue which *can* get confusing if you don’t do it every day!)

→ a major psych diagnosis (depression, anxiety disorder, PTSD, etc. and member found PQ)

→ diagnosis of a personality disorder and member found NPQ, not NAA

→ a diagnosis of adjustment disorder recommending a waiver (not required – remember, the condition is not disqualifying) or permanent grounding (*NOT*, remember, this diagnosis by definition is time-limited and not disqualifying)

7. ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT

→ Waiver for an air traffic controller that recommends waiver for “DIACA SGI”. . . .sure hope not. . . .

→ Other minor stuff that will delay the process – **always read what you sign** – yes, I know this is a novel concept but please consider it

Again, if you have any questions on a specific situation please contact us and we'll be happy to help!