

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 10 October 2024

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20240003985

APPLICANT REQUESTS:

- an upgrade of her under other than honorable conditions discharge to honorable
- a video/telephonic appearance before the Board

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

DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record).

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 she is requesting an upgrade of her discharge to honorable. She was in the process of separation in the same month that she was charged with failing a urinalysis and discharged. She never saw any information of the positive test and believes her first sergeant used the procedures to discharge her because she was a black female. The offense was the first in an otherwise excellent career.
3. A review of the applicant's service record shows:
  - a. She enlisted in the Regular Army on 25 July 1978. She was honorably released from active duty on 23 July 1981. Her DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) shows she completed 2 years, 11 months, and 29 days of active service with no lost time. It also shows she was awarded or authorized:
    - Good Conduct Medal
    - Expert Marksmanship Qualification Badge with Rifle Bar
  - b. Having had prior active service, she enlisted in the Regular Army on 31 January 1989 for a period of 4 years. The highest grade she held during this enlistment was E-4.

c. The available service record is void of nonjudicial punishment and/or the facts and circumstances surrounding the applicant's discharge processing.

d. On 27 April 1992, she was discharged from active duty with an under other than honorable conditions characterization of service. Her DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) shows she completed 3 years, 2 months, and 26 days of active service with 2 years, 11 months, and 29 days of prior active service and no lost time. The narrative reason for separation listed as "Misconduct – Commission of a Serious Offense." It also shows she was awarded or authorized:

- Army Service Ribbon
- National Defense Service Medal
- Army Achievement Medal

4. By regulation (AR 15-185), an applicant is not entitled to a hearing before the ABCMR. Hearings may be authorized by a panel of the ABCMR or by the Director of the ABCMR.

5. By regulation (AR 635-200), action will be taken to separate a Soldier for misconduct when it is clearly established that despite attempts to rehabilitate or develop him or her as a satisfactory Soldier, further effort is unlikely to succeed. Paragraph 14-12c states Soldiers are subject to action per this section for commission of a serious military or civil offense, if the specific circumstances of the offense warrant separation and a punitive discharge is, or would be, authorized for the same or a closely related offense under the Manual for Courts-Martial.

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:

1. The Board found the available evidence sufficient to consider this case fully and fairly without a personal appearance by the applicant.
2. The Board carefully considered the applicant's request, evidence in the records, and published Department of Defense guidance for consideration of discharge upgrade requests. The Board considered the applicant's statement, her record of service, the reason for her separation, and whether to apply clemency. The Board found insufficient evidence of in-service mitigating factors, noting that the record does not contain any documentation showing what misconduct led to her discharge. The applicant provided no evidence of post-service achievements or letters of reference in support of a

clemency determination. Based on a preponderance of the evidence, the Board determined 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.

4/1/2025



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. 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 15-185 (ABCMR) prescribes the policies and procedures for correction of military records by the Secretary of the Army, acting through the ABCMR. The ABCMR begins its consideration of each case with the presumption of administrative regularity, which is that what the Army did was correct.

a. The ABCMR is not an investigative body and decides cases based on the evidence that is presented in the military records provided and the independent evidence submitted with the application. The applicant has the burden of proving an error or injustice by a preponderance of the evidence.

b. The ABCMR may, in its discretion, hold a hearing or request additional evidence or opinions. Additionally, it states in paragraph 2-11 that applicants do not have a right to a hearing before the ABCMR. The Director or the ABCMR may grant a formal hearing whenever justice requires.

3. 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 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. Chapter 14 of the regulation states action will be taken to separate a Soldier for misconduct when it is clearly established that despite attempts to rehabilitate or develop him or her as a satisfactory Soldier, further effort is unlikely to succeed. Paragraph 14-12c states Soldiers are subject to action per this section for commission of a serious military or civil offense, if the specific circumstances of the offense warrant separation and a punitive discharge is, or would be, authorized for the same or a closely related offense under the Manual for Courts-Martial.

4. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issued guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records on 25 July 2018, 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 court-martial forum. However, the guidance applies to more than clemency from a sentencing in a court-martial; it also applies to any other

corrections, including changes in a discharge, which may be warranted on equity or relief from injustice grounds.

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 on the basis of equity, injustice, or clemency grounds, Boards 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//