

ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Richmond, April 29, 1863.

GENERAL ORDERS. }  
No. 51. }

To simplify the manner of effecting discharges and furloughs, the following Orders, condensed from those heretofore issued, are published for the government of the army :

I. When a soldier, *present with his regiment or company*, shall be unfit for military service in consequence of wounds, disease or infirmity, his captain shall forward to the commander of the department or of the army in the field, through the regimental, brigade and other commanders, a statement of the case, with "certificates of disability," that he is totally unfit for service, signed by the surgeon of the battalion or regiment, according to the form prescribed in the Medical Regulations. If the recommendation for the discharge of the invalid be approved by the department or army commander, he will endorse the order for the discharge, upon the "certificate of disability;" which will be sent back, to be signed by the commanding officer of the regiment or battalion to which the invalid soldier's company belongs, and afterwards forwarded by the captain to the Adjutant and Inspector General. The "discharge" will be signed by the regimental or battalion commander, and "final statements," by the company commander.

II. When the soldier, *present with his command*, is certified to be laboring under temporary disability, which requires his removal or a change of climate, the commander of the department or of the army in the field may grant a furlough of 30 days; which, in extreme cases, may be extended by him to sixty days.

III. When a soldier *is absent from his company, battalion or regiment*, in hospital, and is unfit for military service, for reasons set forth in paragraph I of these Orders, the commandant of the post, upon the recommendation of an examining board, to consist of two or more medical officers, established by the commandant of the post (or if there be no such board, the senior surgeon of the hospital) may grant him a furlough for 30 days, subject to extension by the commander of the department or army in the field, when he will make out "certificates of disability," and send them to the commander of the company, to be forwarded

by him, as prescribed in the preceding paragraph. But when access to commanders is *difficult*, and attended with *great delay*, and the case is urgent, the certificates of disability may be forwarded by the surgeon directly to the Surgeon General, for his approval; which being given, the discharge will be authorized from the Adjutant and Inspector General's office; and the surgeon will make out "final statements."

IV. When a soldier, *absent from his command*, certified by the surgeon or assistant surgeon of the army to be unfit for present duty, and that his health requires his removal or change of climate, the commander of the post, if access to the commander of the department or of the army in the field be difficult, may grant the soldier a furlough, not to exceed 30 days, and submit the application for a longer period, if necessary, to the General to whose command the soldier may belong; or, without granting the furlough, he may refer it to the discretion of such Commanding General.

V. In every case where a soldier has been discharged under paragraph III, by orders from the Adjutant and Inspector General's office, and the "descriptive list" and "final statements" cannot be had, he will be mustered for payment upon hospital rolls by the surgeon in charge, upon his affidavit, taken before one or more witnesses, that he has not received pay for the period for which he claims it to be due, and that he is not indebted to the Confederate States government beyond the amount stated by him.

VI. Due notices of all furloughs and discharges granted under these Orders, will be forwarded, through department and army commanders, to the Adjutant and Inspector General, and to the immediate commander of the company to which the soldier belongs.

VII. All Orders heretofore issued relating to furloughs and discharges for the causes aforesaid, are hereby revoked.

By order.

S. COOPER,  
*Adjutant and Inspector General.*