

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 10 January 2025

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20240006141

APPLICANT REQUESTS: reconsideration of his previous request to upgrade his characterization of service.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S) CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:

- DD Form 293 (Application for the Review of Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States)
- Applicant Statement

FACTS:

1. Incorporated herein by reference are military records which were summarized in the previous consideration of the applicant's case by the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR) in Docket Number AR20150018431 on 4 April 2017.
2. The applicant states after he was discharged, he went back to college and became a Certified Nursing Assistant. Since being discharged he has thought about what his life would have been like if he had not messed up. He would like the Board to consider his debt as paid after over 35 years. Upgrading his discharge will help him gain benefits to continue to get his life back on track.
3. A review of the applicant's service record shows:
  - a. The applicant enlisted in the Regular Army on 28 October 1986.
  - b. On 13 May 1988, he accepted nonjudicial punishment, under field grade Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice, for wrongfully using cocaine from on or about 18 March 1988 to on or about 18 April 1988. His punishment included reduction to the pay grade of E-1 and 45 days extra duty.
  - c. The available records do not contain the documentation related to the processing of the applicant's request for discharge in lieu of trial by court-martial under Army Regulation (AR) 635-200 (Personnel Separations - Enlisted Personnel), Chapter 10.

d. On 30 June 1988, the separation authority approved the recommended request for discharge for the good of the service and directed the applicant be issued an under other than honorable conditions discharge.

e. The applicant was discharged on 21 July 1988. His DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) shows he was discharged under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chapter 10, for the good of the service in lieu of court-martial, in the lowest enlisted grade, and his service was characterized as under other than honorable conditions. He completed 1 year, 8 months, and 24 days of active service. It also shows in:

- Item 13 (Decorations, Medals, Badges, Citations and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized): Army Service Ribbon and the Sharpshooter Marksmanship Qualification Badge (M-16)
- Item 26 (Separation Code): KFS
- Item 27 (Reenlistment Code): 3-3C

4. On 4 April 2017 in ABCMR Docket Number AR20150018431, the ABCMR determined that the evidence presented did not demonstrate the existence of a probable error or injustice. Therefore, the Board determined the overall merits of the case were insufficient as a basis for correction of the records of the applicant.

5. There is no indication the applicant applied to the ADRB for review of his discharge processing within the Board's 15-year statute of limitations.

6. The pertinent Army regulation in effect at the time provided discharges under the provision of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 10, where voluntary requests from the Soldier to be discharged in lieu of a trial by court-martial.

7. In reaching its determination, the Board can consider the applicant's petition and his service record in accordance with the published equity, injustice, or clemency determination guidance.

8. MEDICAL REVIEW:

a. Background: The applicant is applying to the ABCMR requesting reconsideration of an upgrade to his characterization of service from under other than honorable conditions (UOTHC) to something more favorable. He contends he experienced an undiagnosed mental health condition that mitigates his misconduct.

b. The specific facts and circumstances of the case can be found in the ABCMR Record of Proceedings (ROP). Pertinent to this advisory are the following:

- The applicant enlisted into the Regular Army on 28 October 1986.

- On 13 May 1988, he accepted NJP for wrongfully using cocaine from on or about 18 March 1988 to on or about 18 April 1988.
- The available records do not contain the documentation related to the processing of the applicant's request for discharge in lieu of trial by court-martial.
- The applicant was discharged on 21 July 1988 under the provisions of AR 635-200, chapter 10, for the good of the service in lieu of court-martial and his service was characterized as UOTHC. He completed 1 year, 8 months, and 24 days of net active service.

c. Review of Available Records: The Army Review Board Agency (ARBA) Behavioral Health Advisor reviewed the supporting documents contained in the applicant's file. The applicant asserts a mental health condition as a mitigating factor in his misconduct. The application was void of any medical or mental health records. There was insufficient evidence that the applicant was diagnosed with a psychiatric condition while on active service.

