

**1. Applicant's Name:** [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 26 April 2021**b. Date Received:** 26 April 2021**c. Counsel:** None**2. REQUEST, ISSUES, BOARD TYPE, AND DECISION:**

**a. Applicant's Requests and Issues:** The current characterization of service for the period under review is general (under honorable conditions). The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable.

The applicant seeks relief contending, in effect, the discharge was the result of not thinking clearly after receiving red cross messages about their child. The applicant contends while they were in the military, they were chosen to be a color guard for the United States and French partnership and attended several Soldier of the Month boards.

**b. Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 21 January 2025, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board determined that the characterization of service was inequitable based on the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder outweighing the applicant's alcohol-related misconduct. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed to the separation authority to AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12a. Accordingly, the narrative reason for separation changed to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) with a corresponding separation code of JKN. The Board determined the reentry code is proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

*Please see Section 9 of this document for more detail regarding the Board's decision. Board member names available upon request.*

**3. DISCHARGE DETAILS:**

**a. Reason / Authority / Codes / Characterization:** Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure / AR 635-200, Chapter 9 / JPD / RE-4 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

**b. Date of Discharge:** 7 September 2007**c. Separation Facts:**

**(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 7 August 2007

**(2) Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons: inability or refusal to participate in, cooperate in, or successfully complete such a program Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) in one of the following circumstances: there is a lack of potential for continued Army service and rehabilitation efforts are no longer practical.

**(3) Recommended Characterization:** General (Under Honorable Conditions)

**(4) Legal Consultation Date:** 27 August 2007

**(5) Administrative Separation Board:** NA

**(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** 30 August 2007 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

**4. SERVICE DETAILS:**

**a. Date / Period of Enlistment:** 2 July 2003 / 4 years

**b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** E-4 / High School Graduate / 113

**c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-4 / 42A10, Human Resources / 4 years, 2 months, 6 days

**d. Prior Service / Characterizations:** None

**e. Overseas Service / Combat Service:** Germany, SWA / Iraq (21 December 2006 – 22 June 2007)

**f. Awards and Decorations:** AAM, MUC, AGCM, NDSM, GWOTSM, ICM, ASR

**g. Performance Ratings:** NA

**h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:** Summary of Army Substance Abuse Program Rehabilitation Failure Memorandum, 2 August 2007, reflects in consultation with and upon recommendation of the Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) counseling staff, the applicant had been declared a rehabilitation failure in the Bamberg Community Counseling Center (CCC) Army Substance Abuse Program. Under the provisions of enlisted rehabilitation failure (Chapter 9 AR 635-200) discharge procedures are outlined. Requested actions be initiated within 60 calendar days from the date of the letter. If such actions were not initiated, another meeting would be necessary to clinically evaluate the applicant's potential for further military service.

Three Developmental Counseling Forms, for failure to report, chapter 5-17 and family responsibilities.

**i. Lost Time / Mode of Return:** None

**j. Behavioral Health Condition(s):**

**(1) Applicant provided:** None

**(2) AMHRR Listed:** Memorandum For Commander, Report of Mental Status Evaluation, 22 June 2007, reflects a diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder, severe, without psychotic features, single episode. The applicant was and is mentally responsible, able to distinguish right from wrong and to adhere to the right and had the mental capacity to understand and to participate in board proceedings. Psychiatrically cleared for any administrative action deemed appropriate by the command. Psychiatric factors indicated an administrative separation under AR 635-200, paragraph 5-17, would be in the best interests of the applicant and the military.

Report of Medical History, 13 July 2007, the examining medical physician noted in the comments section: High anxiety and being seen by mental health.

Report of Medical Examination, 13 July 2007, the examining medical physician noted the in the comments section: Depression and being seen by a psychiatrics.

**5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:** Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty; Application for the Review of Discharge; Chronological Record of Medical Care.

**6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** None submitted with the application.

**7. STATUTORY, REGULATORY AND POLICY REFERENCE(S):**

a. Section 1553, Title 10, United States Code (Review of Discharge or Dismissal) provides for the creation, composition, and scope of review conducted by a Discharge Review Board(s) within established governing standards. As amended by Sections 521 and 525 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, 10 USC 1553 provides specific guidance to the Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records and Discharge Review Boards when considering discharge upgrade requests by Veterans claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), sexual trauma, intimate partner violence (IPV), or spousal abuse, as a basis for discharge review. The amended guidance provides that Boards will include, as a voting board member, a physician trained in mental health disorders, a clinical psychologist, or a psychiatrist when the discharge upgrade claim asserts a mental health condition, including PTSD, TBI, sexual trauma, IPV, or spousal abuse, as a basis for the discharge. Further, the guidance provides that Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records and Discharge Review Boards will develop and provide specialized training specific to sexual trauma, IPV, spousal abuse, as well as the various responses of individuals to trauma.

b. Multiple Department of Defense Policy Guidance Memoranda published between 2014 and 2018. The documents are commonly referred to by the signatory authorities' last names (2014 Secretary of Defense Guidance [Hagel memo], 2016 Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [Carson memo], 2017 Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [Kurta memo], and 2018 Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [Wilkie memo].

