


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

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Application for the Correction of  
the Coast Guard Record of:

**BCMR Docket No. 2024-136**

  
QM2 (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 docketed the case after receiving the applicant's completed application on April 4, 2019 and this decision of the Board was prepared pursuant to 33 C.F.R. § 52.61(c).

This final decision, dated May 1, 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 quartermaster second class (QM2) who was honorably discharged from the Coast Guard on July 3, 1969, asked the Board to correct his DD 214<sup>1</sup> to show that he received the Arctic Service Medal, the Coast Guard Sea Service Ribbon, and a Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal. He argued that he is eligible to receive the Sea Service Ribbon because his DD 214 shows that he completed one year, two months, and nine days of sea service during his enlistment. He further argued that he is eligible for the medals because he served aboard the USCGC Staten Island above the Arctic Circle above Russia and Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. He also alleged that he performed more than four years of sea service while aboard the USCGC Staten Island and the USCGC Clover.

The applicant stated that he discovered the alleged errors in his record on April 24, 2023, but did not explain why he did not discover the errors earlier.

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<sup>1</sup> The DD Form 214 provides the member and the service with a concise record of a period of service with the Armed Forces at the time of the member's separation, discharge or change in military status (reserve/active duty). In addition, the form is an authoritative source of information for both governmental agencies and the Armed Forces for purposes of employment, benefit and reenlistment eligibility, respectively. The DD Form 214 is issued to members who change their military status among active duty, reserve, or retired components or are separated/discharged from the Coast Guard to a civilian status. COMDTINST M1900.4D.

### SUMMARY OF THE RECORD

The applicant served on active duty in the Coast Guard from July 27, 1965, to July 3, 1969, and block 24 of his DD 214 shows that he received the following medals, badges, commendations, citations, and campaign ribbons:

Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal  
Coast Guard Unit Commendation Ribbon  
National Defense Service Medal

The applicant's DD 214 also shows that during his enlistment he had completed three years, eight months, and fourteen days of foreign and/or sea service.

### APPLICABLE LAW AND REGULATIONS

COMDTINST M1900.4D contains the Commandant's instructions for completing the DD 214, and Chapter 1.D.2 provides that it must be accurate as of the date of separation. Chapter 1.E of the instruction states that the DD 214 should show "all decorations, medals, badges, commendations, citations, and campaign ribbons awarded or authorized for all periods of service."

Chapter 5.A.6 of the Coast Guard Military Medals and Awards Manual states that the Coast Guard Arctic Service Medal was established on October 15, 1976 and may be awarded to any member of the Coast Guard who, during summer operations (1 May to 31 October), serves in any Coast Guard mission north of the Arctic Circle (66°33'N); or any member of the Coast Guard who, during winter operations (1 November to 30 April), serves or has served aboard a Coast Guard vessel operating in polar waters north of latitude 60 degrees North, specifically in the Bering Sea, Davis Strait, or Denmark Strait. Minimum time requirement is 21 non-consecutive days under competent orders. Only one award per year is authorized.

Chapter 5.A.19 of the Awards Manual states that the Coast Guard Sea Service Ribbon is awarded to active and inactive duty members of the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Reserve or non-Coast Guard personnel who, under temporary or permanent assignment, satisfactorily complete a minimum of 12 months cumulative sea duty. For the purposes of the award, sea duty is defined as duty performed aboard any commissioned Coast Guard cutter 65 feet or more in length. This award was authorized on March 3, 1984 and was not made retroactive.

Chapter 5.A.1 of the Awards Manual states that the Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal is awarded for satisfactory service, which is defined as proficiency in rating, sobriety, obedience, industry, courage, and neatness throughout such period of service. As of 1 July 1983, an individual is required to perform three consecutive years of satisfactory service to earn this award.

### VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD

On February 12, 2025, a judge advocate (JA) of the Coast Guard submitted an advisory opinion in which he recommended that the Board grant partial relief in this case. In doing so, he

adopted the findings and analysis provided in a memorandum prepared by the Personnel Service Center (PSC).

PSC recommended that the Board deny the applicant's request to have the Arctic Service Medal added to his DD 214 because the medal wasn't established until October 15, 1976 and the applicant was discharged on July 3, 1969.

PSC recommended that the applicant's record be corrected to show that he received the Sea Service Ribbon because Block 22.b of his DD 214 shows that he completed three years, eleven months, and seven days of sea service.

PSC recommended that the applicant's request for a Good Conduct Medal be denied because Block 24 of his DD 214 already includes the Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal.

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

On February 13, 2025 the BCMR sent the applicant a copy of the Coast Guard's views and invited him to respond within 30 days. The BCMR did not receive a response.

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

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

1. The Board has jurisdiction concerning this matter pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1552. An application to the Board must be filed within three years after the applicant discovers the alleged error or injustice.<sup>2</sup> The applicant was discharged from the Coast Guard on July 3, 1969 and did not submit his application to the Board until May 17, 2023. Moreover, he did not explain the delay in discovering the error nor did he argue why the Board should waive the statute of limitations and consider his request. Thus, his application is untimely.

2. The Board may excuse the untimeliness of an application if it is in the interest of justice to do so.<sup>3</sup> In *Allen v. Card*, 799 F. Supp. 158 (D.D.C. 1992), the court stated that the Board should not deny an application for untimeliness without "analyz[ing] both the reasons for the delay and the potential merits of the claim based on a cursory review"<sup>4</sup> to determine whether the interest of justice supports a waiver of the statute of limitations. 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."<sup>5</sup> In accordance with this direction, the Board has conducted a cursory review of the merits and finds no reason to excuse the untimeliness of the application:

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<sup>2</sup> 10 U.S.C. § 1552(b) and 33 C.F.R. § 52.22.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*; 33 C.F.R. 52.22.

<sup>4</sup> *Allen v. Card*, 799 F. Supp. 158, 164 (D.D.C. 1992).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 164, 165; *see also Dickson v. Secretary of Defense*, 68 F.3d 1396 (D.C. Cir. 1995).

a. The applicant did not explain or justify why he waited 55 years after his retirement to request correction of his military record. He failed to show that anything prevented him from seeking correction of the alleged error or injustice more promptly.

b. The applicant has not submitted any evidence of error or injustice. His DD 214 is correct because it lists all of the medals and awards he was eligible to receive during his active duty service from 1965 to 1969.

c. The applicant is not eligible to receive the Arctic Service Medal because the medal wasn't established until October 15, 1976 and he was discharged on July 3, 1969. The Awards Manual does not indicate if the award was made retroactive.<sup>6</sup>

d. The applicant is not eligible to have the Sea Service Medal added to his DD 214 because although he completed more than three years of sea service, Chapter 5.A.19 of the Awards Manual states that the award was not authorized until March 3, 1984 and was not made retroactive. PSC recommended that the Board grant the applicant's request for the medal, but the Manual clearly states that the medal was not made retroactive.

e. The applicant asked the Board to add the Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal (GCM) to his DD 214, but the Board notes that the medal is already listed in Block 24 of his DD 214, and he did not perform any additional periods of service for which he could earn a second GCM.

3. The applicant's military service is highly commendable, but the Board will not waive the statute of limitations. The request should be denied.

**[ORDER AND SIGNATURES ON NEXT PAGE]**

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<sup>6</sup> The Coast Guard Medals and Awards Manual typically states that an award or medal is retroactive.

**ORDER**

The application of former QM2 [REDACTED], USCG, for correction of his military record is denied.

May 1, 2025

