

§ 1636.1 Purpose; definitions.

(a) The provisions of this part govern the consideration of a claim by a registrant for classification in Class 1-A-0 ([§ 1630.11 of this chapter](#)), or Class 1-0 ([§ 1630.17 of this chapter](#)).

(b) The definitions of this paragraph shall apply in the interpretation of the provisions of this part:

(1) ***Crystallization of a Registrant's Beliefs.*** The registrant's becoming conscious of the fact that he is opposed to participation in war in any form.

(2) ***Noncombatant Service.*** Service in any unit of the Armed Forces which is unarmed at all times; any other military assignment not requiring the bearing of arms or the use of arms in

(3) ***Noncombatant Training.*** Any training which is not concerned with the study, use, or handling of arms or other implements of warfare designed to destroy human life.

§ 1636.2 The claim of conscientious objection.

A claim to classification in Class 1-A-0 or Class 1-0, must be made by the registrant in writing. Claims and documents in support of claims may only be submitted after the registrant has received an order to report for induction or after the Director has made a specific request for submission of such documents. All claims or documents in support of claims received prior to a registrant being ordered to report for induction or prior to the Director's specific request for such documentation will be returned to the registrant and no file or record of such submission will be established.

§ 1636.3 Basis for classification in Class 1-A-0.

(a) A registrant must be conscientiously opposed to participation in combatant training and service in the Armed Forces.

(b) A registrant's objection may be founded on religious training and belief; it may be based on strictly religious beliefs, or on personal beliefs that are purely ethical or moral in source or content and occupy in the life of a registrant a place parallel to that filled by belief in a Supreme Being for those holding more traditionally religious views.

(c) A registrant's objection must be sincere.

§ 1636.4 Basis for classification in Class 1-0.

(a) A registrant must be conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form and conscientiously opposed to participation in both combatant and noncombatant training and service in the Armed Forces.

(b) A registrant's objection may be founded on religious training and belief; it may be based on strictly religious beliefs, or on personal beliefs that are purely ethical or moral in source or content and occupy in the life of a registrant a place parallel to that filled by belief in a Supreme Being for those holding more traditionally religious views.

(c) A registrant's objection must be sincere.

A registrant shall be excluded from Class 1-A-0 or Class 1-0:

(a) Who asserts beliefs which are of a religious, moral or ethical nature, but who is found not to be sincere in his assertions; or

(b) Whose stated objection to participation in war does not rest at all upon moral, ethical, or religious principle, but instead rests solely upon considerations of policy, pragmatism, expediency, or his own self-interest or well-being; or

(c) Whose objection to participation in war is directed against a particular war rather than against war in any form (a selective objection). If a registrant objects to war in any form, but also believes in a theocratic, spiritual war between the forces of good and evil, he may not by reason of that belief alone be considered a selective conscientious objector.

§ 1636.6 Analysis of belief.

(a) A registrant claiming conscientious objection is not required to be a member of a *peace church* or any other church, religious organization, or religious sect to qualify for a 1-A-0 or 1-0 classification; nor is it necessary that he be affiliated with any particular group opposed to participation in war in any form.

(b) The registrant who identifies his beliefs with those of a traditional church or religious organization must show that he basically adheres to beliefs of that church or religious organization whether or not he is actually affiliated with the institution whose teachings he claims as the basis of his conscientious objection. He need not adhere to *all* beliefs of that church or religious organization.

(c) A registrant whose beliefs are not religious in the traditional sense, but are based primarily on moral or ethical principle should hold such beliefs with the same strength or conviction as the belief in a Supreme Being is held by a person who is religious in the traditional sense. Beliefs may be mixed; they may be a combination of traditional religious beliefs and nontraditional religious, moral or ethical beliefs. The registrant's beliefs must play a significant role in his life but should be evaluated only insofar as they pertain to his stated objection to his participation in war.

(d) Where the registrant is or has been a member of a church, religious organization, or religious sect, and where his claim of a conscientious objection is related to such membership, the board may properly inquire as to the registrant's membership, the religious teachings of the church, religious organization, or religious sect, and the registrant's religious activity, insofar as each relates to his objection to participation in war. The fact that the registrant may disagree with or not subscribe to some of the tenets of his church or religious sect does not necessarily discredit his claim.

(e)

(1) The history of the process by which the registrant acquired his beliefs, whether founded on religious, moral, or ethical principle is relevant to the determination whether his stated opposition to participation in war in any form is sincere.

(2) The registrant must demonstrate that his religious, ethical, or moral convictions were acquired through training, study, contemplation, or other activity comparable to the processes by which traditional religious convictions are formulated. He must show that these religious, moral, or ethical convictions, once acquired,

have directed his life in the way traditional religious convictions of equal strength, depth, and duration have directed the lives of those whose beliefs are clearly founded in traditional religious conviction.

