



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS
701 S. COURTHOUSE ROAD, SUITE 1001
ARLINGTON, VA 22204-2490

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Docket No. 7807-22
Ref: Signature Date



Dear Petitioner:

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to Section 1552 of Title 10, United States Code. After careful and conscientious consideration of relevant portions of your naval record and your application, the Board for Correction of Naval Records (Board) found the evidence submitted insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice. Consequently, your application has been denied.

Although you did not file your application in a timely manner, the statute of limitation was waived in accordance with the 25 August 2017 guidance from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (Kurta Memo). A three-member panel of the Board, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 1 February 2023. The names and votes of the panel members will be furnished upon request. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application together with all material submitted in support thereof, relevant portions of your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations, and policies, to include the Kurta Memo, the 3 September 2014 guidance from the Secretary of Defense regarding discharge upgrade requests by Veterans claiming post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Hagel Memo), and the 25 July 2018 guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations (Wilkie Memo). The Board also considered the advisory opinion (AO) furnished by a qualified mental health professional, which was previously provided to you. Although you were afforded an opportunity to submit an AO rebuttal, you chose not to do so.

You enlisted in the Navy and began a period of active duty on 16 September 1977. On 23 February 1978, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for two specifications of unauthorized absence (UA) totaling 43 days. On 15 May 1978, you were evaluated and diagnosed with immature personality disorder and alcohol abuse. On 31 May 1978, you received a second NJP for wrongful possession of marijuana. On 30 July 1979, you were convicted by a special court-martial (SPCM) of absence from your appointed place of duty, UA totaling 290 days, disrespect in language towards a superior noncommissioned officer, and wrongfully

communicating a threat. As punishment, you were sentenced to confinement, forfeiture of pay, reduction in rank, and a Bad Conduct Discharge (BCD). The BCD was subsequently approved at all levels of review and, on 20 February 1981, you were so discharged.

Post-discharge, you applied to the Naval Discharge Review Board (NDRB) for a discharge upgrade. The NDRB denied your request for an upgrade, on 30 April 1987, based on their determination that your discharge was proper as issued.

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 change your discharge character of service and contentions that you suffered from alcoholism and never received counseling or treatment. 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 16 December 2022. The AO stated in pertinent part:

Petitioner was appropriately referred for psychological evaluation and properly evaluated during his enlistment. His personality disorder diagnosis was based on observed behaviors and performance during his period of service, the information he chose to disclose, and the psychological evaluation performed. He has provided no post-service evidence of PTSD or another mental health condition. Although he was diagnosed with an alcohol use disorder during service, there is no evidence he was unaware of his misconduct or not responsible for his behavior. His in-service misconduct appears to be consistent with his diagnosed personality disorder, rather than evidence of PTSD or another mental health condition incurred in or exacerbated by military service. 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 diagnosis of PTSD. There is in-service evidence of a diagnosis of a mental health condition (personality disorder and alcohol use disorder) during service. There is insufficient evidence his misconduct could be attributed to PTSD or another mental health condition, other than his diagnosed personality disorder."

After thorough review, the Board concluded your potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined your misconduct as evidenced by your two NJPs and SPCM conviction, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and concluded that it showed a complete disregard of military authority and regulations. Further, the Board concurred with the AO and determined that there is in-service evidence of a diagnosis of a mental health condition (personality disorder and alcohol use disorder) during service, there is insufficient evidence of a diagnosis of PTSD, and there is insufficient evidence your misconduct could be attributed to PTSD or another mental health condition, other than your diagnosed personality disorder. As

noted in the AO, although, you diagnosed with an alcohol use disorder during service, there is no evidence you were unaware of your misconduct or not responsible for your behavior. As a result, the Board concluded that your discharge was proper and equitable under standards of law and discipline and that the discharge accurately reflects your conduct during your period of service, which was terminated by your BCD. The Board determined that the evidence of record did not demonstrate that you were not mentally responsible for your conduct or that you should otherwise not be held accountable for your actions. Ultimately, the Board concluded your conduct constituted a significant departure from that expected of a service member and continues to warrant a BCD. 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 granting you the relief you requested or granting relief as a matter of clemency or equity. Accordingly, given the totality of the circumstances, the Board determined that 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,

2/16/2023

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Executive Director

Signed by: █