

**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, always excelling at work performance and was an outstanding Soldier. The applicant was at their first duty station was Fort Hood for six months before they deploying to Iraq. While in Iraq, the applicant volunteered for guard duty and other details. After the deployment, the applicant reenlisted and was assigned to Japan. The applicant was a maintenance supervisor and attended a logistic course. The applicant is trying to further their education, applying to a one-year Japanese language school, and will attend an automotive customization school to progress their automotive field. The applicant is applying for military and civilian jobs on the Marine base in Iwakuni Japan and this type of discharge received is making it hard to find a job.

**b. Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 5 December 2024, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board determined that the characterization of service was inequitable based on the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder outweighed the applicant's Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure. Accordingly, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade to the characterization of service to Honorable and the reentry code to RE-3. The Board determined the narrative reason/SPD code were proper and equitable and voted not to change them.

*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:** 10 July 2013

**c. Separation Facts:** The applicant's Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR) is void of the case separation file.

**(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** NIF

**(2) Basis for Separation:** NIF

**(3) Recommended Characterization:** NIF

**(4) Legal Consultation Date:** NIF

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

(6) **Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** NIF

**4. SERVICE DETAILS:**

a. **Date / Period of Enlistment:** 26 October 2010 / 4 years

b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 22 / High School Graduate / 99

c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-4 / 91B10, Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic / 5 years, 8 months, 16 days

d. **Prior Service / Characterizations:** RA, 25 October 2007 – 25 October 2010 / HD

e. **Overseas Service / Combat Service:** Japan, SWA / Ionian Sea (5 January 2012 – 20 February 2012); Iraq (27 April 2009 – 13 April 2010)

f. **Awards and Decorations:** AAM, MUC, NDSM, GWOTSM, ICM-CS, ASR, OSR

g. **Performance Ratings:** NA

h. **Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:** Orders 190-1336, 9 July 2013, reflect the applicant was to be reassigned to the U.S. Army Transition Point and discharged on 10 July 2013 from the Regular Army.

The applicant's DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty), reflects the applicant had completed the first full term of service. The applicant was discharged under the authority of AR 635-200, chapter 9, with a narrative reason of Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure. The DD Form 214 was authenticated with the applicant's electronic signature.

The applicant's Enlisted Record Brief (ERB), 10 July 2013, reflects the applicant was flagged for Involuntary Separation or Discharge (Field Initiated) (BA), effective 20 March 2013; was ineligible for reenlistment due pending separation (9V). The applicant was reduced from E-4 to E-3 effective 10 February 2012.

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

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

(1) **Applicant provided:** None

(2) **AMHRR Listed:** None

*The ARBA's medical advisor reviewed DoD and VA medical records and not solely those documents listed in 4j(1) and (2) above.*

**5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:** Application for the Review of Discharge and Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty.

**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) is void of the specific facts and circumstances concerning the events which led to the discharge from the Army. The applicant's AMHRR does contain a properly constituted DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty), which was authenticated by the applicant's electronic signature. The applicant's DD Form 214 indicates the applicant was discharged under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chapter 9, by reason of Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure, with a characterization of service of general (under honorable conditions).

The applicant contends good service, including a combat tour.

The applicant contends an upgrade of the discharge will allow the applicant to obtain better employment. The Board does not grant relief to gain employment or enhance employment opportunities.

**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 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: Adjustment Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, PTSD.

**(2)** Did the condition exist or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board found that the applicant was diagnosed in service with an Adjustment Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder and is service connected by the VA for PTSD. Service connection establishes that the applicant's PTSD also existed during military service.

**(3)** Does the condition or experience actually 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 Major Depressive Disorder, PTSD, and self-medicating with substances, the alcohol rehabilitation failure that led to the separation is mitigated.

**(4)** Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** After applying liberal consideration to the evidence, including the Board Medical Advisor opine, the Board determined that the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder outweighed the applicant's Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure.

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

**(1)** The applicant contends good service, including a combat tour. The Board considered this contention during proceedings, but ultimately did not address the contention due to an upgrade being granted based on the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder outweighing the applicant's Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure.

(2) The applicant contends an upgrade of the discharge will allow the applicant to obtain better employment. The Board considered this contention but does not grant relief to gain employment or enhance employment opportunities.

c. The Board determined that the characterization of service was inequitable based on the applicant's Major Depressive Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder outweighed the applicant's Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure. Accordingly, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade to the characterization of service to Honorable and the reentry code to RE-3. The Board determined the narrative reason/SPD code were proper and equitable and voted not to change them.

**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 and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder outweighing the applicant's Alcohol Rehabilitation Failure. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

(2) The Board voted not to change the applicant's reason for discharge or accompanying SPD code as the reason the applicant was discharged was both proper and equitable.

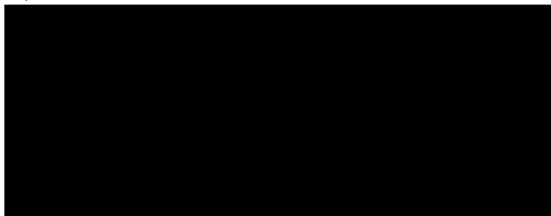
(3) The RE code will change to RE-3.

**10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:**

- a. Issue a New DD-214: Yes
- b. Change Characterization to: Honorable
- c. Change Reason / SPD Code to: No Change
- d. Change RE Code to: RE-3
- e. Change Authority to: No Change

**Authenticating Official:**

12/30/2024



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