

ARMY BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 2 July 2024

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20230014561

APPLICANT REQUESTS: an upgrade of his bad conduct discharge.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S) CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:

- DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record)
- Standard Form (SF) 180 (Request Pertaining to Military Records)

FACTS:

1. The applicant did not file within the 3-year time frame provided in Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552(b); however, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR) conducted a substantive review of this case and determined it is in the interest of justice to excuse the applicant's failure to timely file.
2. The applicant states, in effect, that while serving in the Army, he faced racial discrimination from officers and Soldiers. He states that the altercation that he was court-martialed for, the opposing party did not receive any form of punishment, and feels as though he was racially profiled, and discharged accordingly. He explains that during his time in service, he was treated unfairly due to his race, whereby he received a court-martial resulting in a three month confinement and bad conduct discharge.
3. The applicant provides a SF 180 wherein he states he needs benefits and military help with living a normal life.
4. A review of the applicant's service record shows:
 - a. He enlisted in the Regular Army on 23 September 1980.
 - b. On 13 July 1981, the applicant accepted nonjudicial punishment (NJP) for one specification of assaulting a noncommissioned officer by striking him with his fist and his foot. His punishment included reduction to private, E-1.

c. On 27 July 1982, the applicant accepted NJP for one specification of resisting lawful apprehension by an Armed Forces policeman and one specification of disobeying a lawful order.

d. The available service record is void of the Special Court-Martial Order detailing the applicant's charges and findings.

e. On 22 March 1984, a memorandum shows, the applicant was placed in an involuntary excess leave status pending punitive discharge.

f. Special Court-Martial Order (SPCMO) Number 82 dated 12 December 1984 shows the applicant was sentenced to be reduced to private, E-1, a bad conduct discharge, confinement at hard labor for three months, and a fine of \$1,200.00 was adjudged on 23 December 1983, as promulgated in SPCMO #20 dated 22 March 1984. SPCMO 82, after Article 71(c) was complied with and the sentence was affirmed, ordered the bad conduct discharge executed.

g. On 28 February 1986, he was discharged from active duty with a bad conduct characterization of service. His DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) shows he completed 5 years, 1 month, and 13 days of active service with 97 days of lost time. He was assigned separation code JJD and the narrative reason for separation listed as "As a Result of Court-Martial," with reentry code 4. It also shows he was awarded or authorized the following:

- Army Service Ribbon
- Sharpshooter Marksmanship Qualification Badge with Rifle Bar (M-16)

h. On 8 May 1986, a DD Form 215 (Correction to the DD Form 214) was issued correcting the applicants spelling of his first name.

5. By regulation, a member will be given a bad conduct discharge pursuant only to an approved sentence of a general or special court-martial. The appellate review must be completed, and the affirmed sentence ordered duly executed.

6. In reaching its determination, the Board can consider the applicant's petition and her service record in accordance with the published equity, injustice, or clemency determination guidance.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

After reviewing the application, all supporting documents, and the evidence found within the military record, the Board found that relief was not warranted. The Board carefully considered the applicant's request, supporting documents, evidence in the records, and published DoD guidance for liberal consideration of discharge upgrade requests.

a. The specific charges and their specifications are unknown; however, other evidence shows the applicant was convicted by a court-martial that sentenced him to a bad conduct discharge. The ABCMR begins its consideration of each case with the presumption of administrative regularity. The applicant has the burden of proving an error or injustice by a preponderance of the evidence. The Board presumed that the applicant's trial by a court-martial was warranted by the gravity of the offenses charged, that his conviction and discharge were presumably conducted in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and the discharge appropriately characterizes the misconduct for which he was convicted. He was given a bad conduct discharge pursuant to an approved sentence of a court-martial. The appellate review was completed, and the affirmed sentence was ordered duly executed. All requirements of law and regulation were presumably met with respect to the conduct of the court-martial and the appellate review process, and the rights of the applicant were fully protected. The Board found no error or injustice in the available separation processing.

b. Also, the applicant provided no evidence of post-service achievements or letters of reference of a persuasive nature in support of a clemency determination. Based on a preponderance of evidence, the Board determined that the character of service the applicant received upon separation was not in error or unjust.

