

the time of the original review, is submitted to the DRB.

[CGD 81-104, 50 FR 41495, Oct. 11, 1985, as amended by CGD 96-026, 61 FR 33663, June 28, 1996]

#### § 51.10 Decisions.

(a) The DRB will make written findings and conclusions with respect to all disputed facts and issues. The decision of the DRB is governed by the vote of a majority of the board.

(b) A decision document is prepared for each review conducted by the DRB. This document contains—

(1) The date, character of, and reason for the discharge including the specific authority under which the discharge was issued;

(2) The specific change(s) requested by the applicant;

(3) A list of the issues raised by the applicant;

(4) The circumstances and character of the applicant's service, as extracted from the service record, health record and other evidence presented to the DRB;

(5) References to documentary evidence, testimony or other material relied on by the DRB in support of its decision;

(6) A statement of the DRB's findings with respect to each issue raised by the applicant;

(7) A summary of the rationale and a statement of the DRB's conclusions as to whether any change, correction or modification should be made in the type or character of the discharge or the reason and authority for the discharge; and

(8) A statement of the particular changes, correction, or modification made by the DRB.

#### § 51.11 Records.

(a) The record of the discharge review will include—

(1) The application for review;

(2) A summarized record of the testimony and a summary of evidence considered by the DRB other than information contained in the service records;

(3) Briefs or written arguments submitted by or on behalf of the applicant;

(4) The decision of the DRB;

(5) Advisory opinions relief upon for the final action; and

(6) The final action on the DRB decision by the Commandant or Secretary.

(b) The record of the discharge review is incorporated into the service record of the applicant.

(c) A copy of the decision of the DRB and the final action thereon is made available for public inspection and copying promptly after a notice of the final decision is sent to the applicant. However, to the extent required for the protection of privacy rights, identifying details of the applicant and other persons are deleted from the public record.

(1) DRB documents made available for public inspection and copying are located in the Armed Forces Discharge Review/Correction Board Reading Room. The documents are indexed so as to enable the public to determine why relief was granted or denied. The index includes the case number, the date, character of, reason for, and authority for the discharge and is maintained at Coast Guard Headquarters and the Armed Forces Reading Room. The Armed Forces Discharge Review/Correction Board Reading Room publishes indexes quarterly for all boards.

(2) Correspondence relating to matters under the cognizance of the Reading Room (including requests for purchase of indexes) should be addressed to: Armed Forces Discharge Review/Correction Board Reading Room, The Pentagon Concourse, Washington, DC 20310.

### PART 52—BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS OF THE COAST GUARD

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AUTHORITY: 10 U.S.C. 1552; 49 U.S.C. 108; Pub. L. 101–225, 103 Stat. 1908, 1914.

SOURCE: 55 FR 31045, July 31, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

## Subpart A—Purpose and Authority

### § 52.1 Purpose.

This part establishes the procedure for application for correction of military records of the Coast Guard, for consideration of applications by the

Department of Transportation Board for Correction of Military Records of the Coast Guard (hereinafter “the Board”), and for settling claims or determining monetary benefits.

### § 52.2 Authority.

(a) The Secretary of Transportation, acting through boards of civilians, is authorized to correct any military record of the Coast Guard when the Secretary considers it necessary to correct an error or remove an injustice. 10 U.S.C. 1552. Section 212 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1989 provides that the Secretary shall ensure that final action on a complete application for correction is taken within 10 months of its receipt.

(b) Corrections made under this authority are final and conclusive on all officers of the Government except when procured by fraud.

## Subpart B—Establishment, Function, and Jurisdiction of Board

### § 52.11 Establishment and composition.

(a) Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1552 and 49 U.S.C. 108(a), the Board for Correction of Military Records of the Coast Guard is established in the Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

(b) The Secretary appoints a panel of civilian officers or employees of the Department of Transportation to serve as members of the Board, and designates one such member to serve as Chairman of the Board. The Chairman designates members from this panel to serve as the Board for each case requiring consideration by a Board. The Board consists of three members, and two members present constitute a quorum of the Board.

(c) The Deputy Chairman of the Board exercises the functions prescribed by these regulations and such other duties as may be assigned by the Chairman.

### § 52.12 Function.

The function of the Board is to consider all applications properly before it, together with all pertinent military records to determine:

(a) Whether an error has been made in the applicant’s Coast Guard military

record, whether the applicant has suffered an error or injustice as the result of an omission or commission in his or her record, or whether the applicant has suffered some manifest injustice in the treatment accorded him or her; and

(b) Whether the Board finds it necessary to change a military record to correct an error or remove an injustice.