d. The Joint Legacy Viewer (JLV), which includes medical and mental health records from DoD and VA, was also reviewed and showed the applicant initiated VA homeless services in February 2014, and he reported a history of treatment for depression and recent unemployment. Because of his humanitarian status, he was only offered homeless services, but there is documentation of mental health treatment occurring within the community. He received intermittent case management services until August 2016, and in January 2019, he placed a call to the Veterans Crisis Line asking for mental health treatment. He was directed to an emergency walk-in service at his local VA, but the next documentation is in June 2019, noting engagement in homeless services again. In February 2024 he also initiated services through the VA's homeless program, and he has been provided with housing assistance and substance abuse counseling. His most recent contact was on 31 December 2024, and documentation indicated he has remained sober from substances, was housed, and had improved relationships with family.

e. Based on the available information, it is the opinion of the Agency Behavioral Health Advisor that there is insufficient evidence to support that the applicant had a mental health condition while on active service.

f. Kurta Questions:

(1) Did the applicant have a condition or experience that may excuse or mitigate the discharge? Yes. The applicant asserts he had an undiagnosed mental health condition at the time of the misconduct. The application did not contain any mental health records, and VA documentation was primarily for homeless services but did mention a history of treatment for depression.

(2) Did the condition exist or experience occur during military service? Yes, the applicant asserts he was experiencing a mental health condition while on active service. However, no diagnosis or treatment records, from his time in service or after discharge, were provided.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? No. A review of military medical and mental health records revealed no documentation of any mental health condition(s) while on active service. There is insufficient evidence, beyond self-report, that the applicant was experiencing a mental health condition while on active service. Additionally, in the absence of information from a separation packet containing the basis for separation, no opinion regarding mitigation under liberal consideration can be offered. However, his assertion of a mental health condition is sufficient to merit consideration by the board.

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

After reviewing the application, all supporting documents, and the evidence found within the military record, the Board found that relief was not warranted. The Board carefully considered the applicant's request, supporting documents, evidence in the records, and published Department of Defense guidance for liberal consideration of discharge upgrade requests. The Board considered the applicant's statement and record of service, the frequency and nature of the applicant's misconduct and the reason for separation. The applicant was charged with being an offense punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice with a punitive discharge. After being charged, he consulted with counsel and voluntarily requested discharge in lieu of trial by court-martial. The Board found no error or injustice in the separation proceedings and designated characterization of service. The Board reviewed and concurred with the medical advisor's review finding insufficient evidence to support that the applicant had a mental health condition while on active service. Based on a preponderance of the evidence, the Board concluded that the characterization of service the applicant received upon separation was not in error or unjust.

BOARD VOTE:

Mbr 1    Mbr 2    Mbr 3

:	:	:	GRANT FULL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT PARTIAL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT FORMAL HEARING
			DENY APPLICATION

BOARD DETERMINATION/RECOMMENDATION:

The evidence presented does not demonstrate the existence of a probable error or injustice. Therefore, the Board determined the overall merits of this case are insufficient as a basis for correction of the records of the individual concerned.

4/11/2025



CHAIRPERSON

I certify that herein is recorded the true and complete record of the proceedings of the Army Board for Correction of Military Records in this case.

**REFERENCES:**

1. Army Regulation (AR) 635-200 (Personnel Separations – Enlisted Personnel), in effect at the time, set forth the basic authority for the separation of enlisted personnel.
  - a. Chapter 10 provided that a Soldier who committed an offense or offenses, the punishment for which includes a bad conduct or dishonorable discharge, may submit a request for discharge for the good of the service. The discharge request may be submitted after court-martial charges are preferred against the Soldier, or, where required, after referral, until final action by the court-martial convening authority. Commanders will ensure that a Soldier is not coerced into submitting a request for discharge for the good of the service. The Soldier will be given a reasonable time to consult with consulting counsel and to consider the wisdom of submitting such a request for discharge. After receiving counseling, the Soldier may elect to submit a request for discharge for the good of the service. The Soldier will sign a written request, certifying that they were counseled, understood their rights, may receive a discharge under other than honorable conditions, and understood the adverse nature of such a discharge and the possible consequences. A discharge under other than honorable conditions was normally appropriate for a Soldier who is discharged for the good of the service. However, the separation authority was authorized to direct a general discharge certificate if such was merited by the Soldier's overall record during their current enlistment. For Soldiers who had completed entry level status, characterization of service as honorable was not authorized unless the Soldier's record was otherwise so meritorious that any other characterization clearly would be improper.
  - b. An honorable discharge is a separation with honor. The honorable characterization is appropriate when the quality of the Soldier's service generally has met the standards of acceptable conduct and performance of duty for Army personnel or is otherwise so meritorious that any other characterization would be clearly inappropriate.
  - c. A general discharge is a separation from the Army under honorable conditions. When authorized, it is used for a Soldier whose military record is satisfactory but not sufficiently meritorious to warrant an honorable discharge.
  - d. A discharge under other than honorable conditions is an administrative separation from the service under conditions other than honorable. It may be issued for misconduct or for the good of the service.
2. AR 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes), in effect at the time, provided that enlisted Soldiers separated under the provisions of AR 635-200, chapter 10 for the Good of the Service in lieu of court-martial would receive a separation code of "KFS."

