



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. 2097-24
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 your application was not filed in a timely manner, the Board found it in the interest of justice to waive the statute of limitations and consider your application on its merits. A three-member panel of the Board, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 10 April 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 the 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 25 July 2018 guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness regarding equity, injustice or clemency determinations (Wilkie Memo).

You enlisted in the U.S. Navy on 18 March 1993. You received non-judicial punishment (NJP), on 8 June 1995, five specifications for failure to go to your appointed place of duty. Then, on 13 November 1995, you received your second NJP for larceny and wrongful appropriation. You received your third NJP on 9 April 1996, for larceny. On 9 April 1996, you began a period of unauthorized absence (UA) for seven days. On 23 April 1996, through military counsel, you requested a separation in lieu of trial (SILT) with an Other Than Honorable (OTH) characterization for the period of UA, missing ship's movement, and escaping from the custody of a person authorized to apprehend. Your SILT request was approved by the Separation Authority and you were so discharged on 7 May 1996.

Post-discharge, you applied to the Naval Discharge Review Board (NDRB) for relief. The NDRB partially corrected your record, on 28 April 2005, after finding an administrative error on your DD Form 214, but ultimately determined your discharge characterization 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 Wilkie Memo. These included, but were not limited to, your desire for an upgrade in your characterization of service and contentions that you have learned from this experience, continued to serve after the incident, and were promised a General (Under Honorable Conditions) (GEN) discharge as part of your SILT request. You also contended that you had Honorable service after your service in the Navy. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you provided a personal statement but no documentation describing post-service accomplishments or advocacy letters.

After thorough review, the Board concluded these potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined that your misconduct, as evidenced by your NJPs and SILT request, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and found that your conduct showed a complete disregard for military authority and regulations. Additionally, the Board also noted that the misconduct that led to your request to be discharged in lieu of trial by court-martial was substantial and, more likely than not, would have resulted in a punitive discharge and extensive punishment at a court-martial. Therefore, the Board determined that you already received a large measure of clemency when the convening authority agreed to administratively separate you in lieu of trial by court-martial; thereby sparing you the stigma of a court-martial conviction and likely punitive discharge. Finally, the Board noted you provided no evidence to substantiate your contention that you had post-discharge Honorable service with another branch of the military or were promised a GEN characterization of service as part of your SILT request.

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. Even in light of the Wilkie Memo and reviewing the record 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. 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,

4/25/2024