#### **§ 52.13 Jurisdiction.**

(a) The Board has jurisdiction to review and determine all matters properly brought before it, consistent with existing law and such directives as may be issued by the Secretary.

(b) No application shall be considered by the Board until the applicant has exhausted all effective administrative remedies afforded under existing law or regulations, and such legal remedies as the Board may determine are practical, appropriate, and available to the applicant.

### **Subpart C—General Provisions Regarding Applications**

#### **§ 52.21 General requirements.**

(a) An application for correction of a Coast Guard record shall be submitted on DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military or Naval Record) or an exact copy thereof, and shall be addressed to: Chairman, Board for Correction of Military Records of the Coast Guard (C-60), United States Department of Transportation, Washington, DC 20590. Forms and explanatory material may be obtained from the Chairman of the Board.

(b) The application shall be signed by the person alleging error or injustice in his or her military record, except that an application may be signed by a family member or legal representative with respect to the record of a deceased, incapacitated, or missing person.

(c) No application shall be processed until it is complete. An application for relief is complete when all of the following have been received by the Board:

(1) A signed DD Form 149, providing all necessary responses, including a specific allegation of error or injustice, accompanied by substantial proof in support of such allegation;

(2) The military records of the applicant; and

(3) Any applicable Department of Veterans Affairs medical records.

#### **§ 52.22 Time limit for filing application.**

An application for correction of a record must be filed within three years after the applicant discovered or reasonably should have discovered the alleged error or injustice. If an application is untimely, the applicant shall set forth reasons in the application why its acceptance is in the interest of justice. An untimely application shall be denied unless the Board finds that sufficient evidence has been presented to warrant a finding that it would be in the interest of justice to excuse the failure to file timely.

#### **§ 52.23 Counsel.**

As used in this part, the term “counsel” includes attorneys who are members in good standing of any bar; accredited representatives of veterans’ organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 3402; and other persons who, in the opinion of the Board, are competent to represent the applicant for correction. Whenever the term “applicant” is used in these rules, except in § 52.21, the term shall mean an applicant or his or her counsel.

#### **§ 52.24 Evidence.**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to procure such evidence, including official records, as the applicant desires to present in support of his case.

#### **§ 52.25 Access to official records.**

The applicant shall have access to official records or to any information pertaining to the applicant which is in the custody of the Coast Guard, as provided in 49 CFR part 10. The applicant shall also have access to other Coast Guard records as provided in 49 CFR part 7.

#### **§ 52.26 Withdrawal.**

The board may, in its discretion, permit the applicant to withdraw his or her application at any time before a final determination by the Secretary.

Any further consideration by the Board of the issues raised in the withdrawn application shall occur only upon the filing of a new application.

### Subpart D—Consideration of Application, Denial of Relief, and Stay of Proceedings

#### § 52.31 Consideration of application.

Each application shall be reviewed by the Chairman to determine whether it meets the requirements of § 52.21(c). The Chairman shall decide in appropriate cases whether to grant a hearing or to recommend disposition on the merits without a hearing.

#### § 52.32 Denial of relief.

(a) The Chairman may, notwithstanding § 52.64, and without written findings and conclusions, deny in writing all requested relief to an applicant at any time prior to consideration of the applicant's case by a Board if:

(1) The information or evidence submitted by the applicant is insufficient to demonstrate probable substantial error or injustice;

(2) Effective relief cannot be granted by the Board;

(3) The Board does not have jurisdiction to determine the issues presented; or

(4) The application has not been timely filed under § 52.22 and the interest of justice does not require its acceptance.

(b) Denial of relief pursuant to this section is without prejudice to further consideration by the Board if the applicant requests further consideration and submits evidence in addition to that contained in his or her complete application. A request for further consideration shall be regarded as a new application for purpose of § 52.68.

(c) If relief is denied under this section, the applicant shall be advised of the right to further proceedings.

#### § 52.33 Stay of proceedings.

An application to the Board for correction of a military record does not operate as a stay of any proceeding or administrative action taken with respect to or affecting the applicant.

### Subpart E—Hearings

#### § 52.41 General provision.

In each case in which the Chairman determines that a hearing is warranted, the applicant will be entitled to be heard orally in person, by counsel, or in person with counsel.

#### § 52.42 Notice of hearing.

(a) If the Chairman determines that a hearing is warranted, the Chairman shall notify the applicant that a hearing has been granted.

(b) The date of hearing shall be not less than 21 days from the date of this notification. Written notice stating the date, time and place of the hearing shall be given to the applicant and the Coast Guard.

#### § 52.43 Witnesses.

(a) In any case in which the Chairman has granted a hearing, the applicant shall have the right to present witnesses.

(b) It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify witnesses and to ensure their appearance at the date, time and place set for the hearing.

