

1. Applicant's Name:

- 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 period under review is general (under honorable conditions). The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable.

The applicant seeks relief contending, in effect, being mistreated by the chain of command. The applicant believes they deserved a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) because they had valid medical reason. The applicant states processing over 500 deceased bodies and coping with the aftermath caused them considerable distress.

b. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 22 October 2024, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board denied the request upon finding the separation was both proper and equitable.

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:** Misconduct (Serious Offense) / AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c / JKQ / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. **Date of Discharge:** 7 June 2010

c. **Separation Facts:**

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 18 May 2010

(2) **Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons: On or about January 2010, the applicant endangered the welfare of a minor, by knowingly and unlawfully providing alcohol to J. S., a sixteen-year-old person, and A. G., a seventeen-year-old person (violation of Section 260.20, Subdivision 2 of the Penal Law of the State of New York). On or about 11 August 2009, the applicant made a False Official Statement (violation of Article 107, Uniform Code of Military Justice) to MSG T. K., to wit: the applicant had been hit by an IED blast, which statement was totally false, and was then known by them to be so false. The applicant received a Summary Court-Martial on 14 September 2006, for conspiracy, and destruction of private property.

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

(4) **Legal Consultation Date:** On 20 May 2010, the applicant waived legal counsel.

(5) **Administrative Separation Board:** On 20 May 2010, the applicant unconditionally waived consideration of the case before an administrative separation board.

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: undated / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Enlistment: 27 March 2007 / 6 years

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 20 / High School Graduate / 82

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-4 / 92M10, Mortuary Affairs Specialist / 6 years, 17 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: RA, 19 May 2004 – 26 March 2007 / HD

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: SWA / Afghanistan (27 July 2006 – 1 January 2007); Iraq (27 January 2007 – 27 July 2007)

f. Awards and Decorations: ARCOM-2, AAM, NDSM, ACM-2CS, GWOTSM, HSM, ASR, OSR-2, NATOMDL

g. Performance Ratings: NA

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record: A Summary Court Martial was held on 14 September 2006, and the applicant was found guilty on all charges.

Record of Trial by Summary Court-Martial, reflects the applicant was charged with:

Charge I Violation of the UCMJ, The Specification: Conspiracy. Plea: Guilty; Finding: Guilty.

Charge II Violation of the UCMJ, The Specification: Destruction of private property. Plea: Guilty; Finding: Guilty.

The sentence adjudged: Forfeiture \$150; reduction to E-1 (suspended); confinement for 30 days.

The State of New York County of Jefferson Justice Court Village of Carthage, charge the applicant with two counts of unlawfully dealing with a child in the first degree and endangering the welfare of a child.

Two Developmental Counseling Forms, for leaving assigned duty; Army Weight Control program and failing to meet Army weight standards.

i. Lost Time / Mode of Return: None

j. Behavioral Health Condition(s):

(1) Applicant provided: Report of Medical History, 12 April 2010, the examining medical physician noted in the comments section: The evaluation included a medical diagnosis.

(2) AMHRR Listed: Report of Medical History, 12 April 2010, as described in previous paragraph 4j(1).

Report of Mental Status Evaluation, 22 April 2010, reflects the applicant was cleared for any administrative actions deemed appropriate by the command. The applicant could understand and participate in administrative proceedings; could appreciate the difference between right and wrong; and met medical retention requirements. The command was advised to consider the influence of these conditions. The evaluation included a diagnosis.

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: Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty; Application for the Review of Discharge; Separation packet.

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 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for separating members for misconduct. Specific categories include minor disciplinary infractions, a pattern of misconduct, and commission of a serious offense, to include abuse of illegal drugs, convictions by civil authorities and desertion or being absent without leave. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impractical or unlikely to succeed.

(5) Paragraph 14-3 prescribes a discharge under other than honorable conditions is normally appropriate for a Soldier discharged under this chapter. However, the separation authority may direct a general discharge if such is merited by the Soldier's overall record.

(6) Paragraph 14-12c prescribes a Soldier is subject to action per this section for commission of a serious military or civilian offense, if the specific circumstances of the offense warrant separation and a punitive discharge is, or would be, authorized for the same or a closely related offense under the Manual for Courts-Martial.

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 "JKQ" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 12c, misconduct (serious offense).

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-3 Applies to: Person who is not considered fully qualified for reentry or continuous service at time of separation, but disqualification is waiverable. Eligibility: Ineligible unless a waiver is granted.

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.

The applicant contends processing over 500 deceased bodies and coping with the aftermath caused them considerable distress. The applicant provided a Report of Medical History, 12 April 2010, in which the examining medical physician noted in the comments section: The evaluation included a medical diagnosis. The AMHRR includes a Report of Mental Status Evaluation, 22 April 2010, reflecting the applicant was cleared for any administrative actions deemed appropriate by the command. The applicant could understand and participate in administrative proceedings; could appreciate the difference between right and wrong; and met medical retention requirements. The command was advised to consider the influence of these conditions. The evaluation included a diagnosis. All medical documents were considered by the separation authority.