3. AR 601-210 (Active and Reserve Components Enlistment Program) covers eligibility criteria, policies, and procedures for enlistment and processing into the Regular Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and Army National Guard. Table 3-1 provides a list of RE codes.

- RE code "1" applies to Soldiers completing their term of active service, who are considered qualified for enlistment if all other criteria are met.
- RE code "2" is no longer in use but applied to Soldiers separated for the convenience of the government, when reenlistment is not contemplated, who are fully qualified for enlistment/reenlistment.
- RE code "3" applies to Soldiers who are not considered fully qualified for reentry or continuous service at time of separation, whose disqualification is waivable; they are ineligible unless a waiver is granted.
- RE code "4" applies to Soldiers separated from last period of service with a non-waivable disqualification
- RE code "3B" applied to Soldiers who had lost time during their last period of service, who were ineligible for enlistment unless a waiver was granted.
- RE code "3C" applied to Soldiers who had completed over 4 months of service who did not meet the basic eligibility pay grade requirements or who have been denied reenlistment under the Qualitative Retention Process and were ineligible for enlistment unless a waiver was granted.

4. On 25 August 2017, the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issued clarifying guidance for the Secretary of Defense Directive to DRBs and BCM/NRs when considering requests by Veterans for modification of their discharges due in whole, or in part, to: mental health conditions, including PTSD; TBI; sexual assault; sexual harassment. Boards were directed to give liberal consideration to Veterans petitioning for discharge relief when the application for relief is based in whole or in part to those conditions or experiences. The guidance further describes evidence sources and criteria and requires Boards to consider the conditions or experiences presented in evidence as potential mitigation for that misconduct which led to the discharge.

5. On 25 July 2018, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issued guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations. Clemency generally refers to relief specifically granted from a criminal sentence. Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records may grant clemency regardless of the court-martial forum. However, the guidance applies to more than clemency from a sentencing in a court-martial; it also applies to any other corrections, including changes in a discharge, which may be warranted on equity or relief from injustice. This guidance does not mandate relief but provides standards and principles to guide Boards in application of their equitable relief authority.

- a. In determining whether to grant relief on the basis of equity, injustice, or clemency grounds, Boards shall consider the prospect for rehabilitation, external evidence, sworn testimony, policy changes, relative severity of misconduct, mental and behavioral health conditions, official governmental acknowledgement that a relevant error or injustice was committed, and uniformity of punishment.
- b. Changes to the narrative reason for discharge and/or an upgraded character of service granted solely on equity, injustice, or clemency grounds normally should not result in separation pay, retroactive promotions, and payment of past medical expenses or similar benefits that might have been received if the original discharge had been for the revised reason or had the upgraded service characterization.

6. Section 1556 of Title 10, United States Code, requires the Secretary of the Army to ensure that an applicant seeking corrective action by the Army Review Boards Agency (ARBA) be provided with a copy of any correspondence and communications (including summaries of verbal communications) to or from the Agency with anyone outside the Agency that directly pertains to or has material effect on the applicant's case, except as authorized by statute. ARBA medical advisory opinions and reviews are authored by ARBA civilian and military medical and behavioral health professionals and are therefore internal agency work product. Accordingly, ARBA does not routinely provide copies of ARBA Medical Office recommendations, opinions (including advisory opinions), and reviews to Army Board for Correction of Military Records applicants (and/or their counsel) prior to adjudication.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//