

**Erie County Recorder's Office**

**For Immediate Release:**

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**Protecting Ohio's Veterans: Erie County Recorder Ellen Olsen cautions Veterans to be aware of exploitative practices**

Erie County Recorder, Ellen Olsen, and the Ohio Records' Association (ORA) urges Veterans to be aware of exploitative practices targeting Military Veterans who are being charged for services that are available for free. DD214 Direct, a company based in Arizona, is currently soliciting veterans in Ohio to purchase a copy of their DD214 form for a fee ranging from \$79 to \$99. While this practice may be legal, Ellen Olsen and other County Recorders across Ohio want to ensure that Veterans are informed about the free services they are entitled to.

Veterans can obtain a free copy of their military records through their local Veteran's Service Commission as well as record their DD214 at their local County Recorder's office at no charge. The DD214 form is essential for veterans to access benefits like VA loans, disability compensation, and reduced medical costs. In recent months, Recorders offices across Ohio have received DD214 forms (paid for by veterans) from DD214 Direct through the mail, along with a limited Power of Attorney granting the Recorder the authority to file both documents on behalf of the veteran. We record DD214's for Veterans in person only.

To safeguard veterans from exploitative, unnecessary fees and inform the public, the ORA is working to raise awareness among Veterans about these practices. Furthermore, the ORA is currently looking into potential legislation aimed at regulating companies like DD214 Direct and mandating the disclosure of the availability of these services at no charge. The Service Discharges are sealed for 75 years after the veteran has passed. The Veteran can only get an unredacted Certified Copy with proof of I.D.

Veterans can request a copy of their DD214 at National Archives website at <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records> or print a Standard Form-180 and mail or fax it to:

National Personnel Records Center  
1 Archives Drive  
St Louis, MO 63138  
FAX: 314-801-9195

*For more information or assistance, please contact Erie County Recorder, Ellen Olsen's office at 247 Columbus Ave. Sandusky, Ohio 44870(419)627-7685 or Erie County Veterans Service Commission.*