

JO/ 08/ 2026/ Adm/ Wearing of Service Medals by
Ex-Servicemen (ESM) and Wearing of Family Medals by
Next of Kin (NoK) of Deceased Personnel
{Originating Branch. PPOC/ DOT Branch, HQ IDS}



भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
रक्षा मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

JOINT ORDER
ON
WEARING OF SERVICE MEDALS BY EX-SERVICEMEN (ESM) AND
WEARING OF FAMILY MEDALS BY NEXT OF KIN (NOK)
OF DECEASED PERSONNEL

मुख्यालय एकीकृत रक्षा स्टाफ
HEADQUARTERS INTEGRATED DEFENCE STAFF
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**WEARING OF SERVICE MEDALS
BY EX-SERVICEMEN (ESM) AND WEARING OF FAMILY MEDALS BY NEXT OF KIN
(NoK) OF DECEASED PERSONNEL**

- References: -
- a. Para 666 of Defence Service Regulations, 1987.
 - b. Army Uniform Pamphlets, 2018.
 - c. Uniform Regulations of the Indian Navy (INBR – 293).
 - d. IAF letter No Air HQ/99730/2/Org(Cer) dated 31 Jul 2019.

1. The wearing of medals is a mark of honour, pride and remembrance. This Joint Order lays down guidelines for Ex-Servicemen (ESM) and Next of Kin (NoK) for wearing medals for uniformity across the three Services.

SECTION A: WEARING OF SERVICE MEDALS BY EX-SERVICEMEN

2. **Wearing of Service Medals on Uniform.** Wearing of medals on uniform and formal civil dress by ESM is regulated as per Para 666 of Defence Services Regulations, 1987.

3. **Occasions for Wearing of Full Size Medals/ Miniature Medals on Formal Civil Dress by Ex-Servicemen.**

- 3.1. Official get-together at Rashtrapati Bhavan/ Raj Bhavans.
- 3.2. When invited to an official function by any Embassy, Legation or High Commission.
- 3.3. At Defence Forces functions.
- 3.4. When attending a Sainik Sammelan or function in honour of the National Day.
- 3.5. When called upon in aid to civil power.
- 3.6. When visiting military headquarters.
- 3.7. When calling on or meeting senior Service Officers and local heads of the civil administration of and above the rank of Collector/ Deputy Commissioner.
- 3.8. When serving on the personal staff of a Governor.
- 3.9. When attending State or Military Funerals.

Note. - Orders, decorations and medals will be worn on uniform when appropriate and in the manner as authorised for Service personnel from time to time. Silver war badges, wound stripes and chevrons Great War Service will not be worn.

- 4 **Method of Wearing.** On left chest.
- 5 **Not Permitted/ Prohibited.** Medals will not be worn at/ by: -
 - 5.1. Marriages or private family celebrations.
 - 5.2. Purely social/ club functions.
 - 5.3. Meeting of political nature
 - 5.4. Personnel dismissed from Service or discharged on disciplinary ground will not wear medals on any occasion.
 - 5.5. Except medals, wearing of accouterments such as Commendation Badges, specialisation Badges, etc. by ESM is not permitted.

SECTION B: WEARING OF FAMILY MEDALS BY NEXT OF KIN (NoK)

6. **Eligibility.** The following Next of Kin (NoK) are authorised to wear Family Medals: -
 - 6.1. Spouse (widow/ widower).
 - 6.2. Son/ daughter/ adopted child.
 - 6.3. Grandson/ granddaughter (incl recognised kinship adoption).
 - 6.4. Parents of a bachelor personnel.
 - 6.5. In cases where there are multiple legal heirs, the family shall nominate one eligible NoK who alone shall be authorised to retain and wear the original family medals. The same medals shall not be worn simultaneously by more than one family member.
7. **Occasions for Wearing.** Family medals may be worn only during: -
 - 7.1. Homage ceremonies at National/ Regimental/ Military War Memorials/ War Cemeteries.
 - 7.2. State or military funerals.
 - 7.3. Official events at Rashtrapati Bhavan/ Raj Bhavan.
 - 7.4. Official functions at Embassies/ High Commissions.