(1) Individually and collectively, these documents provide further clarification to the Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records when considering requests by Veterans for modification of their discharge due to mental health conditions, including PTSD; TBI; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Liberal consideration will be given to Veterans petitioning for discharge relief when the application for relief is based in whole or in part on matters relating to mental health conditions, including PTSD; TBI; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Special consideration will be given to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) determinations that document a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment potentially contributed to the circumstances resulting in a less than honorable discharge characterization. Special consideration will also be given in cases where a civilian provider confers diagnoses of a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment if the case records contain narratives supporting symptomatology at the time of service or when any other evidence which may reasonably indicate that a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment existed at the time of discharge might have mitigated the misconduct that caused a discharge of lesser characterization.

(2) Conditions documented in the service record that can reasonably be determined to have existed at the time of discharge will be considered to have existed at the time of discharge. In cases in which a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment may be reasonably determined to have existed at the time of discharge, those conditions will be considered potential mitigating factors in the misconduct that caused the characterization of

service in question. All Boards will exercise caution in weighing evidence of mitigation in cases in which serious misconduct precipitated a discharge with a less than Honorable characterization of service. Potentially mitigating evidence of the existence of undiagnosed combat related PTSD, PTSD-related conditions due to TBI or sexual assault/harassment as causative factors in the misconduct resulting in discharge will be carefully weighed against the severity of the misconduct. PTSD is not a likely cause of premeditated misconduct. Caution shall be exercised in weighing evidence of mitigation in all cases of misconduct by carefully considering the likely causal relationship of symptoms to the misconduct.

**c.** Army Regulation 15-180 (Army Discharge Review Board) sets forth the policies and procedures under which the Army Discharge Review Board is authorized to review the character, reason, and authority of any Servicemember discharged from active military service within 15 years of the Servicemember's date of discharge. Additionally, it prescribes actions and composition of the Army Discharge Review Board under Public Law 95-126; Section 1553, Title 10 United States Code; and Department of Defense Directive 1332.41 and Instruction 1332.28.

**d.** Army Regulation 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations) provides the basic authority for the separation of enlisted personnel.

**(1)** Chapter 3, Section II provides the authorized types of characterization of service or description of separation.

**(2)** Paragraph 3-7a states an Honorable discharge is a separation with honor and 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.

**(3)** Paragraph 3-7b states a General discharge is a separation from the Army under honorable conditions and is issued to a Soldier whose military record is satisfactory but not sufficiently meritorious to warrant an honorable discharge.

**(4)** Chapter 9 outlines the procedures for discharging individuals because of alcohol or other drug abuse. A member who has been referred to the Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) for alcohol or drug abuse may be separated because of inability or refusal to participate in, cooperate in, or successfully complete such a program if there is a lack of potential for continued Army service and rehabilitation efforts are no longer practical.

**(5)** Paragraph 9-4 stipulates the service of Soldiers discharged under this section will be characterized as honorable or under honorable conditions unless the Soldier is in entry-level status and an uncharacterized description of service is required. An honorable discharge is mandated in any case in which the Government initially introduces into the final discharge process limited use evidence as defined by AR 600-85.

**e.** Army Regulation 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes), provides the specific authorities (regulatory or directive), reasons for separating Soldiers from active duty, and the SPD codes to be entered on the DD Form 214. It identifies the SPD code of "JPD" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 9, for alcohol rehabilitation failure.

**f.** Army Regulation 601-210 (Regular Army and Reserve Components Enlistment Program) governs eligibility criteria, policies, and procedures for enlistment and processing of persons into the Regular Army, the U.S. Army Reserve, and Army National Guard for enlistment per DODI 1304.26. It also prescribes the appointment, reassignment, management, and mobilization of

Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadets under the Simultaneous Membership Program. Chapter 4 provides the criteria and procedures for waiverable and nonwaiverable separations. Table 3-1 defines reentry eligibility (RE) codes: RE-4 Applies to: Person separated from last period of service with a nonwaiverable disqualification. This includes anyone with a DA imposed bar to reenlistment in effect at time of separation or separated for any reason (except length of service retirement) with 18 or more years active Federal service. Eligibility: Ineligible for enlistment.

**8. SUMMARY OF FACT(S):** The Army Discharge Review Board considers applications for upgrade as instructed by Department of Defense Instruction 1332.28.

The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable. The applicant's Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR), the issues, and documents submitted with the application were carefully reviewed.