#### § 52.44 Expenses.

No expenses of any nature whatsoever incurred by an applicant, his or her counsel, witnesses, or others acting on behalf of the applicant shall be paid by the Government.

#### § 52.45 Nonappearance.

An applicant who fails without good cause to appear in person or by counsel at the appointed date, time, and place for hearing, is deemed to have waived the right to a hearing. The application is then considered by the Board on the basis of all the material of record.

### Subpart F—Procedure at Hearings

#### § 52.51 Conduct of hearing.

(a) The Chairman or the Chairman's designee shall conduct a hearing so as to ensure a full and fair presentation of the evidence.

(b) The hearing is not limited by legal rules of evidence but reasonable standards of competency, relevancy,

and materiality are observed for the receipt and consideration of evidence.

(c) All testimony shall be given under oath or affirmation.

**§ 52.52 Record of hearing.**

A hearing pursuant to this subpart in open session shall be recorded verbatim and, at the discretion of the Board or direction of the Secretary, shall be transcribed.

**Subpart G—Judgment and Disposition**

**§ 52.61 Deliberations and decision.**

(a) The Board is convened at the call of the Chairman and its meetings are recessed or adjourned by order of the Chairman. Only members of the Board and its staff may be present during the deliberations of the Board. The Board's deliberations are conducted in executive session and are not reported.

(b) When the Board finds that the facts have not been fully and fairly disclosed by the records, testimony, and any other evidence before the Board, the Board may request the applicant and/or the Coast Guard to obtain and submit such further evidence as it considers essential to a complete and impartial understanding of the facts and issues.

(c) An applicant may submit to the board any further evidence relevant to an application at any time prior to final action. The Chairman shall accept any such submission if, and only if, the applicant agrees that § 52.68 shall not apply to the case.

(d) Following the receipt of all evidence, the Chairman shall cause to be prepared and shall submit to the Board for its consideration a draft decision containing proposed findings and conclusions and a proposed order. A majority vote of the members of the board present at a meeting on any matter relating to a draft decision before the Board shall constitute the action of the Board. If a draft decision is approved by the Board, it shall become a decision of the Board.

(e) The decision of the Board shall specify with particularity any change, correction, or modification of records to be made by the Coast Guard, and

any other action deemed necessary to carry out the Board's recommendation.

(f) If the Board deems it necessary to submit a comment or recommendation to the Secretary as to a matter arising from, but not directly related to, the issues in a case, it does so by separate communication.

**§ 52.62 Minority report.**

In case of disagreement among Board members, a minority report may be submitted dissenting from or concurring with the decision of the Board.

**§ 52.63 Record of proceedings.**

The Board shall prepare a complete record of each proceeding. The record shall include the application for relief; the written views of the Coast Guard, if any; any transcript of testimony; affidavits and documents considered by the Board; briefs and written arguments filed in the case; the findings, decisions, and recommendations of the Board; minority reports, if any; and all other materials necessary to reflect a true and complete history of the proceedings.

**§ 52.64 Final action.**

(a) The Board, provided that it acts unanimously, may take final action on behalf of the Secretary, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1552, as follows:

(1) The Board may deny an application for the correction of military records.

(2) Unless the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard, in submitting its views pursuant to § 52.82(c), states that the application involves a significant issue of Coast Guard policy, the Board may approve an application for the correction of military records in any of the following categories:

(i) An application to correct an enlistment or reenlistment contract or agreement to extend an enlistment for the purpose of effecting or increasing entitlement to a Selective Reenlistment Bonus;

(ii) An application to modify an election to participate in the Survivor Benefit Plan;

(iii) An application to change a reenlistment eligibility code;

(iv) An application to correct the character of, or reason for, a discharge or separation.

(3) The Board may approve any application for correction of military records not falling into one of the categories in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, if the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard recommends the same or substantially same relief as that requested by the applicant.

(b) Except in cases where the Board takes final action under paragraph (a) of this section, the Board shall forward the record of its proceedings to the Secretary for approval, disapproval, or return for additional consideration. After taking final action, the Secretary shall return the record to the Board for disposition.

#### **§ 52.65 Orders.**

(a) The Board shall issue such orders or directives as may be necessary to carry out a final action.

(b) The Board may ask the Coast Guard to submit a written report to the Board specifying the action taken and the date thereof with respect to any final action.

(c) Unless doing so is likely to nullify the relief granted, copies of the final decision shall be placed in the military record of the applicant.

#### **§ 52.66 Notification.**

Subject to Department of Transportation regulations, the Board shall transmit to the applicant a copy of a decision. The applicant may inspect the record of proceedings at Board offices.

