


**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

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Application for Correction of  
the Coast Guard Record of:

**BCMR Docket No. 2024-180**

  
E-4 (former)

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**FINAL DECISION**

This proceeding was conducted according to the provisions of 10 U.S.C. § 1552. The Chair docketed the case after receiving the completed application on January 13, 2022, and assigned it to an attorney to prepare the decision for the Board pursuant to 33 C.F.R. § 52.61(c).

This final decision dated August 28, 2025, is approved and signed by the three duly appointed members who were designated to serve as the Board in this case.

**APPLICANT'S REQUEST AND ALLEGATIONS**

The applicant is a former E-4 who served both active duty and as a reservist. The applicant requests a correction to his time in service and rank listed on his DD214. The applicant claims he did not have a break in service from July 21, 1980 to June 30, 1988 and that he achieved the rank of E-4. His current DD214 reflects his six months served on active duty and his rank at the time he served those six months of active duty, which was in the rank of an E-2. The applicant requests that he be issued an updated DD214 to reflect his full time in service and final rank achieved of E-4.

**SUMMARY OF THE RECORD**

In 1981, the applicant received a DD214 to reflect his six months on active duty from July 23, 1980 to February 13, 1981. He was an E-2 during this service period.

In December 1984, the applicant is recorded on a small arms target practice report as a PS3 (E-4), though it is unclear when he promoted to this rank.

On June 30, 1988, the applicant separated from the USCG Reserve.

**VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD**

On June 3, 2025, a Judge Advocate (JA) for the Coast Guard submitted an advisory opinion in which he recommended that the Board deny relief in this case and adopted the findings and analysis prepared by the Coast Guard Personnel Service Center (PSC).

The JA argued that the application is untimely, and the applicant failed to prove an error or injustice within his DD214. Per Coast Guard policy, a DD214 is issued per active-duty period but not for separation from the reserves.

The JA concurred with the PSC evaluation of the applicant's request. PSC determined there was no error or injustice and the applicant's request should be denied.

### **APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO THE VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD**

On June 25, 2025, the Chair sent the applicant a copy of the Coast Guard's views and invited him to respond within thirty (30) days. The applicant has not responded as of the date of this decision.

### **APPLICABLE LAW AND POLICY**

1. 33 C.F.R. § 52.22. An application for correction of a record must be filed within three years after the Applicant discovered or reasonably should have discovered the alleged error or injustice.
2. Instructions for the Preparation and Distribution of the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, DD Form 214. COMDTINST M1900.4B September 1979.
  - a. Chapter 1.A. Criteria for Issuance of the DD Form 214. The DD Form 214 is issued to cover periods of service on active duty, temporary active duty, active duty for training and special active duty for training, certain periods terminated by a change of status not concurrent with separation from active service and release from a status that is legally determined to be void.

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The Board makes the following findings and conclusions on the basis of the applicant's submissions, the Coast Guard's submission, and applicable law:

1. The Board has jurisdiction concerning this matter pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1552.
2. An application to the Board must be filed within three years after the applicant discovers the alleged error or injustice.<sup>1</sup> The applicant received his DD214 in 1981 and signed confirming the document. He was subsequently fully discharged in 1988. The applicant makes no attempt to explain his more than 30-year delay in bringing his request for relief to this Board. His application is therefore untimely.
  - a. The Board may excuse the untimeliness of an application if it is in the interest of justice to do so. In *Allen v. Card*, 799 F. Supp. 158 (D.D.C. 1992), the court stated that in determining whether the interest of justice supports a waiver of the limitations period, the Board should "analyze both the reasons for the delay

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<sup>1</sup> 10 U.S.C. § 1552(b) and 33 C.F.R. § 52.22.

and the potential merits of the claim based on a cursory review.” The court noted that “the longer the delay has been and the weaker the reasons are for the delay, the more compelling the merits would need to be to justify a full review.” As the applicant provides no explanation for his delay, the Board finds that this factor militates against excusal of his untimeliness.

3. The Board next turns to the potential merits of the applicant’s claim using a cursory review. Consistent with Coast Guard policy, the applicant’s DD 214 was intended to capture data that was accurate at the time of the form’s issuance. In similar cases, the Board has previously found that a DD 214 is “a record of a single period of enlistment, like a snapshot, and it is supposed to ... be accurate as of the date of discharge.” The Board acknowledges that this analysis does not apply universally, given that DD 214 corrections based on post-service events may be warranted in some limited circumstances (e.g., the addition of a newly-created medal or other award for which retroactive issuance is authorized). In this case, however, the reasoning underpinning the Board’s prior decisions remains applicable. To state the analysis differently, the Board’s authority extends only to the correction of records based on error or injustice. When a DD 214 lists accurate information at the time of issuance, and otherwise comports with applicable law and policy, the Board will generally not find an error.

4. In this case, the applicant’s DD 214 was correct when issued. Consistent with the COMDTINST M1900.4 series of issuances, the DD 214 is issued only for specific periods of active duty service identified in Coast Guard policy. It is not issued to document periods of reserve duty, and is often not issued for many short periods of active-duty service. The applicant’s record does not show, and he has not alleged, that he performed any additional active duty after the date of his 1981 discharge that should be documented with a DD 214.

5. Given the limited evidence to support the applicant’s request and the review of Coast Guard policy, the Board finds that relief for the applicant should be denied.

**(ORDER AND SIGNATURES ON NEXT PAGE)**

**ORDER**

The application of E-4 [REDACTED], USCG, for an updated DD214 is denied.

August 28, 2025