Summary of Army Substance Abuse Program Rehabilitation Failure Memorandum, 2 August 2007, reflects in consultation with and upon recommendation of the Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) counseling staff, the applicant had been declared a rehabilitation failure in the Bamberg Community Counseling Center (CCC), Army Substance Abuse Program. Under the provisions of enlisted rehabilitation failure (Chapter 9 AR 635-200) discharge procedures were outlined.

The applicant contends the discharge was the result of not thinking clearly after receiving red cross messages about their child. There is no evidence in the AMHRR the applicant ever sought assistance before committing the misconduct, which led to the separation action under review.

The applicant contends good service, including a combat tour. The Board considered the applicant's service accomplishments and the quality of service according to the DODI 1332.28.

The AMHRR includes a Memorandum For Commander, Report of Mental Status Evaluation, 22 June 2007, reflecting a diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder, severe, without psychotic features, single episode. The applicant was and is mentally responsible, able to distinguish right from wrong and to adhere to the right and had the mental capacity to understand and to participate in board proceedings. The applicant was psychiatrically cleared for any administrative action deemed appropriate by the command. Psychiatric factors indicated an administrative separation under AR 635-200, paragraph 5-17, would be in the best interests of the applicant and the military. A Report of Medical History and Examination, 13 July 2007, the examining medical physician noted in the comments section: High anxiety; depression and being seen by mental health. All the medical documents were considered by the separation authority.

#### **9. BOARD DISCUSSION AND DETERMINATION:**

a. As directed by the 2017 memo signed by A.M. Kurta, the board considered the following factors:

(1) Did the applicant have a condition or experience that may excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor, a voting member, reviewed the applicant's DOD and VA health records, applicant's statement, and/or civilian provider documentation and found that the applicant has the following potentially mitigating diagnoses/experiences: MDD and Adjustment Disorder.

**(2)** Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found the applicant is 70 percent service connected for MDD.

**(3)** Does the condition or experience excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board determined, based on the BMA's opine, that the applicant's behavioral health conditions mitigate the discharge. Given the nexus between MDD and the use of substances to self-medicate, the applicant's continued alcohol use leading to ASAP rehabilitation treatment failure is mitigated.

**(4)** Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** After applying liberal consideration to the evidence, including the Board Medical Advisor's opine, the Board determined that the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder outweighed the separating alcohol-related misconduct.

**b. Response to Contention(s):**

**(1)** The applicant contends the discharge was the result of not thinking clearly after receiving red cross messages about their child. The Board liberally considered this contention in relation to the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder and factored it into a vote to upgrade.

**(2)** The applicant contends good service, including a combat tour. The Board considered this contention during proceedings, but ultimately did not address it in detail due to an upgrade being granted based on the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder outweighing the alcohol-related misconduct.

**c.** The Board determined that the characterization of service was inequitable based on the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder outweighing the separating alcohol-related misconduct. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed to the separation authority to AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12a. The narrative reason for separation was changed to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) with a corresponding separation code of JKN. The Board determined the reentry code is proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

**d. Rationale for Decision:**

**(1)** The Board voted to change the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable because the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder outweighed the separating alcohol-related misconduct. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

**(2)** The Board voted to change the reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) under the same pretexts. Thus, the reason for discharge is no longer appropriate. The SPD code associated with the new reason for discharge is JKN.

**(3)** The RE code will not change due to the behavioral health conditions. The current code is also consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

**ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE**

**AR20210000547**

**10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:**

- a. Issue a New DD-214: Yes
- b. Change Characterization to: Honorable
- c. Change Reason / SPD Code to: Misconduct (Minor Infractions) / JKN
- d. Change RE Code to: No Change
- e. Change Authority to: AR 635-200

**Authenticating Official:**

1/22/2025



**Legend:**

AWOL – Absent Without Leave  
AMHRR – Army Military Human  
Resource Record  
BCD – Bad Conduct Discharge  
BH – Behavioral Health  
CG – Company Grade Article 15  
CID – Criminal Investigation  
Division  
ELS – Entry Level Status  
FG – Field Grade Article 15

GD – General Discharge  
HS – High School  
HD – Honorable Discharge  
IADT – Initial Active Duty Training  
MP – Military Police  
MST – Military Sexual Trauma  
N/A – Not applicable  
NCO – Noncommissioned Officer  
NIF – Not in File  
NOS – Not Otherwise Specified

OAD – Ordered to Active Duty  
OBH (I) – Other Behavioral  
Health (Issues)  
OMPF – Official Military  
Personnel File  
PTSD – Post-Traumatic Stress  
Disorder  
RE – Re-entry  
SCM – Summary Court Martial  
SPCM – Special Court Martial

SPD – Separation Program  
Designator  
TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury  
UNC – Uncharacterized  
Discharge  
UOTHC – Under Other Than  
Honorable Conditions  
VA – Department of Veterans  
Affairs