

AIR FORCE DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD DECISIONAL DOCUMENT

SUMMARY:

The applicant was discharged on 24 November 2015 in accordance with Air Force Instruction 36-3208, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, with an Entry Level Separation for Discharge Defective Enlistment Agreement. The applicant appealed for a change to the discharge narrative reason, and a change to the reentry code.

The applicant requested the Board be completed based on a records only review. The Board was conducted on 11 April 2024. The applicant was not represented by counsel.

The attached examiner's brief (provided to applicant only), extracted from available service records, contains pertinent data regarding the circumstances and character of the applicant's military service.

DISCUSSION: The Discharge Review Board (DRB), under its responsibility to examine the propriety and equity of an applicant's discharge, is authorized to change the characterization of service and the narrative reason for discharge if such changes are warranted. If applicable, the Board can also change the applicant's reentry code. In reviewing discharges, the Board presumes regularity in the conduct of governmental affairs unless there is substantial credible evidence to rebut the presumption, to include evidence submitted by the applicant. The Board completed a thorough review of the circumstances that led to the discharge and the discharge process to determine if the discharge met the pertinent standards of equity and propriety.

The documentary evidence the Board considered as part of the review includes, but is not limited to, the DD Form 293, *Application for the Review of Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States*, and any additional documentation submitted by applicant and/or counsel; the applicant's personnel file from the Automated Records Management System (ARMS); and the DRB Brief detailing the applicant's service information and a summary of the case.

The applicant requested a correction to be made to their narrative reason. as they had been disqualified during training but contest that they did not have an ineligible condition. They stated that they had gone to the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) since their discharge and had been cleared for military service.

After a thorough review of the applicant's available records, the DRB determined that it was more likely than not that he was discharged for sickle cell disease. While the applicant's military personnel records did not include a discharge package, the available records include the entry "sickle cell," making it likely he was separated for sickle cell disease, which is disqualifying for military service. However, a review of his medical records indicates the actual lab result denotes sickle cell trait, rather than sickle cell disease. The Board is aware that under certain circumstances, members with sickle cell trait are not disqualified for military service. Therefore, given the blood test result indicating a condition that is not necessarily disqualifying, the Board was convinced it was appropriate to upgrade the applicant's RE code to the degree necessary where he can be *considered* for accession. Whether or not he is successful in enlisting is subject to the needs of the service and provided he is otherwise qualified.

FINDING: The DRB voted unanimously to *approve* the applicant's request to change the RE code. However, the DRB voted to unanimously *deny* the applicant's request to change their narrative reason for separation. As indicated above, the Board concluded it is possible that the applicant was discharged for sickle cell disease; however, because the applicant's records do not include a discharge package, the Board is

unable to conclusively determine that the sickle cell issue is what rendered the applicant's enlistment defective. Therefore, the Board was not convinced there is sufficient evidence to change the narrative reason for separation as there could be another reason the member's enlistment agreement was defective. In the Board's view, correcting the record to reflect a new RE code is sufficient to allow the applicant to be considered for accession, again, provided he is otherwise qualified. With respect to the applicant's request for an upgrade of his entry level separation, the Board was not convinced that corrective action was warranted. In this respect, the Board notes that such a correction would violate Air Force policy in effect at the time IAW AFI 36-3208, which states Airmen are in entry level status during the first 180 days of continuous active military service and if a separation action is initiated during this time, they will receive an entry level separation without service characterization. Therefore, the applicant's request to "upgrade" the entry level separation could not be approved.

Should the applicant wish to appeal this decision, the applicant must request a personal appearance before this Board before applying for relief to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR). In accordance with DAFI 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records*, all applicants before the AFBCMR must first exhaust available administrative avenues of relief before applying to the AFBCMR, otherwise their AFBCMR case will be administratively closed until such time that the applicant avails themselves of the available avenue of relief. Therefore, should the applicant wish to appeal this decision, they must first exercise their right to make a personal appearance before the AFDRB.

CONCLUSION: After a thorough review of the available evidence, to include the Applicant's issues, summary of service, service/medical record entries, and discharge process, the Board found the discharge was inequitable. Therefore, the awarded characterization of service shall remain "Entry Level Separation," the narrative reason for separation shall remain "Discharge Defective Enlistment Agreement," and the reenry code shall Change to "3K." The Air Force DRB (AFDRB) results were approved by the Presiding Officer on 14 May 24. If desired, the applicant can request a list of the Board members and their votes by writing to:

Air Force Review Boards Agency
Attn: Discharge Review Board
3351 Celmers Lane
Joint Base Andrews, NAF Washington, MD 20762-6602

Instructions on how to appeal an AFDRB decision can be found at <https://afrbportal.azurewebsites.us>

Attachment:
Examiner's Brief (Applicant Only)