



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

■
Docket No. 1727-23
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 your application was not filed in a timely manner, the Board found it in the interest of justice to waive the statute of limitations and consider your application on its merits. A three-member panel of the Board, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 13 September 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 the 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 25 July 2018 guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness regarding equity, injustice or clemency determinations (Wilkie Memo).

The Board determined that your personal appearance, with or without counsel, would not materially add to their understanding of the issues involved. Therefore, the Board determined that a personal appearance was not necessary and considered your case based on the evidence of record.

You enlisted in the Navy and began a period of active duty on 16 November 1972. On 7 March 1973, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for unauthorized absence (UA), a period totaling three days. The record shows, on 17 March 1973, you commenced a period of UA that subsequently concluded upon your surrender to military authorities on 29 March 1973, a period totaling 12 days. The record shows, on 23 April 1973, you commenced a period of UA that subsequently concluded upon your apprehension by civilian authorities and return to military authorities on 29 May 1973, a period totaling 36 days. On 12 June 1973, you were issued an administrative remarks (Page 13) counseling concerning deficiencies in your military behavior,

and advised that any further misconduct of a discreditable nature with either civilian or military authorities may be grounds for administrative separation processing.

On 3 July 1973, you submitted a written request for separation for the good of the service (GOS) in lieu of trial by court-martial for two specifications of UA totaling 49 days, missing movement, and failure to obey a lawful order. Prior to submitting this request, you conferred with a military lawyer at which time you were advised of your rights and warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. As part of this discharge request, you admitted your guilt to the foregoing offenses and acknowledged that your characterization of service upon discharge would be Other Than Honorable (OTH) conditions. The separation authority approved your request and directed your commanding officer to discharge you with an OTH characterization of service. On 20 July 1973, you were discharged from the Navy with an OTH characterization of service by reason of good of the service.

The Board carefully considered all potentially mitigating factors to determine whether the interests of justice warrant relief in your case in accordance with the Wilkie Memo. These included, but were not limited to, your desire to change your discharge character of service and assertion that you grew up with an “extremely alcoholic and abusive mother and father,” you were rebellious against all authority figures and wanted to just get away from it all so you joined the Navy, your rebellious nature drove you to make many mistakes which you regret now that you are older, you are extremely remorseful of those actions that occurred 50 years ago, and you are not asking for pity but only asking for mercy in determining your application. Additionally, the Board noted you checked the “PTSD” and “Other Mental Health” box on your application but chose not to respond to the 27 September 2022 letter from the Board requesting evidence in support of your claim. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you did not provide supporting documentation describing post-service accomplishments or advocacy letters.

After thorough review, the Board concluded your potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined that your misconduct, as evidenced by your NJP, periods of UA, and GOS request, 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. The Board also noted that the misconduct that led to your request to be discharged in lieu of trial by court-martial was substantial and, more likely than not, would have resulted in a punitive discharge and extensive punishment at a court-martial. Therefore, the Board determined that you already received a large measure of clemency when the convening authority agreed to administratively separate you in lieu of trial by court-martial; thereby sparing you the stigma of a court-martial conviction and likely punitive discharge. Finally, the Board noted you provided no evidence to substantiate your contentions. As a result, the Board concluded your conduct constituted a significant departure from that expected of a service member and continues to warrant an OTH characterization. While the Board appreciates your expression of remorse for your actions, 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,

9/28/2023