(f) The registrant need not use formal or traditional language in describing the religious, moral, or ethical nature of his beliefs. Board members are not free to reject beliefs because they find them incomprehensible or inconsistent with their own beliefs.

(g) Conscientious objection to participation in war in any form, if based on moral, ethical, or religious beliefs, may not be deemed disqualifying simply because those beliefs may influence the registrant concerning the Nation's domestic or foreign policy.

§ 1636.7 Impartiality.

Boards may not give preferential treatment to one religion over another, and all beliefs whether of a religious, ethical, or moral nature are to be given equal consideration.

§ 1636.8 Considerations relevant to granting or denying a claim for classification as a conscientious objector.

(a) After the registrant has submitted a claim for classification as a conscientious objector and his file is complete, a determination of his sincerity will be made based on:

- (1) All documents in the registrant's file folder; and
- (2) The oral statements of the registrant at his personal appearance(s) before the local and/or appeal board; and
- (3) The oral statements of the registrant's witnesses, if any, at his personal appearance(s) before the local board; and
- (4) The registrant's general demeanor during his personal appearance(s).

(b) The registrant's stated convictions should be a matter of conscience.

(c) The board should be convinced that the registrant's personal history since the crystallization of his conscientious objection is not inconsistent with his claim and demonstrates that the registrant's objection is not solely a matter of expediency. A recent crystallization of beliefs does not in itself indicate expediency.

(d) The information presented by the registrant should reflect a pattern of behavior in response to war and weapons which is consistent with his stated beliefs. Instances of violent acts or conviction for crimes of violence, or employment in the development or manufacturing of weapons of war, if the claim is based upon or supported by a life of nonviolence, may be indicative of inconsistent conduct.

(e) The development of a registrant's opposition to war in any form may bear on his sincerity. If the registrant claims a recent crystallization of beliefs, his claim should be supported by evidence of a religious or educational experience, a traumatic event, an historical occasion, or some other special situation which explains when and how his objection to participation in war crystallized.

(f) In the event that a registrant has previously worked in the development of or manufacturing of weapons of war or has served as a member of a military reserve unit, it should be determined whether such activity was

prior to the stated crystallization of the registrant's conscientious objector beliefs. Inconsistent conduct prior to the actual crystallization of conscientious objector beliefs is not necessarily indicative of insincerity. But, inconsistent conduct subsequent to such crystallization may indicate that registrant's stated objection is not sincere.

(g) A registrant's behavior during his personal appearance before a board may be relevant to the sincerity of his claim.

(1) Evasive answers to questions by board members or the use of hostile, belligerent, or threatening words or actions, for example, may in proper circumstances be deemed inconsistent with a claim in which the registrant bases his objection on a belief in nonviolence.

(2) Care should be exercised that nervous, frightened, or apprehensive behavior at the personal appearance is not misconstrued as a reflection of insincerity.

(h) Oral response to questions posed by board members should be consistent with the written statements of the registrant and should generally substantiate the submitted information in the registrant's file folder; any inconsistent material should be explained by the registrant. It is important to recognize that the registrant need not be eloquent in his answers. But, a clear inconsistency between the registrant's oral remarks at his personal appearance and his written submission to the board may be adequate grounds, if not satisfactorily explained, for concluding that his claim is insincere.

(i) The registrant may submit letters of reference and other supporting statements of friends, relatives and acquaintances to corroborate the sincerity of his claim, although such supplemental documentation is not essential to approval of his claim. A finding of insincerity based on these letters or supporting statements must be carefully explained in the board's decision, specific mention being made of the particular material relied upon for denial of classification in Class 1-A-0 or Class 1-0.

§ 1636.9 Types of decisions.

The following are the types of decisions which may be made by a board when a claim for classification in Class 1-A-0 or Class 1-0 has been considered.

(a) Decision to grant a claim for classification in Class 1-A-0 or Class 1-0, as requested, based on a determination that the truth or sincerity of the registrant's claim is not refuted by any information contained in the registrant's file or obtained during his personal appearance.

(b) Decision to deny a claim for classification in Class 1-A-0 or Class 1-0 based on all information before the board, and a finding that such information fails to meet the tests specified in [§ 1636.3](#) or [1636.4 of this part](#). If supported by information contained in the registrant's file or obtained during his personal appearance the board may find that the facts presented by the registrant in support of his claim are untrue.

§ 1636.10 Statement of reasons for denial.

(a) Denial of a conscientious objector claim by a board must be accompanied by a statement specifying the reason(s) for such denial as prescribed in [§§ 1633.9, 1651.4](#) and [1653.3 of this chapter](#). The reason(s) must, in turn, be supported by evidence in the registrant's file.

(b) If a board's denial is based on statements by the registrant or on a determination that the claim is inconsistent or insincere, this should be fully explained in the statement of reasons accompanying the denial.