

ARMY BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 29 July 2025

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20240011707

APPLICANT REQUESTS: correction of his DD Form 214 (Armed Forces of the United States Report of Transfer or Discharge) to show award of the Purple Heart.

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

- DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record)
- Self-Authored Statement
- Standard Form 600 (Chronological Record of Medical Care)
- DD Form 214
- 5 Eyewitness Statement for Bronze Star Medal upgrade
- Silver Star Medal recommendation
- DA Form 638, Silver Star Medal
- Proposed Citation for Silver Star Medal
- Letters of support
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Service Letter to Army Review Board (ARBA)

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:

a. He served in Vietnam with the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion from September 1965 to September 1966 as a crew chief and gunner, advancing from E-3 to E-5 while flying combat missions. Although aircraft weren't required to disembark, he and his crew repeatedly left their helicopters under fire to load wounded soldiers and unload supplies.

b. During a March 1966 mission to a mountaintop in the Central Highlands, one of the helicopters in his flight crashed amid enemy fire. After landing nearby, he ran through high weeds to assist the downed crew and troops. Unaware at first of his

wound, he discovered a punji stake had pierced his right leg only once back aboard the aircraft. The flight surgeon cleaned the puncture, instructed him to return for daily care over four days, and explained that continued bleeding would help flush out any contaminants. He flew continuously without taking time off and believes he earned a Purple Heart, a decoration already awarded to another pilot who sustained similar injuries, and notes that his medical records document the incident.

3. The applicant provides:

a. A Standard Form 600 (Chronological Record of Medical Care) shows, he was treated for punji stick injury to his left calf.

b. The applicant provided supporting documents requesting an upgrade of his Bronze Star Medal with V device to a Silver Star Medal.

4. A review of the applicant's service record shows:

a. He enlisted in the Regular Army on 7 July 1964.

b. He served in Vietnam from 15 August 1965 to 19 September 1966. His DA Form 20 (Enlisted Qualification Record) shows in:

- item 38 (Record of Assignments)
 - A Company, 5th Aviation (AVN), 5th Infantry (INF), 1st Cavalry (CAV) Division (DIV)
 - B Company 229th AVN BN (Assault Helicopter), 1st CAV DIV
- item 40 (Wounds): no entry
- item 41 (Awards and Decorations): Vietnam Service Medal, Air Medal with 6 oakleaf clusters, Bronze Star Medal with V Device, National Defense Service Medal, 1 Overseas Bar

c. He was honorably discharged from active duty on 6 July 1967. His DD Form 214 shows he completed 3 years of active service. It also shows in he was awarded or authorized:

- Vietnam Service Medal with 2 bronze service stars
- Air Medal with 6 oak leaf clusters
- Aircraft Crewman Badge
- National Defense Service Medal
- Bronze Star Medal with V device
- Bronze Star Medal
- Vietnam Campaign Medal

5. The applicant's name is not listed on the Vietnam casualty roster, a compilation of most of those who were wounded in Vietnam, which is used to verify eligibility for the Purple Heart.

6. A review of the Awards and Decorations Computer Assisted Retrieval System maintained by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, which is an index of general orders issued during the Vietnam era between 1965 and 1973, failed to reveal any orders for the Purple Heart pertaining to the applicant.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

After reviewing the application and all supporting documents, the Board determined relief was warranted. The Board carefully considered the applicant's record of service, documents submitted in support of the petition and executed a comprehensive and standard review based on law, policy and regulation. Based upon the combat operations outlined within the applicant's recommendation for his approved Silver Star and the injury described on the applicant's SF 600, dated 18 March 1966, the Board concluded there was sufficient evidence to award and add the Purple Heart to the applicant's military record.

BOARD VOTE:

Mbr 1 Mbr 2 Mbr 3

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

BOARD DETERMINATION/RECOMMENDATION:

The Board determined the evidence presented is sufficient to warrant a recommendation for relief. As a result, the Board recommends that all Department of Army records of the individual concerned be corrected by amending the applicant's DD Form 214 by awarding and adding the Purple Heart for injuries incurred on 18 March 1966, while serving in Vietnam.

X //SIGNED//

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 600-8-22 (Military Awards) prescribes Army policy, criteria, and administrative instructions concerning individual and unit military awards. The Purple Heart is awarded for a wound sustained in action against an enemy or as a result of hostile action. Substantiating evidence must be provided to verify the wound was the result of hostile action, the wound must have required treatment by a medical officer, and the medical treatment must have been made a matter of official record. The Purple Heart differs from all other decorations in that an individual is not "recommended" for the decoration; rather, he or she is entitled to it upon meeting specific criteria. When contemplating eligibility for the Purple Heart, the two critical factors commanders must consider is the degree to which the enemy or hostile force caused the wound and whether the wound was so severe that it required treatment by a medical officer.
3. The Purple Heart was established by General George Washington at Newburgh, NY on 7 August 1782 during the Revolutionary War. It was reestablished by the President of the United States per War Department General Orders Number 3 in 1932. It was awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of the Armed Forces or any civilian national of the United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the U.S. Armed Services after 5 April 1917, died or

sustained wounds as a result of hostile action. Effective 19 May 1998, award of the Purple Heart is limited to members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//