



LETTERS OF COUNSELING, REPRIMAND, AND ADMONISHMENT ON ENLISTED PERSONNEL

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1. **INTRODUCTION:** This handout is designed to give you some basic information about your rights with respect to receiving letters of counseling (LOCs), letters of reprimand (LORs), or letters of admonishment (LOAs).
 - a. **Definition:** LOCs, LORs, and LOAs are administrative disciplinary measures available to commanders and supervisors under AFI 36-2907. They can be written or verbal. Reprimands are more severe than admonishments.
 - b. **When used:** These actions are intended to improve, correct, and instruct subordinates who depart from standards of performance, military bearing, integrity, and either on duty or off duty conduct, and whose actions degrade the individual and unit mission. These actions need not state an offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). If you receive a written LOC, LOR, or LOA, the letter must state:
 1. What you did or failed to do, citing specific incidents and their dates.
 2. What improvement is expected.
 3. That further deviation may result in more severe action.
 4. That you have three duty days to submit documents for consideration, which will become part of the record.
 - c. **Who can give it:** Any commander, supervisor, or person in authority can take these actions.
 - d. **How to rebut:** You have three duty days from the day you receive the action to respond. This is your chance to document your side of the story. It's always a good idea to do a response to the action if you feel the letter doesn't accurately reflect what happened. If you do not believe you did anything wrong, then explain why you believe that. If it's a misunderstanding, then clear it up in your written response. If you know you did the behavior described in the LOC/LOR/LOA, apologize for it. Follow the sample format provided at the end of this handout to provide a written response. The response does not have to be written, but it is highly recommended. You will want to write a brief but thorough explanation of the incident and attach any supporting documents you have. Whatever you do, do not make excuses; it usually hurts you more than it helps. Take responsibility for your own actions. Your rebuttal will be attached to the original LOC/LOR/LOA. If you do not respond within three days, you generally

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forfeit your right to submit a statement unless the issuer waives the time limit for good cause.

- e. **Result:** If the person giving the LOC/LOR/LOA believes you did nothing wrong the LOC/LOR/LOA will be destroyed. If not destroyed, your response will be attached to the LOC/LOR/LOA and filed in your PIF. LOCs/LORs/LOAs can be kept in your PIF until you PCS or taken out at an earlier by the individual who issued the LOC/LOR/LOA. LOCs/LORs/LOAs are not permanent. Once you PCS, no one knows what LOCs/LORs/LOAs you've received.
- f. **Appeal:** There is technically no appeal to an LOC/LOR/LOA. The only way it can be "thrown out" is for the commander to rescind the action. Commanders do consider how long ago a LOC/LOR/LOA was given and your behavior from that time forward. If your behavior has improved significantly, the LOC/LOR/LOA can be destroyed. The inspector general or equal opportunity treatment office may be able to help you if you feel there has been discrimination or that the action is grossly unfair.
- g. **Effect in the Long Run.** An LOC/LOR/LOA, in and of itself, will not keep you from PCSing, reenlisting, WAPS testing, etc. You cannot lose a stripe or pay from an LOC/LOR/LOA. If you collect LORs/LOAs (in other words, if you keep getting more and more), the Commander may choose to initiate a Unfavorable Information File (UIF), Control Roster, or discharge from the Air Force. A person can be discharged with only one LOR; however, it is not the norm. (See **Discharge** fact sheet for more information)
- h. **Placement in an UIF:** If your commander is going to have an LOC/LOR/LOA placed in an Unfavorable Information File (UIF), he or she must advise you of this. Normally, the commander will use an AF Form 1058 to notify you of the intent to file information in a UIF, obtain your response, and record the final decision. If the commander does not use an AF Form 1058, he or she will include notice of the intent to refer the letter for filing in you UIF in the body of the LOR/LOA. The action generally will stay in the UIF for one year from the date the commander signs section V of AF Form 1058. (See **UIF** fact sheet for more information.)

2. **CONCLUSION:** This fact sheet was intended to give you an overview of your options concerning LORs. If you should have any further questions, you should review AFI 36-2907. If you still have any further questions, please schedule an appointment with the Area Defense Counsel at 256-3246. Since an LOR is an administrative action and there is no right to an attorney, you will be seen time and resource permitting.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE FORMAT for LOC/LOR/LOA

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR (Name or Office Symbol of Person Who Signed LOR)

FROM: (Your Rank and Full Name)

SUBJECT: Response to Letter of Reprimand, dated

1. Use the following introductory paragraph: *This statement concerns the letter of reprimand I received on (date) for (offense). I respectfully request that you consider the following information.*
2. If you believe you did not commit the offense, explain why:
 - Point out discrepancies in the version of events in the LOR
 - Clarify incorrect statements made in the LOR
 - Briefly state what happened in your own words
 - Were your actions misinterpreted? By whom?
 - Were you authorized to do as you did? By whom?
 - Do you have any other explanation? If so, describe
3. If you know you committed the offense:
 - Admit it and apologize
 - Briefly describe any circumstances which explain your actions
 - Avoid making excuses or blaming others
 - Accept responsibility
 - Stress that you have no intention of repeating the offense again
4. Ask for consideration of your background and duty performance so that your unit can realize that you are an asset to the Air Force, such as:
 - Tech school or other specialized training
 - What your job is and what you like about it
 - Any special honors, awards, or achievements you've earned
 - Letters of Appreciation, nominations (Amn of the Quarter, Below-the-Zone)
 - Good EPRs or character statements attached
5. *In conclusion,...*
 - Apologize for the incident in your own words, if you can (which is usually the best thing to do
 - *Based on (evidence submitted and/or good character and/or excellent duty performance, etc.) I respectfully request you do not give me this LOR*
 - *Reassure that regardless of the outcome of this situation, you are going to take positive steps to overcome this in the future or make behavioral changes to ensure this doesn't happen again.*
 - *Thank you for taking the time to review this response.*

(Sign above your signature block.)
FULL NAME, Rank, USAF