

SUMMARY: The Applicant was discharged on September 28, 2023 in accordance with Department of the Air Force Instruction 36-3211, Military Separations, with an Under Honorable Conditions (General) Service Characterization for Misconduct – (Drug Abuse). The Applicant appealed for an upgrade of their Service Characterization and a change to the Narrative Reason for separation.

The Applicant requested the Board be completed based on a Record Review. The Board was conducted on February 17, 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, 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 Applicant's record of service included the following documented misconduct leading up to their discharge:

- Article 15 for Wrongful use of Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC9)
- Letter of Counseling for Departing on leave without a valid approved leave number

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 contends they served the country honorably for six years without any issues. They claim they were not a drug abuser and their THC9 level was just over the Air Force legal limit. They contend they were serving with members that had multiple DUI's that were given another chance, but they were made an example and discharged for arguably less detrimental situation, and that is completely unjust.

The applicant had a positive urinalysis test for THC9 and was punished under Article 15 and reduced in rank. They waived the right to an administrative discharge board in exchange for a General discharge characterization. According to the discharge legal review the Applicant did not know how THC9 got into their system and they never knowingly ingested the substance.

The DRB recognized the Applicant served eight years before the discharge was initiated and reviewed the entire service record and concluded the Applicant's one-time misconduct, though serious does not offset the positive aspects of their service.

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 determined it is consistent with military custom and practice to honor sacrifices and

achievements, to punish only to the extent necessary, to rehabilitate to the greatest extent possible, and to *favor second chances* in situations in which individuals have paid for their misdeeds.

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, based on the Wilkie Memo, the DRB voted unanimously to **approve** the Applicant's request. Therefore, the awarded Service Characterization shall change to "Honorable," the Narrative Reason for separation shall change to Secretarial Authority, and the Reentry Code shall remain 4D. The DRB results were approved by the Presiding Officer on March 12, 2026.

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.

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