



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. 3991-24
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 case on its merits. A three-member panel of the Board, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 29 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 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 25 July 2018 guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations (Wilkie Memo).

The Board determined that your personal appearance, with or without counsel, would not materially add to their understanding of the issues involved. Therefore, the Board determined that a personal appearance was not necessary and considered your case based on the evidence of record.

You enlisted in the United States Marine Corps commenced a period of active duty on 16 April 1984. On your enlistment application, you acknowledged pre-service marijuana use. On 13 December 1984, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for violating Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) Article 121, for wrongful appropriation of government property, a battery of a government vehicle. On 4 December 1985, you were formally counseled for financial irresponsibility and poor judgment by failing to report to duty in a timely manner. On 15 January

1986, you received your second NJP for violating UCMJ Article 86, for unauthorized absence from an appointed place of duty. You did not appeal these NJPs. On 13 February 1986, you were again formally counseled, this time for poor judgment, being frequently late for work, and for failure to return to your place of duty following doctor's appointments. On 7 April 1986, you were found guilty at Summary Court Martial (SCM) of violating UCMJ Article 123(a), for 12 specifications of uttering checks with insufficient funds within one month. You were sentenced to reduction in rank to E-1 and 60 days restriction (suspended for 6 months).

Consequently, you were notified that you were being processed for an administrative discharge by reason of pattern of misconduct. You waived your right to consult with qualified counsel and your right to present written or oral matters in your defense. On 17 July 1986, you were discharged from the Marine Corps due to your misconduct and assigned an Other than Honorable (OTH) characterization of service and an RE- 4 reentry code.

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: (1) your desire to upgrade your discharge characterization, (2) your assertion that you were dealing with multiple stressors during your service, such as racial bullying and financial problems, (3) your contention that the stress led to your misconduct, (4) your explanation that your platoon leader gave you authorization to take the battery from the utility vehicle, and (5) your post service sobriety. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted that you did not provide evidence related to your post-service accomplishments or character letters.

After thorough review, the Board concluded your potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined that your misconduct, as evidenced by your NJPs, counseling warnings, and SCM conviction, outweighed these mitigating factors. The Board considered the seriousness of your repeated misconduct and the fact that it involved larceny and financial fraud. Further, the Board also considered the likely negative impact your conduct had on the good order and discipline of your command. The Board determined that such misconduct is contrary to Marine Corps values and policy, renders such Marine unfit for duty, and poses an unnecessary risk to the safety of fellow service members. Additionally, such misconduct places an undue burden on your chain of command and negatively impacts mission accomplishment. A characterization under OTH conditions is appropriate when the basis for separation is the commission of an act or acts constituting a significant departure from the conduct expected of a service member. The Board did not believe that your record was otherwise so meritorious as to deserve a discharge upgrade. The Board highlighted that your characterization was based on a series of infractions, not a one-time incident, that spanned the entirety of your time in service. For these reasons, the Board concluded that an OTH remains the appropriate characterization of service in your case.

Therefore, 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,

5/14/2024