#### **§ 52.67 Reconsideration.**

(a) Reconsideration of an application for correction of a military record shall occur if an applicant requests it and the request meets the requirements set forth in paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section.

(1) An applicant presents evidence or information that was not previously considered by the Board that could result in a determination other than that originally made. Evidence or information may only be considered if it could not have been presented to the Board prior to its original determination if

the applicant had exercised reasonable diligence; or

(2) An applicant presents evidence or information that the Board, or the Secretary as the case may be, committed legal or factual error in the original determination that could have resulted in a determination other than that originally made.

(b) The Chairman shall docket a request for reconsideration of a final decision if it meets the requirements of paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section. If neither of these requirements is met, the Chairman shall not docket such request.

(c) The Board shall consider each application for reconsideration that has been docketed. None of the Board members who considered an applicant's original application for correction shall participate in the consideration of that applicant's application for reconsideration.

(d) Action by the Board on a docketed application for reconsideration is subject to § 52.64(b).

(e) An applicant's request for reconsideration must be filed within two years after the issuance of a final decision, except as otherwise required by law. If the Chairman docketed an applicant's request for reconsideration, the two-year requirement may be waived if the Board finds that it would be in the interest of justice to consider the request despite its untimeliness.

[OST Doc. No. OST-95-878, 61 FR 24235, May 14, 1996]

#### **§ 52.68 Time limit for final action.**

Final action on an application for correction of a military record shall be taken within 10 months after all the elements of a complete application, as defined in § 52.21(c), have been received by the Board.

### **Subpart H—Payment of Claims and Implementation of Orders**

#### **§ 52.71 Authority to pay.**

(a) The Coast Guard is authorized to pay the claims of any person as the result of any action heretofore or hereafter taken under 10 U.S.C. 1552.

(b) The Coast Guard is not authorized to pay any claim heretofore compensated by Congress through enactment of private law, or to pay any amount as compensation for any benefit to which the claimant might subsequently become entitled under the laws and regulations administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

**§ 52.72 Procedures.**

(a) In each case the Board transmits a copy of its decision or the Secretary's decision to the proper Coast Guard authority for determination of monetary benefits due, if any, as a result of the action of the Board and for corrections of the military record ordered by the Board.

(b) Upon request, the claimant is required to furnish any information necessary to determine the proper parties to the claim for payment under applicable provisions of law.

(c) Appropriate records shall be examined in light of the Board's decision to determine all amounts which may be due. Amounts found due are subject, to the extent authorized by law or regulations, to setoff in the amount of existing indebtedness to the Government arising from Coast Guard service.

(d) At the time of payment, the claimant shall be advised as to the nature and amount of the various benefits represented by the total settlement, and of the fact that acceptance of the settlement constitutes a complete release by the claimant of any claim against the United States on account of the correction of record ordered by the Board.

**§ 52.73 Interpretation.**

If the intent or import of the final decision is not clear to the Coast Guard or if the Coast Guard believes that executing all or part of the order in the final decision is beyond the Coast Guard's authority, the final decision shall be returned to the Board for clarification or technical amendment.

**§ 52.74 Report of settlement.**

When payment is made pursuant to the order of the Board, the Board may request the Coast Guard to notify it of the name of any person to whom pay-

ment was made and of the amount of the payment.

**Subpart I—Miscellaneous Provisions**

**§ 52.81 Assistance.**

The Board may request such advice, opinion, assistance, or use of the facilities of any other bureau, board, or office of the Department of Transportation as the Board deems necessary.

**§ 52.82 Submissions sent to or received from the Coast Guard.**

(a) The Board shall transmit to the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard a copy of each application for relief submitted under subpart C of this part that has not been denied pursuant to § 52.32, together with any briefs, memoranda, and documentary evidence submitted or obtained in the case.

(b) The Board may request the Coast Guard to submit any additional pertinent facts not disclosed in an application and its supporting documents.

(c) The Chief Counsel may forward to the Board the written views of the Coast Guard on any case before the Board.

(d) A copy of each submission made by the Coast Guard under this section shall be transmitted to the Board, which shall promptly send a copy to the applicant involved. Each applicant has 15 days, from the date the Board sends the submission, to rebut or respond to such submission.

(e) Information and views furnished by the Coast Guard under this section shall not be binding upon the Board, but shall be considered by the Board along with all other information and material submitted in the particular case.

**PART 53—COAST GUARD WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION**

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- 53.3 Applicability.
- 53.5 Definitions.
- 53.7 Requirements.
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- 53.11 Procedures.

AUTHORITY: 10 U.S.C. 1034, Pub. L. 100-456, Pub. L. 101-225.