



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS  
701 S. COURTHOUSE ROAD, SUITE 1001  
ARLINGTON, VA 22204-2490

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Docket No. 7820-23  
Ref: Signature Date

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Dear Petitioner:

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to Section 1552 of Title 10, United States Code. After careful and conscientious consideration of relevant portions of your naval record and your application, the Board for Correction of Naval Records (Board) found the evidence submitted insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice. Consequently, your application has been denied.

Although you did not file your application in a timely manner, the statute of limitations was waived in accordance with the 25 August 2017 guidance from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (Kurta Memo). A three-member panel of the Board, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 8 May 2024. The names and votes of the panel members will be furnished upon request. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application together with all material submitted in support thereof, relevant portions of your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations, and policies, to include the Kurta Memo, the 3 September 2014 guidance from the Secretary of Defense regarding discharge upgrade requests by Veterans claiming post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)/mental health condition (MHC) (Hagel Memo), and the 25 July 2018 guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations (Wilkie Memo). The Board also considered an advisory opinion (AO) from a qualified mental health professional, dated 14 March 2024. Although you were provided an opportunity to comment on the AO, you chose not to do so.

You entered active duty with the Navy on 3 July 2002. On 3 May 2003, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for underage drinking, violation of the buddy policy, and returning late from liberty. On 3 February 2004, your commanding officer (CO) approved your request to be reinstated to the rate of E-2. On 19 July 2004, you received NJP for failure to obey a lawful order and making a false official statement. On 14 April 2006, you received NJP for failure to obey a lawful order or regulation, drunk or reckless operation of a vehicle, and false or unauthorized pass offenses.

Unfortunately, not all the documents pertinent to your administrative separation are in your official military personnel file (OMPF). Notwithstanding, the Board relies on a presumption of regularity to support the official actions of public officers and, in the absence of substantial evidence to the contrary, will presume that they have properly discharged their official duties. Your Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214), reveals that you were separated from the Navy on 5 May 2006 with an Other Than Honorable (OTH) characterization of service, your narrative reason for separation is "Pattern of Misconduct," your separation code is "HKA," and your reenlistment code is "RE-4."

Post-discharge, you applied to the Naval Discharge Review Board (NDRB) for a discharge upgrade. On 10 January 2008, the NDRB denied your request after determining that your discharge was proper as issued.

The Board carefully considered all potentially mitigating factors to determine whether the interests of justice warrant relief in your case in accordance with the Kurta, Hagel, and Wilkie Memos. These included, but were not limited to your desire to upgrade your discharge and contentions that you incurred mental health condition (MHC) during military service due to dealing with a recent family death and depression, and you would like to receive veterans' benefits. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you provided a letter from a treating nurse practitioner but failed to provide supporting documentation describing post-service accomplishments or advocacy letters.

As part of the Board's review, a qualified mental health professional reviewed your request and provided the Board with an AO on 14 March 2004. The mental health professional stated in pertinent part:

Petitioner submitted a letter from a treating nurse practitioner of Neighborhood Healthcare dated September 2023. The letter indicated that the Petitioner had been diagnosed with ADHD in September 2020. There is no evidence that the Petitioner was diagnosed with a mental health condition while in military service, or that he exhibited any psychological symptoms or behavioral changes indicative of a diagnosable mental health condition. He submitted evidence of post-service diagnosis of ADHD; however, most of his misconduct involved the use of alcohol, which is not related to ADHD. His personal statement is not sufficiently detailed to establish clinical symptoms or provide a nexus with his misconduct. Additional records (e.g., post-service mental health records describing the Petitioner's diagnosis, symptoms, and their specific link to his misconduct) would aid in rendering an alternate opinion.

The AO concluded, "it is my considered clinical opinion there is insufficient evidence of a mental health condition that may be attributed to military service. There is insufficient evidence that his misconduct could be attributed to a mental health condition."

After thorough review, the Board concluded these potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined your misconduct, as evidenced by your NJPs, outweighed the potential mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered

the seriousness of your misconduct and the likely negative impact your conduct had on the good order and discipline of your command. The Board found that your conduct showed a complete disregard for military authority and regulations. The Board also concurred with the AO that there is insufficient evidence to attribute your misconduct to a mental health condition. As pointed out in the AO, there is no evidence that you were diagnosed with a mental health condition while in military service, or that you exhibited any psychological symptoms or behavioral changes indicative of a diagnosable mental health condition. Finally, absent a material error or injustice, the Board declined to summarily upgrade a discharge solely for the purpose of facilitating veterans' benefits, or enhancing educational or employment opportunities.

As a result, the Board concluded your conduct constituted a significant departure from that expected of a service member and continues to warrant an OTH characterization. While the Board carefully considered the evidence you provided in mitigation, even in light of the Kurta, Hagel, and Wilkie Memos and reviewing the record liberally and holistically, the Board did not find evidence of an error or injustice that warrants granting you the relief you requested or granting relief as a matter of clemency or equity. Ultimately, the Board concluded the mitigation evidence you provided was insufficient to outweigh the seriousness of your misconduct. Accordingly, given the totality of the circumstances, the Board determined that your request does not merit relief.

You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new matters, which will require you to complete and submit a new DD Form 149. New matters are those not previously presented to or considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

5/22/2024