BOARD VOTE:

Mbr 1 Mbr 2 Mbr 3

:	:	:	GRANT FULL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT PARTIAL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT FORMAL HEARING
■	■	■	DENY APPLICATION

BOARD DETERMINATION/RECOMMENDATION:

The evidence presented does not demonstrate the existence of a probable error or injustice. Therefore, the Board determined the overall merits of this case are insufficient as a basis for correction of the records of the individual concerned.

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I certify that herein is recorded the true and complete record of the proceedings of the Army Board for Correction of Military Records in this case.

REFERENCES:

1. Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552(b), provides that applications for correction of military records must be filed within 3 years after discovery of the alleged error or injustice. This provision of law also allows the ABCMR to excuse an applicant's failure to timely file within the 3-year statute of limitations if the ABCMR determines it would be in the interest of justice to do so.

2. Army Regulation 635-200 (Personnel Separations – Enlisted Personnel), in effect at the time, sets forth the basic authority for the separation of enlisted personnel.

a. Paragraph 3-7a (Honorable discharge) states an honorable discharge is a separation with honor. The honorable characterization is appropriate when the quality of the member's service generally has met the standards of the acceptable conduct and performance of duty for Army personnel, or is otherwise so meritorious that any other characterization would be clearly inappropriate.

b. Paragraph 3-7b (General discharge) states a general discharge is a separation from the Army under honorable conditions. When authorized, it is issued to a member whose military record is satisfactory but not sufficiently meritorious to warrant an honorable discharge.

c. Paragraph 3-7c (Under Other Than Honorable Conditions) states a discharge under other than honorable conditions is an administrative separation from the service under conditions other than honorable. It may be issued for misconduct, fraudulent entry, homosexuality, security reasons, or for the good of the service.

d. Paragraph 3-11 (DD Form 259A (Bad Conduct Discharge Certificate) states a member will be given a bad conduct discharge pursuant only to an approved sentence of a general or special court-martial. The appellate review must be completed and the affirmed sentence ordered duly executed.

3. Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552, provides that the Secretary of a Military Department may correct any military record of the Secretary's Department when the Secretary considers it necessary to correct an error or remove an injustice. With respect to records of courts-martial and related administrative records pertaining to court-martial cases tried or reviewed under the UCMJ, action to correct any military record of the Secretary's Department may extend only to correction of a record to reflect actions taken by reviewing authorities under the UCMJ or action on the sentence of a court-martial for purposes of clemency. Such corrections shall be made by the Secretary acting through boards of civilians of the executive part of that Military Department.

4. On 25 July 2018, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issued guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NRs) regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations. Clemency generally refers to relief specifically granted from a criminal sentence. BCM/NRs may grant clemency regardless of the type of court-martial. However, the guidance applies to more than clemency from a sentencing in a court-martial; it also applies to other corrections, including changes in a discharge, which may be warranted based on equity or relief from injustice.

a. This guidance does not mandate relief, but rather provides standards and principles to guide Boards in application of their equitable relief authority. In determining whether to grant relief based on equity, injustice, or clemency grounds, BCM/NRs shall consider the prospect for rehabilitation, external evidence, sworn testimony, policy changes, relative severity of misconduct, mental and behavioral health conditions, official governmental acknowledgement that a relevant error or injustice was committed, and uniformity of punishment.

b. Changes to the narrative reason for discharge and/or an upgraded character of service granted solely on equity, injustice, or clemency grounds normally should not result in separation pay, retroactive promotions, and payment of past medical expenses or similar benefits that might have been received if the original discharge had been for the revised reason or had the upgraded service characterization.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//