



You entered active duty with the Marine Corps Reserve on 12 December 1972. On 27 November 1973, a special court-martial (SPCM) convicted you of unauthorized absence (UA) for 172 days. During the period from February 1974 to April 1974, you accumulated seven unsatisfactory drill attendance. As a result, on 8 April 1974, your CO notified you by certified mail of his intention to recommend you be separated from the Marine Corps Reserves due to failure to participate in scheduled drills (Shirking). Your failure to respond to the certified mail resulted in you waiving your rights associated with your administrative separation processing. On 30 April 1974, your CO forwarded your package to the separation authority (SA) recommending your discharge due to shirking with an Other Than Honorable (OTH) characterization of service. On 6 June 1974, an Administrative Separation Board (ADB) found that you committed misconduct due to shirking and recommended you receive an OTH characterization of service. On 16 August 1974, the SA approved the recommendations and, on 9 September 1974, you were so discharged.

The Board carefully considered all potentially mitigating factors to determine whether the interests of justice warrant relief in your case in accordance with the Kurta, Hagel, and Wilkie Memos. These included, but were not limited to your desire to upgrade your discharge and contention that you suffered from mental health concerns and alcohol abuse during military service due to the death of your mother, which contributed to your misconduct and might have mitigated your discharge character of service. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you did not provide supporting documentation describing post-service accomplishments or advocacy letters.

As part of the Board's review, a qualified mental health professional reviewed your request and provided the Board with an AO on 20 September 2022. The mental health professional stated in pertinent part:

There is no evidence that Petitioner was diagnosed with a mental health condition in military service, or that he exhibited any psychological symptoms or behavioral changes indicative of a diagnosable mental health condition. Throughout his disciplinary processing, there were no concerns raised of a mental health condition that would have warranted a referral for evaluation. Post-service, he has submitted a claim of mental health concerns and has provided no medical evidence in support of his claims. Unfortunately, his personal statement is not sufficiently detailed to establish clinical symptoms or provide a nexus with his misconduct. Additional records (e.g., post-service mental health records describing the Petitioner's diagnosis, symptoms, and their specific link to his misconduct) would aid in rendering an alternate opinion.

The AO concluded, "it is my considered clinical opinion there is insufficient evidence of a mental health condition that may be attributed to military service. There is insufficient evidence his misconduct could be attributed to a mental health condition."

After thorough review, the Board concluded these potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined your misconduct, as evidenced by your SPCM and failure to attend scheduled drills, outweighed the potential mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and determined it

showed a complete disregard for military authority and regulations. The Board also concluded that, even if you were dealing with the death of your mother, your failure to communicate that issues with your command severely diminished your arguments that an injustice exists in your case. Further, the Board noted that there is no evidence in your record, and you submitted none, to support your contentions. Finally, the Board concurred with the AO that there is insufficient evidence your misconduct could be attributed a mental health condition. Even in light of the Wilkie Memo and reviewing the record holistically, the Board did not find evidence of an error or injustice that warrants upgrading your characterization of service or granting an upgraded characterization of service as a matter of clemency or equity. Accordingly, given the totality of the circumstances, the Board determined your request does not merit relief.

You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new matters, which will require you to complete and submit a new DD Form 149. New matters are those not previously presented to or considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

12/6/2022

