

**SUMMARY:** The Applicant was discharged on September 10, 2014 in accordance with Air Force Instruction 36-3208, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, with an Under Honorable Conditions (General) Service Characterization for Misconduct (Minor Infractions). The Applicant requested an upgrade of their Service Characterization, a change to the Narrative Reason for separation, and a change to the Reentry Code.

The Applicant requested the Board be completed based on a Record Review. The Board was conducted on September 4, 2025. The Applicant was 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, including evidence submitted by the Applicant. The Board thoroughly reviewed 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 DRB provided a notice to inform the service member of resources available to help answer their questions about the application process and/or to help them supplement their application, to include information on the types of evidence that can be submitted to support a claim; information regarding potential eligibility for mental health treatment and evaluation services offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); general information regarding Veterans Service Organizations that may assist with DRB applications, and their right to retain counsel; a link to a database of legal services organizations that serve members of the military, veterans, and their families; the weblink to the VA's Directory of Veteran's Service Organizations; and information regarding reasonable accommodation requests from the DRB in the application and adjudication process.

The Applicant's record of service included the following documented misconduct leading up to their discharge:  
-Article 15 for failure to go

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.

Through counsel, the Applicant stated they did not have any discipline problems, nor did they exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but soon after the military sexual trauma (MST), they began to develop severe symptoms of PTSD. The Applicant stated the symptoms of PTSD and medication changes, including problems with sleeping, combined, made it difficult for them to complete tasks of daily living, which resulted in tardiness. The Applicant stressed that their only misconduct was being late, which was a result of the medications they were taking to control their PTSD symptoms, and it is in the interest of equity, to upgrade their discharge to Honorable with a narrative reason of Secretarial Authority, and a separation code of JFF and a reentry code of 1J.

The DRB determined the discharge was improper. A review of the Applicant's record revealed the only misconduct was the Article 15 for failure to go. Their performance evaluations showed they were performing

well enough to meet and exceed standards. Per DAFIs, there are progressive disciplinary tools to allow members the chance to correct their behaviors, however this Applicant was not afforded such an opportunity. Therefore, the Board partially approved the Applicant's request by approving the service characterization of Honorable but denied the request to change the narrative reason and reentry code due to the service record indicating minor infractions and post service substance abuse issues.

**LIBERAL CONSIDERATION:** Due to the Applicant's contentions or evidence of a mental health diagnosis and/or experiences of sexual assault or sexual harassment and/or records documenting that one or more symptoms of mental health conditions and/or experiences of sexual assault or sexual harassment existed/occurred during military service found in the Applicant's record, the Board considered the case based on the liberal consideration (LC) standards required by guidance from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and 10 USC §1553. The Board included a member who is a physician, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist or social worker with training on mental health issues connected with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury (TBI) or other trauma. Specifically, the Board reviewed the four questions the Under Secretary of Defense provided that Boards should consider when weighing evidence in requests for modification of discharges due in whole or in part to mental health conditions, including PTSD: TBI, sexual assault, and sexual harassment. The Board considered the following:

1. Did the veteran have a condition or experience that may excuse or mitigate the discharge?

*The Applicant's legal counsel on behalf of the Applicant contended that while they were on leave in December 2012, they were sexually assaulted. After they returned from leave and attempted to return to their life, they suffered a mental breakdown during their training to be a pharmacy technician and finally reported their sexual assault. Between October 2013 and September 2014, several psychiatrists treated their Major Depressive Disorder and their ongoing reports of extreme exhaustion, headaches, sleep problems, and fatigue, and these problems led to their tardiness, resulting in an Article 15. Their misconduct, a series of late arrivals, were directly related to their PTSD developed from their Military Sexual Trauma (MST), causing their discharge.*

2. Did that condition exist/experience occur during military service?

*A review of the Applicant's available service treatment record revealed they first met with a mental health provider in September 2012 for complaints of sleep disturbances that began two months prior, after they were removed from loadmaster school and assigned to the legal office. They attended one follow-up session in October 2012 and reported their sleep had improved and stopped attending treatment. They returned to mental health treatment in August 2013 for complaints of feeling depressed due to unresolved issues. They discussed being homeless and living with drug addicts before they joined the military, being in multiple abusive relationships, and being stressed about returning home the next month to take care of their vehicle registration. They would receive recurring mental health treatment, consisting of individual psychotherapy and medication management, at the mental health clinic for anxiety, depression, sleep problems, and PTSD, ending in September 2014, because they were discharged from service. Their treatment notes reported there were times when they were not compliant with treatment, but when they were compliant with their medication, they benefited, and their symptoms were reduced. They were first diagnosed with PTSD in June 2014, and their treatment notes dated in July 2014 reported their PTSD was related "to an assault that occurred". Their assault experience was not detailed in their treatment notes. In addition to treatment they received from the mental health clinic, the Applicant participated in the Partial Hospitalization Program and then Intensive Outpatient Program for depression to help expand their emotional coping and self-care strategies caused by having family issues and past trauma from November 2013 to January 2014. They were reported to have made improvements/benefited from these treatment modalities. The Applicant was diagnosed with PTSD, Insomnia, Major Depression, Single Episode, Adjustment Disorder with Anxious and Depressed Mood, Adjustment Disorder with Disturbance of Emotions, and Borderline Personality Disorder.*

3. Does that condition, or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge?

*The Applicant's discharge paperwork is not available or submitted by the Applicant for review. Their records did indicate that they received an Article 15 for failing to go in August 2014, and it is possible that their PTSD, anxiety, depression, and sleep problems caused by their sexual assault or MST had caused this misconduct. However, the Applicant's legal counsel also contended that they had a series of tardiness, and their available limited records do not support this contention. It is also possible that the Applicant had other misconduct problems causing their discharge, but since their discharge paperwork is not available, it cannot be definitively determined that their mental health condition or MST experience may actually excuse or mitigate their discharge.*

4. Does that condition, or experience outweigh the discharge?

*Since the Applicant's mental health condition or MST experience does not excuse or mitigate their discharge, their mental health condition or MST experience also does not outweigh their discharge.*

Additionally, the Board considered the factors laid out in the attachment to the Under Secretary of Defense memorandum, *Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Regarding Equity, Injustice, or Clemency Determinations*, dated 25 June 2018, known as the "Wilkie Memo." The Board considered the factors listed in paragraphs (6)(a) - (6)(l) and (7)(a) - (7)(r) of this memorandum.

**FINDING AND 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 improper. The DRB voted two to one to ***partially approve*** the Applicant's request. Therefore, the awarded Service Characterization shall change to Honorable, the Narrative Reason for separation shall remain Misconduct (Minor Infractions), and the Reentry Code shall remain 2B. The DRB results were approved by the Presiding Officer on September 9, 2025.

Should the Applicant wish to appeal this decision, they 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.

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

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, MD 20762-6435

Attachment:  
Examiner's Brief (Applicant Only)