



# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



## **CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY:**

### **A) "Vietnam War period" or "period of the Vietnam War" vs "Vietnam era"**

- The phrase "Vietnam War period" is used to define the Commemoration's inclusive dates as our Nation recognizes all who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the period of November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of duty location; and their families. No distinction is made between veterans who served in-country, in-theater, or who were stationed elsewhere during the Vietnam War period. November 1, 1955 was selected to coincide with the official designation of Military Assistance Advisory Group-Vietnam (MAAG-V); May 15, 1975 marks the end of the last official battle of the Vietnam War, which was precipitated by the seizure of the SS Mayaguez.
- We do NOT use "Vietnam era" in recognition of U.S. law ([38 USC § 101, Definitions, line 29](#)). This law—until a 2021 amendment—defined the "Vietnam era" as (a) February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975 (for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period) or (b) August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975 (for veterans who served outside the Republic of Vietnam during that period) for the purpose of benefits.

The [2021 amendment of this statute](#) changed the definition of the "Vietnam era" to (a) November 1, 1955 to May 7, 1975 (for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period) or (b) August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975 (for veterans who served outside the Republic of Vietnam during that period).

### **B) "Vietnam veteran" vs "Vietnam-era veteran"**

- In association with (A) above, the Commemoration uses the term "Vietnam veteran" to describe those who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the period of November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of duty location.
- We do NOT use the phrase "Vietnam-era veteran."



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**C) "Congressionally authorized" vs "congressionally mandated"**

- The Commemoration appropriately uses "congressionally authorized" as § 598 ([Public Law 110-181](#)) of the 2008 NDAA specifically addresses Commemoration activities and states "(a) COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Defense may conduct a program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War."
- We do NOT use "congressionally mandated" when referring to the Commemoration.

**D) "[Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin](#)" or "lapel pin" vs "pin"**

- The Commemoration uses the full term "Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin" or its shortened moniker "lapel pin" to help listeners and/or readers understand the weight of importance and symbolism represented in each element of this "lasting memento of the Nation's thanks" presented to all Vietnam veterans.
- We AVOID the use of the simpler term "pin" when referring to the Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin.

**E) "[Official Seal](#)" vs "Commemorative Partner Seal" vs "Logo"**

- The Commemoration has two seals that are protected by law: one is our official seal, which is authorized for use only by the Commemoration on official material (e.g., website, printed material). The Commemorative Partner (CP) Seal is similar to, yet distinctively different from, the official seal and contains a banner under the seal that reads "COMMEMORATIVE PARTNER."
- Our partners are authorized to use the CP Seal; they are NOT authorized to use our official seal.
- We do NOT use the term "logo."