

SUMMARY: The Applicant was discharged on June 7, 2023 in accordance with Air Force Instruction 36-3208, Administrative Separation of Airmen, with an Under Honorable Conditions (General) Service Characterization for Misconduct – (Serious Offense). The Applicant requested an upgrade of their Service Characterization.

The Applicant requested the Board be completed based on a Record Review. The Board was conducted on March 19, 2026. 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, 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 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 requests the Board grant their upgrade request based on propriety, equity, and clemency. They claim they have had transformative growth since the unjust circumstances surrounding separation. The Applicant contends they endured a traumatic sexual assault during deployment that caused severe depression, anger, suicidal ideation, and mental health problems that led to alcoholism. They further contend they were accused of being a predator and the allegations were never substantiated, which highlights the inequity of the discharge. Through inpatient therapy they were able to overcome their issues and recover from alcoholism. Since the discharge they have devoted themselves to advocating for marginalized communities and those in need. Also, they are a staffer in the Michigan state senate and contribute to community service initiatives through leadership roles at their university.

The Board determined the Applicant's discharge for multiple incidents of abusive sexual contact with patients, at a psychiatric treatment facility where the applicant was also receiving treatment, was proper and equitable. The Board also notes that while in service the Applicant was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Borderline Personality Disorder, and Alcohol Use Disorder.

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 checked the boxes for PTSD and Sexual Assault/Harassment on her application. The applicant contended "Based on propriety, equity, and clemency, the board should grant the requested discharge change because it reflects my transformative growth and the unjust circumstances surrounding my separation. After enduring a traumatic sexual assault, severe mental health challenges, and overcoming alcoholism, I demonstrated resilience through dedicated treatment, excelling in therapy, and channeling my experiences into advocacy and service. The unfounded allegations against me during my recovery were deeply harmful but never substantiated, further highlighting the inequity of my discharge. Since my discharge, I have devoted myself to advocating for marginalized communities and those in need. I volunteer at Women's shelters supporting survivors of human trafficking, assist at refugee centers helping displaced individuals rebuild their lives, and work on legislative reform as a staffer in the Michigan Senate to advance social Justice. I also mentor students aspiring to create positive change and actively contribute to community service initiatives through leadership roles in organizations at Michigan State University."

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

A review of the applicant's records revealed the applicant received mental health and substance use treatment services during her time in service including outpatient services, partial hospitalization intensive outpatient service, inpatient service, and residential treatment services. The applicant's records revealed the applicant received the diagnoses, in service, of PTSD, Borderline Personality Disorder, and Alcohol Use Disorder. The applicant's records revealed the applicant experienced and reported sexual harassment during her time in service. The applicant's records revealed the applicant was the perpetrator of sexual harassment and abusive sexual contact on multiple occasions during her time in service.

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

A review of the applicant's DD214 revealed the applicant was discharged with an Under Honorable Conditions (General) character of service due to Misconduct (Serious Offense) with four years, eight months, thirteen days time in service. The applicant's discharge package was not available for review and was not submitted by the applicant. A review of the applicant's Medical Evaluation Board package revealed the applicant was recommended for discharge due to eight documented misconducts and for multiple incidents of abusive sexual contact:

- a. In the timeframe of Dec 21, while riding in a car, you committed abusive sexual contact against AIC Brandon D. Taylor by grabbing and wrapping your fingers around his penis (over the pants), without his consent.
- b. In the timeframe of Dec 21, in a courtyard setting, you attempted to commit abusive sexual contact against AIC Brandon D. Taylor by reaching out to touch/grab him in the groin area, without his consent.
- c. In the timeframe of late Feb 22, while at a club and later at your dorm room, you committed abusive sexual contact against AIC Chioma Ondo by grabbing her breasts and buttocks, without her consent.

- d. In the timeframe of Mar 22, at a bar, you committed abusive sexual contact against SSgt Adam C. Hinton by repeatedly grabbing his genitals (over the pants), without his consent.
4. The following is not the basis of the discharge, but may be considered in deciding your separation or retention - as well as the characterization of your service:
- a. In the timeframe between Oct-Nov 19, you failed to advise a member as to the rules and restrictions for shipping a weapon into Germany - this failure prompted hurried engagement and remedial action by the Transportation Service Provider and the Joint Personnel Property Shipping Office. For your misconduct, you received a Letter of Counseling (LOC), dated 13 Nov 19 (Tab IB).
- b. On 30 Sep 21, you failed to report for a scheduled dental appointment - this caused you to be four months overdue for your periodic dental examination. Of note, this was your fourth missed dental appointment, as you had previously missed appointments on 20 May 21, 2 Jun 21, and 23 Jun 21. For your misconduct, you received a Letter of Reprimand (LOR), dated 2 Nov 21 (Tab IC).
- c. On 15 Jun 21 and 13 Jul 21, you failed to report for your scheduled CBRN Defense Course. For your misconduct, you received an LOR dated 2 Nov 21 (Tab IC).
- d. On 30 Jan 23, your first sergeant, MSgt Alton E. Lee, provided a detailed Memorandum for Record regarding his observations on events since 30 Sep 21 (Tab 1D).

A review of the available records revealed the applicant experienced sexual harassment during her time in service. The applicant's records revealed the applicant's discharge was reviewed by dual-action case processing and was recommended for administrative separation due, which cancelled the applicant's pending medical discharge. There was evidence the applicant experienced sexual harassment while deployed; the applicant's records also revealed the applicant endorsed a history of childhood sexual abuse that existed prior to service. The misconducts that led to applicant's discharge included multiple incidents of abusive sexual contact with patients at a psychiatric treatment facility where the applicant was also receiving treatment. The severity of the applicant's misconduct, including abusive sexual contact with patients in a psychiatric unit, is not excused or mitigated by the applicant's prior experience of sexual harassment or diagnosis of PTSD.

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

A review of the available records revealed contradictory evidence between the applicant's testimony and the medical, administrative, and post-service records available for review. The severity and pre-meditated nature of the misconducts that led to the applicant's discharge were not excused or mitigated by her in-service experience of sexual harassment. Because the applicant's discharge was not mitigated or excused, the applicant's discharge was also not outweighed by her experience of sexual harassment or mental health conditions.

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 and found no evidence of inequity or impropriety; however, the Board considered several mitigating factors. Requests for relief based in whole or in part on a mental health condition, should be considered for relief on equitable, injustice, or clemency grounds whenever there is insufficient evidence to warrant relief for an error or impropriety. The Applicant was diagnosed with PTSD, Borderline Personality Disorder, and Alcohol Use Disorder while in service. In addition, the Applicant's post-service accomplishments, including earning a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, active involvement in several university and community organizations are commendable. And finally, the Applicant's job history in working in the Michigan U.S and House of Representatives since discharge show an atonement for the misconduct. the DRB approved a change to the Applicant's service characterization.

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 proper and equitable; however, in accordance with the Wilkie memorandum, the DRB voted two to one to **approve** the Applicant's request. Therefore, the awarded Service Characterization shall change to "Honorable," the Narrative Reason for separation shall remain Misconduct – (Serious Offense), and the Reentry Code shall remain 2B. The DRB results were approved by the Presiding Officer on March 24, 2026.

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)