



**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. 12350-24  
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 26 March 2025. 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 and began a period of active duty on 23 October 1996. During your enlistment processing, you admitted to illegal use of a controlled substance. After a period of continuous Honorable service, you immediately reenlisted and commenced a second period of active duty on 15 April 2001.

Unfortunately, some documents pertinent to your misconduct and administrative separation are not 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 14 June 2002, with an Other Than Honorable (OTH) characterization of service, narrative reason for separation of "Misconduct," separation code of "HKK," and reenlistment code of "RE-4."

Post-discharge, you applied to the Naval Discharge Review Board (NDRB) for relief. The NDRB denied your request, on 12 August 2004, after determining your discharge was proper as issued. However, they did note an administrative errors on your DD Form 214 and directed the changes be made.

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 a discharge upgrade and contentions that you acknowledge the seriousness of the actions that led to your discharge but believes your overall service merits a higher characterization of service, you have shown remorse, and the positive changes you have made since that time reflect in your commitment to making amends. You further contend that an Honorable would not only restore your dignity but also provide you with the opportunity to fully reintegrate into civilian life, continue contributing to society in meaningful ways, and give you an opportunity to seek additional veterans' benefits. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you provided a personal statement and your Department of Veterans Affairs decision letter but no supporting 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 discharge for drug abuse, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and the fact it included drug offense. The Board determined that illegal drug use or possession by a service member is contrary to military core values and policy, renders such members unfit for duty, and poses an unnecessary risk to the safety of their fellow service members. The Board was not persuaded by your contentions that you had no knowledge of the marijuana in your vehicle. First, the Board noted you provided no evidence, other than your statement, to substantiate your contentions. Second, even though you argue that you have no history of drug abuse, the Board found this contention contrary to your enlistment report of medical history that indicated pre-service drug abuse. In the end, the Board determined your evidence was insufficient to overcome the presumption of regularity in your case.

The Board also noted that, although one's service is generally characterized at the time of discharge based on performance and conduct throughout the entire enlistment, the conduct or performance of duty reflected by only a single incident of misconduct may provide the underlying basis for discharge characterization. Additionally, there is no precedent within this Board's review, for minimizing the "one-time" isolated incident. As with each case before the Board, the seriousness of a single act must be judged on its own merit, it can neither be excused nor extenuated solely on its isolation. 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 determined that there was no impropriety or inequity in your discharge and concluded that your misconduct and disregard for good order and discipline clearly merited your discharge. While the Board carefully considered the evidence you submitted in mitigation, even in light of 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. 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,

4/8/2025

