



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

█  
Docket No. 5794-24

Ref: Signature Date

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Dear Petitioner:

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to Title 10, United States Code, Section 1552. 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 limitation 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 4 November 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, 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 the advisory opinion (AO) furnished by a qualified mental health professional, dated 20 September 2024. Although you were afforded an opportunity to submit an AO rebuttal, you chose not to do so.

You enlisted in the Marine Corps and began a period of active duty on 1 September 1998. Upon your enlistment, you received a waiver for a skin condition. On 15 May 2000, you began a period of unauthorized absence (UA) which lasted 185 days and resulted in you being declared a deserter on 14 June 2000. On 20 June 2000, you were charged with UA and referred to trial by special court martial. On 29 November 2000, you requested an Other Than Honorable (OTH) discharge characterization of service in lieu of trial by court martial. The separation authority approved your request and, on 22 December 2000, you were so discharged.

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 for a discharge upgrade and contentions that: (a) during your time in service you experienced significant marital problems as well as stressful circumstances that affected your ability to serve, (b) as a result of your behavioral circumstances, you had a mental breakdown while in service, tried to commit suicide and was admitted to a Navy hospital, (c) you have been unstable since you left service. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you did provide a Social Security Administration Decision Document and your military medical records

As part of the Board's review, the Board considered the AO. The AO stated in pertinent part:

Petitioner was appropriately referred for psychological evaluation during his enlistment and properly evaluated during an inpatient hospitalization. His personality disorder diagnosis was based on observed behaviors and performance during his period of service, the information he chose to disclose, and the psychological evaluation performed by the mental health clinician. He has provided evidence of diagnoses of depression and anxiety that are temporally remote to his military service and appear unrelated. His in-service misconduct appears to be consistent with his diagnosed personality disorder, rather than evidence of PTSD or another mental health condition incurred in or exacerbated by military service. Additional records (e.g., in-service or post-service mental health records describing the Petitioner's diagnosis, symptoms, and their specific link to his misconduct) may aid in rendering an alternate opinion.

The AO concluded, "it is my clinical opinion that there is insufficient evidence from of a diagnosis of PTSD or another mental health condition that may be attributed to military service. There is insufficient evidence to attribute his misconduct to PTSD or another mental health condition, other than personality disorder."

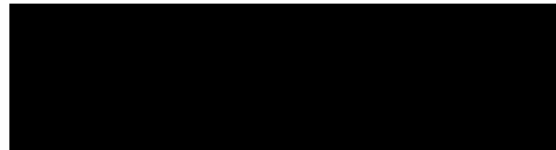
After thorough review, the Board concluded these potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined that your misconduct, as evidenced by your request to be discharged in lieu of trial by court martial, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and the likely negative impact it had on the good order and discipline of your unit. 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 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 possible punitive discharge. Finally, the Board concurred with the AO that there is insufficient evidence that your misconduct could be attributed to PTSD or another mental health condition. As explained in the AO, your in-service misconduct appears to be consistent with his diagnosed personality disorder, rather than evidence of PTSD or another mental health condition incurred in or exacerbated by military service. Therefore, the Board determined that the evidence of record did not demonstrate that you were not mentally responsible for your conduct or that you should not be held accountable for your actions.

As a result, the Board concluded significant negative aspects of your service outweighed the positive aspects and continues to warrant an OTH characterization. While the Board carefully considered the evidence you submitted 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 the 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,

11/26/2024



Executive Director

Signed by: █