



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS
701 S. COURTHOUSE RD
ARLINGTON, VA 22204

██████████
Docket No. 6150-25
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 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 2 December 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, 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). In addition, the Board considered an advisory opinion (AO) from a qualified mental health professional. Although you were provided an opportunity to respond to the AO, you chose not to do so.

You enlisted in the U.S. Navy and entered active duty on 3 January 2002. On 25 March 2005, you were issued a counseling warning for willful disobedience of a superior commission officer. You were further advised that further deficiencies in your performance and or conduct may result in disciplinary action and processing for administrative separation. On 5 April 2005, you began a period of unauthorized absence (UA) that ended on 16 May 2005. During your UA, you missed ship's movement on four occasions. On 17 May 2005, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for desertion, missing ships movement, and failure to obey an order or regulation.

Unfortunately, documents pertinent to your 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 16 June 2005, with an Other Than Honorable (OTH) characterization of service, narrative reason for separation of “Misconduct – Commission of a Serious Offense,” separation code of “HKQ,” and reentry code of “RE-4.”

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 you were suffering from undiagnosed PTSD at the time you went UA, the PTSD impaired your judgment and decision making, and your actions were not a reflection of your character or commitment to service. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board considered the totality of your application, which included your DD Form 149 and the evidence you provided in support of it.

As part of the Board review process, a licensed clinical psychologist (Ph.D.) reviewed your contentions and the available records and issued an AO on 17 September 2025. The Ph.D. stated in pertinent part:

There is no evidence that he was diagnosed with a mental health condition in military service. Temporally remote to his military service, the VA has granted service connection for PTSD. Unfortunately, available records are not sufficiently detailed to establish 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) may aid in rendering an alternate opinion.

The Ph.D. concluded, “it is my considered clinical opinion that there is post-service evidence from the VA of a diagnosis of PTSD that may be attributed to military service. There is insufficient evidence that his misconduct may be attributed to PTSD.”

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 NJP, 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. The Board observed you were given an opportunity to correct your conduct deficiencies but chose to continue to commit misconduct; which led to your OTH discharge. Your conduct not only showed a pattern of misconduct but was sufficiently pervasive and serious to negatively affect the good order and discipline of your command.

Further, the Board concurred with the AO and determined there is insufficient evidence that your misconduct may be attributed to PTSD. The Board applied liberal consideration to your claim that you suffered from a mental health condition, and to the effect that this condition may have had upon the conduct for which you were discharged in accordance with the Hagel and Kurta

Memos. Applying such liberal consideration, the Board found sufficient evidence of a diagnosis of mental health condition that may be attributed to military service. This conclusion is supported by the AO. However, even applying liberal consideration, the Board found insufficient evidence to conclude that the misconduct for which you were discharged was excused or mitigated by your mental health condition. In this regard, the Board simply had insufficient information available upon which to make such a conclusion. The Board agreed with the AO that available records are not sufficiently detailed to establish a nexus with your misconduct. 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. Moreover, even if the Board assumed that your misconduct was somehow attributable to any mental health conditions, the Board unequivocally concluded that the severity of your serious misconduct more than outweighed the potential mitigation offered by any mental health conditions.

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 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,

12/17/2025