- 7.5. Official Defence Forces functions.
- 7.6. National Day ceremonies and related official functions.
- 7.7. When visiting military headquarters.
- 7.8. When calling on senior Service officers and civil administration (Collector/ DC, etc).
- 7.9. When serving on the personal staff of a Governor/ State functionary.
8. **Not Permitted/ Prohibited.**
 - 8.1. Family medals will not be worn at political events.
 - 8.2. Next of Kin (NoK) of personnel dismissed from Service or discharged on disciplinary ground will not wear medals on any occasion.
9. At all other occasions such as private functions, social, religious events and media appearances, except those specified at Para 7, wearing of medals will not be permitted.
10. **Dress.** Formal civil dress is mandatory when wearing family medals. Details are at Appendix 'A'.
11. **Method of Wearing.** The following standards will be applicable: -
 - 11.1. Family medals will be worn on the right chest only.
 - 11.2. Full/ miniature size medals are permitted to be worn.
 - 11.3. Only one complete set of family medals may be worn at any time. There may be cases wherein more than one family members have served in the Defence Forces thereby making the NoK eligible for wearing more than one set of family medals. Under such circumstances, only one set of family medals are to be worn as per choice of the NoK.
 - 11.4. The order of medal precedence shall follow that as was approved for the deceased personnel.
12. **Special Case.**
 - 12.1. **Ex-Servicemen who are also NoK.** In cases where the NoK is an Ex-Serviceman, they may wear family medals on right chest when in formal civil dress, along with their own Service medals on the left chest, on permitted occasions.
 - 12.2. **Serving personnel who are also NoK.** Serving personnel are to wear only one set of medals.
13. Station Commanders and Zila Sainik Boards are to facilitate dissemination of this policy and oversee its implementation during all remembrance events involving NoK representation.

14. The wearing of family medals is both a privilege and a responsibility. It symbolises the enduring bond between the Defence Forces and families, while ensuring dignity and uniformity in all ceremonial observances.

15. This issues with approval of the CDS & Secy DMA.

16. This Joint Order supersedes all previous orders wef date of issue of this order.


(Rajesh Dhankhar)
Vice Admiral
Chairman PPOC & DCIDS (DOT)

02 Sep 26

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Appendix 'A'

(Refers Para 10 of JO/08/2026/ Adm/ Wearing of Service Medals by Ex-Servicemen (ESM) and Wearing of Family Medals by Next of Kin (NoK) of Deceased Personnel dated 02 Sep 26)

WEARING OF SERVICE MEDALS BY EX-SERVICEMEN (ESM) AND WEARING OF FAMILY MEDALS BY NEXT OF KIN (NoK) OF DECEASED PERSONNEL

1. Formal Dress – Men

1.1. **National Dress.** Black/ Cream colour short buttoned-up coat (Jodhpuri), trousers of same colour with oxford pattern shoes.

1.2. **Lounge Suit/ Combination and Shirt & Tie.** Two/ Three-piece Lounge Suit, combination with tie during winters and full sleeve light colour shirt & tie and dark colour trousers during summers. Appropriate tie pins, lapel pins and cuff links can also be worn.

2. Formal Dress – Women.

2.1. **National Dress.** Sober colour Saree, jewellery and makeup appropriate for a formal occasion may be worn.

2.2. **Suit/ Lounge Suit/ Combination.** Women may wear sober coloured Suit – Kameez with Salwaar/ Churidar and Dupatta. However, sleeveless kurtas and casual lowers like palazzo pants/ cigarette pants will not be worn. Lounge Suit/ Combination/ Shirt & Tie as per weather conditions may also be worn.

2.3. **Footwear.** Only closed footwear will be worn with formal dress.