

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 24 April 2025

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20230015317

APPLICANT REQUESTS: correction of his entry grade credit to award him the rank of major (MAJ)/O-4.

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

- DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record)
- Emails to and from Officer Strength Manager
- DA Form 5074-1-R (Record of Award of Entry Grade Credit)
- Appeal of Constructive Credit Awarded
- Response to Appeal of Constructive Credit
- Under Secretary Report

FACTS:

1. The applicant states, in pertinent part:

- He is asking for award of entry grade credit in the rank of MAJ
- He is a Behavioral Health Officer
- He is asking that his doctoral degree be counted towards his entry grade credit
- He is requesting that all of his professional experience be counted to include all his professional experience as a Licensed Social Worker and his additional licensing
- He is commissioned in a critical career field in high demand
- Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6000.13 states additional credit may be granted in unusual cases based on special experience in a particular field
- He was lied to by his recruiting command
- He has dedicated 23 years to the Army

2. The applicant provides and his service record shows:

- College transcripts show he had degrees in criminal justice and clinical social work
- He was enlisted in the Army National Guard (ARNG) from 6 December 1999 through 7 April 2020; he was discharged for appointment as a commissioned officer

- Emails to and from the Officer Strength Manager state in pertinent part the requirement for a Social Worker is a Master's Degree; he would not receive credit for the doctoral degree
- On 8 April 2020, he took the oath of office in [REDACTED] ARNG in the rank of first lieutenant (1LT)
- Record of Award of Entry Grade Credit, 16 September 2020, shows he received 3 years, 2 months, and 6 days total constructive credit which qualified him for the rank of 1LT
- On 14 February 2021, he appealed the constructive credit awarded
- On 28 September 2022, [REDACTED] ARNG denied his appeal

3. On 14 January 2025, the Chief, Special Actions Branch, National Guard Bureau (NGB) provided an advisory opinion, which states in pertinent part:

- NGB recommends disapproval of the applicant's request
- The applicant is in [REDACTED] ARNG as a Behavioral Health Officer
- His rank is captain with a date of rank (DOR) of 3 July 2020
- He was appointed as a 1LT with a DOR of 2 August 2018, effective 8 April 2020
- He requests more constructive credit based on his doctoral degree and professional experience
- The degree provided by the applicant was awarded after the date of his appointment therefore cannot be credited as he was already commissioned
- The minimum qualifying degree requirements for Social Workers is a Master of Social Work
- Workers must also possess two years of experience within the field, which is not creditable as professional experience
- It is the opinion of NGB, which was concurred to by [REDACTED] ARNG, that the applicant's request be disapproved

4. On 26 January 2025, the applicant rebutted the advisory opinion, stating in pertinent part:

- The advisory opinion misaligns, misapplies and adds words to Army and DoD Regulations
- The advisory opinion ignores the applicable regulation
- He does not agree with the advisory opinion
- He was told that his doctoral degree did not count
- He completed his doctoral degree five weeks after 8 April 2020
- He would not have commissioned in April if he had known his doctoral degree would not count for constructive credit
- Regulations direct that his doctoral degree be counted
- Non-applicable regulations have been cited

- Army regulation provides that a doctoral degree does count for Social Workers
- Such degrees will be credited beyond the requirement of entry

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 applicant's contentions, the military record, and regulatory guidance were carefully considered. Based upon the justification provided by the applicant, and the advisory opinion obtained by the Chief, Special Actions Branch, National Guard Bureau (NGB), the Board concurred with the NGB and found insufficient evidence of an error or injustice which would warrant an amendment to the applicant's active date of rank to major (MAJ)/O-4 based on the degree being awarded after his date of appointment.

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.

5/5/2025

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CHAIRPERSON


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. DODI 6000.13 (Accession and Retention Policies, Programs, and Incentives for Military Health Professions Officers (HPO)) states:
 - a. Constructive Service Credit. This credit is awarded to a person who begins commissioned service after obtaining the additional education, training, or experience required for appointment, designation, or assignment as an HPO. The designation will be to the same grade and date of rank comparable to that attained by officers who begin commissioned service after getting a baccalaureate degree and serve for the period of time it would take to obtain the additional education. Constructive service credit will only be used to determine initial grade, rank in grade, and service in grade for promotion eligibility.
 - b. One year of constructive service credit will be granted for each year of graduate level education toward the first professional degree completed when that degree is required for appointment in the professional specialty being entered. The maximum number of years of constructive service credit that may be awarded under this provision is the number of years of graduate level education required by a majority of institutions that award degrees in that professional field.
 - c. Credit for master's and doctorate degrees in a health profession other than those listed in paragraph 1c(3)(a) (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Doctors of Dental Surgery, Doctors of Dental Medicine, Doctors of Veterinary Medicine) of this enclosure may be awarded based on actual full-time equivalent education of up to 2 years for a master's degree and up to 4 years for a doctorate degree. Credit may not include time spent in attainment of baccalaureate or other lower degrees. No additional credit may be given for more than one advanced degree in a single field or closely related field. The total credit allowed for both a master's and a doctorate degree may not exceed the maximum allowed for a doctorate.
 - d. Credit will be awarded for any period of advanced education in a health profession (other than medicine and dentistry) beyond the baccalaureate degree level that exceeds the basic education required for the appointment, if such advanced education will be directly used by the Military Department concerned.
 - e. Credit may only be given for experience in a health profession other than medicine or dentistry if such experience will be directly used by the Military Department concerned.
2. Army Regulation (AR) 135-101 (Appointment of Reserve Commissioned Officers for Assignment to Army Medical Department Branches) states:

a. Grade and date of rank upon original appointment and assignment to an AMEDD branch will be determined by the number of years of entry grade credit awarded. Except as limited by maximum credit limits (a below (Medical Corps and Dental Corps), entry grade credit granted will be the sum of constructive service credit and credit for prior active commissioned service. Entry grade credit awarded to AMEDD officers upon-appointment or assignment will be recorded on DA Form 5074-R.

b. Table 3-1 (Constructive Service Credit) states for Medical Service Corps credit one year for each year (or school year) limited by level of degree. Credit for additional advanced degrees (see Table 3-4). Degree must add adjunctive skill to primary specialty and must contribute directly to performance in anticipated duty position.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//