

Haynes Boone's Advocacy for LGBTQ+ Veterans Receives Nationwide News Coverage

January 9, 2025 Chelsea Corey

PRACTICES Litigation

Haynes Boone [Litigation](#) Partner [Chelsea Corey](#) helped lead an effort to bring justice to [more than 35,000 gay and lesbian military veterans](#) who were dismissed because of their sexual orientation, and in many cases denied an honorable discharge.

The settlement with the U.S. Department of Defense, which is subject to court approval, is a step forward in simplifying the complicated and challenging process veterans face in seeking discharge upgrades and the removal of sexual orientation indicators on their discharge papers.

The effort earned Corey as spot among *The American Lawyer's* [Litigator of the Week](#) honorees.

News outlets around the world covered the major development:

[Reuters: Pentagon to consider honorable discharges for gay veterans barred under 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'](#)

"Chelsea Corey of law firm Haynes Boone, one of the lead attorneys in the case, told Reuters that including veterans' sexual orientation on the paperwork demonstrated intentional discrimination.

Discharges listed as "other than honorable" can bar veterans from receiving various benefits including healthcare, loans, job opportunities and tuition assistance. Corey noted the settlement would allow some of those affected to finally access veterans' medical and other benefits. The deal must be approved by U.S. Magistrate Judge Joseph Spero, who is scheduled to hold a hearing on Feb. 12."

[American Lawyer: Pentagon Settles Suit Seeking to Clear Records of Service Members Discharged for Being LGBTQ](#)

The settlement is expected to ease access to health care, loans, job opportunities and tuition assistance for class members.

"This agreement represents a meaningful step toward restoring their honor and providing long-overdue recognition for their service to the nation," said a statement from Haynes Boone in Charlotte, North Carolina, whose attorney Chelsea Corey represented the plaintiffs and the class.

Attorneys from King & Spalding, the Impact Fund and Legal Aid at Work also represented the plaintiffs and class members. "We are proud to announce an important proposed settlement that brings justice to more than 30,000 LGBTQ+ veterans who were unfairly discharged under discriminatory policies," Corey said. "These veterans deserve our honor and respect and finally their discharge paperwork can reflect that honor."

[CBS News: Pentagon agrees to historic legal settlement with gay and lesbian veterans](#)

[*Bloomberg Law: LGBTQ+ Veterans, Military Settle 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Lawsuit*](#)

[CNN: Pentagon reaches settlement that could restore benefits to LGBTQ+ veterans discharged under 'don't ask, don't tell'](#)