
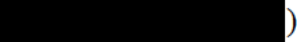


**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

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Application for Correction of  
the Coast Guard Record of:

**BCMR Docket No. 2025-081**

  
(formerly )  
SN/E-3 (Former)

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**FINAL DECISION**

This proceeding was conducted according to the provisions of 10 U.S.C. §1552 and 14 U.S.C. §2507. The Chair, after receiving the completed application, docketed the case on March 26, 2025 and assigned it to a staff attorney to prepare the decision in accordance with 33 C.F.R. § 52.61(c).

This final decision, dated November 6, 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, a former Coast Guard Seaman (SN/E-3), has requested that his records be corrected so that “all [his] records show [his] birthright name.” The applicant claims that he was born with the first name in the caption above (Name 1), but that he was adopted as a child and had his named changed to the second name in the caption (Name 2). He served in the Coast Guard by Name 2, and was discharged in 1978 and issued a DD Form 214 (Certificate of Discharge or Release from Active Duty) (hereinafter “DD 214”) reflecting Name 2. He further claims that he was unaware that his Coast Guard records still reflected Name 2 until 2025. Without specifically identifying the DD 214, applicant requests that his Coast Guard records be corrected to reflect Name 1.

In support of his application, the applicant submitted copies of his current driver’s license showing Name 1, his birth certificate showing Name 1, a probate court order changing applicant’s name from Name 2 to Name 1 dated August 15, 1978, and his DD 214 reflecting his discharge from the Coast Guard effective April 6, 1978 and referring to him by Name 2.

### **SUMMARY OF THE RECORD**

The applicant enlisted in the Coast Guard and began active-duty service on June 3, 1974. He served for 3 years, 10 months, and 4 days on active duty, and was honorably discharged on April 6, 1978. He was issued a DD 214 reflecting Name 2.

The applicant's other military records are not before the Board for review, but neither he or the Coast Guard claim that he served in the Coast Guard under any name other than Name 2.

The applicant presents an order from the Probate Court of Androscoggin County, Maine, dated August 15, 1978, that purports to legally change his name from Name 2 to Name 1.

### **VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD**

In memoranda dated June 4, 2025, a Judge Advocate (JA) of the Coast Guard recommended that the Board deny the applicant's requested relief in accordance with the recommendation of the Coast Guard Personnel Service Center (PSC). The Coast Guard argued that the applicant had presented no evidence that the last name reflected on his DD 214 was incorrect at the time, or that his legal name was Name 1 at any point during his Coast Guard service.

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

On July 23, 2025, the Chair sent the applicant a copy of the Coast Guard's views and invited him to respond within thirty days. As of the date of this Board hearing, no response has been received from the applicant.

### **APPLICABLE LAW AND POLICY**

Under the Coast Guard's current instruction for preparation and distribution of DD 214s, COMDTINST M1900.4E (April 2016), the "DD Form 214 provides an accurate and complete summation of active military personnel service. It is the authoritative source of personnel information for administrative purposes, and for making enlistment or reenlistment eligibility decisions." Previous versions of the instruction – M1900.4, M1900.4A, M1900.4B, M1900.4C, and M1900.4D – include the same or similar language.

Per the Coast Guard Personnel Service Center's related instruction, CGPSCINST 1900.1B (September 2018), "a DD-214 captures the current active duty period...."

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Board makes the following findings and conclusions based on the applicant's military record and submissions, the Coast Guard's submissions, and applicable law and policy:

1. The Board has jurisdiction concerning this matter pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1552. The applicant has exhausted available administrative remedies, as required by 33 C.F.R. § 52.13(b), because there is no other currently available forum or procedure provided by the Coast Guard for correcting the alleged error or injustice that the applicant has not already pursued.

2. An application is untimely if not submitted to the Board within three years after the applicant discovered the alleged error or injustice underlying the application, but the Board may excuse untimeliness if it is in the interests of justice to do so.<sup>1</sup> The applicant separated from this period of active Coast Guard duty in 1978 and did not apply to the Board until 2025. He claims that he didn't know the Coast Guard records still had Name 2 on them until he recently applied for VA benefits. However, the record presented shows that he received his DD 214 in April 1978 reflecting Name 2, and subsequently legally changed his name to Name 1 in August 1978. He offers no explanation of why he believed that his Coast Guard records would have reflected a name change he made four months after his discharge, or why he apparently waited more than forty years to check. His application is therefore untimely.

3. 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 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."

4. The Board first turns to the reasons for delay. The record presented by the applicant clearly shows that he knew his name was Name 2 in the Coast Guard record at the time of his discharge. In fact, he signed his DD 214 using Name 2. His subsequent action four months later to change his name from Name 2 to Name 1 indicates that he was indeed aware of the alleged error, but took no action to correct it. The fact that the applicant's enrollment for VA benefits may have been complicated by this issue is not tantamount to the applicant's discovery of the alleged error. Simply not checking his records for more than forty years, as he claims, is not strong justification for delay.

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

5. The Board next turns to the potential merits of this claim. The applicant's own request states that his mother changed his name to Name 2 before he joined the Coast Guard. The evidence he presents shows that he legally changed his name from Name 2 to Name 1 after he was discharged. 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. He has not alleged, and the record does not otherwise indicate, that the DD 214 was inaccurate or erroneous at the time of its issuance. The applicant also does not allege that, without error, he has suffered an injustice warranting relief. While presenting a legal name change document along with his DD 214 may constitute an inconvenience, it is no different than the inconvenience experienced by the many other service members who change their names following discharge. This Board has never held that such inconvenience experienced when establishing veteran status or entitlement to benefits is, without more, an injustice warranting relief. Therefore, upon a cursory review, the applicant's claim appears to be without merit.

6. Upon cursory review, the Board finds that the applicant's reasons for delay are not persuasive and that his claim is likely without merit. As a result, the Board will not excuse the applicant's untimeliness. His request for relief is denied.

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

**ORDER**

The application of former SN [REDACTED] to correct his DD 214 to reflect his current legal name is denied.

November 6, 2025

