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**§ 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 it is in the interest of justice for the Board to consider the application. 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.**

(a) Applicants may be represented by counsel at their own expense. Applicants whose cases are processed under the Whistleblower Protection Act and who are granted a hearing by the Board may be entitled to representation by a Coast Guard law specialist. 10 U.S.C. 1034(f)(3)(A).

(b) 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. 5902; and other persons who, in the opinion of the Chair, are competent to represent the applicant for correction. Whenever the term "applicant" is used in these rules, except in § 52.21(c), the term shall mean an applicant or his or her counsel.

**§ 52.24 Evidence and burden of proof.**

(a) It is the responsibility of the applicant to procure and submit with his or her application such evidence, including official records, as the applicant desires to present in support of his or her case. All such evidence should be submitted with the applicant's DD Form 149 in accordance with

§ 52.21(c)(1). Evidence submitted by an applicant after an application has been filed and docketed shall be considered late and its acceptance is subject to the provisions in § 52.26(a)(4) and (c).

(b) The Board begins its consideration of each case presuming administrative regularity on the part of Coast Guard and other Government officials. The applicant has the burden of proving the existence of an error or injustice by the preponderance of the evidence.

**§ 52.25 Access to official records.**

The applicant shall have such access to official records or to any information pertaining to the applicant which is in the custody of the Coast Guard as is provided in 49 CFR parts 7 and 10.

**§ 52.26 Right to timely decision; effect of requests for extensions, changes in requests for relief, and late submissions of evidence.**

(a) Each applicant has a right to have final action taken on his or her application within 10 months after all the elements of a complete application, as defined in § 52.21(c), have been received by the Board, unless the applicant:

(1) Submits a written request, which is granted by the Chair, for an extension of a specific duration to seek counsel or additional evidence;

(2) Submits a written request, which is granted by the Chair, for an extension of the time provided for responding to the views of the Coast Guard in accordance with § 52.42(d);

(3) Submits a signed statement that is determined by the Chair to significantly amend the applicant's request for relief after the application has been docketed;

(4) Submits significant new evidence, as determined by the Chair, after the application has been docketed; or

(5) Is found by the Chair to have unreasonably delayed responding to a request for further information or evidence.

(b) If the applicant requests an extension in accordance with paragraphs (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section or unreasonably delays responding to a request for further information or evidence in accordance with paragraph (a)(5) of this section, he or she shall have a