The applicant contends mistreatment by the chain of command. The applicant did not submit any evidence, other than the applicant's statement, to support the contention. The applicant's AMHRR does not contain any indication or evidence of arbitrary or capricious actions by the command.

The applicant contends the discharge should have been for medical reasons. Army Regulation 635-200, in pertinent part, stipulates commanders will not separate Soldiers for a medical condition solely to spare a Soldier who may have committed serious acts of misconduct. Further the applicant's request for a medical discharge does not fall within this board's purview. The applicant may apply to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR), using the enclosed DD Form 149 regarding this matter. A DD Form 149 may also be obtained from a Veterans' Service Organization.

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

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: PTSD, TBI, Bipolar Disorder, Acute Stress Reaction, Adjustment Disorder.

(2) Did the condition exist or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found the applicant is 50 percent SC for PTSD and 40 percent SC for TBI.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **No.** The Board determined, based on the BMA's opine, that the applicant's behavioral health conditions do not mitigate the discharge. The applicant's offenses of endangering the welfare of minors, making a false official statement, conspiracy, and destruction of private property are not mitigated as the misconduct is not natural sequela of PTSD, Depression, or Acute Stress Disorder. These conditions did not render the applicant unable to differentiate between right and wrong and adhere to the right. Regarding Bipolar Disorder, the available information does not support that the applicant was experiencing a manic/hypomanic episode during the time of any of the misconduct and therefore the condition does not mitigate. Regarding the diagnosis of TBI, evidence suggests that at the time of the misconduct in 2009 and 2010 the residual effects of the applicant's TBI was not of a severity to impact judgement, behavior or cognition. The misconduct in 2006 is also not mitigated by the condition, as this misconduct occurred prior to the reported IED exposure associated with TBI diagnosis. The available evidence does not support that, at the time of separation, the applicant had a condition that was determined to make the applicant unfit for continued service.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **No.** After applying liberal consideration to the evidence, including the Board Medical Advisor opine, the Board determined that the available evidence did not support a conclusion that the applicant's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, Bipolar Disorder, Acute Stress Reaction, and Adjustment Disorder outweighed the applicant's medically unmitigated offenses of endangering the welfare of a minor, making a false official statement, conspiracy, and destruction of property.

b. Response to Contention(s):

(1) The applicant contends processing over 500 deceased bodies and coping with the aftermath caused them considerable distress. The Board liberally considered this contention but determined that the available evidence did not support a conclusion that the applicant's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, Bipolar Disorder, Acute Stress Reaction, and Adjustment Disorder outweighed the applicant's medically unmitigated offenses of endangering the welfare of a minor, making a false official statement, conspiracy, and destruction of property.

(2) The applicant contends mistreatment by the chain of command. The Board considered this contention but found insufficient evidence in the applicant's AMHRR or applicant-provided evidence to support the assertion that the applicant experience unfair treatment from the chain of command.

(3) The applicant contends the discharge should have been for medical reasons. The Board determined that the applicant's request for a medical discharge does not fall within the purview of the ADRB. The applicant may apply to the Army Board for Correction of Military

Records (ABCMR), using a DD Form 293 regarding this matter. A DD Form 293 may be obtained online at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/forms/dd/dd0293.pdf> or from a Veterans' Service Organization.

(4) The applicant contends good service, including two combat tours. The Board considered the applicant's six years of service, including combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, but found that the applicant's record does not outweigh the medically unmitigated offenses of endangering the welfare of a minor, making a false official statement, conspiracy, and destruction of property.

c. The Board determined that the discharge is, at this time, proper and equitable, in light of the current evidence of record. However, the applicant may request a personal appearance hearing to address the issues before the Board. The applicant is responsible for satisfying the burden of proof and providing documents or other evidence sufficient to support the applicant's contention(s) that the discharge was improper or inequitable.

d. Rationale for Decision:

(1) The Board voted not to change the applicant's characterization of service because, despite applying liberal consideration to all evidence before the Board, the applicant's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, Bipolar Disorder, Acute Stress Reaction, and Adjustment Disorder did not outweigh the medically unmitigated offenses of endangering the welfare of a minor, making a false official statement, conspiracy, and destruction of property. The Board also considered the applicant's contentions regarding good service and mistreatment from command but found that the totality of the applicant's record does not warrant a discharge upgrade. The applicant did not present any issues of impropriety for the Board's consideration. The discharge was consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation, was within the discretion of the separation authority, and the applicant was provided full administrative due process. Therefore, the applicant's General discharge was proper and equitable as the applicant's misconduct fell below that level of meritorious service warranted for an upgrade to Honorable discharge.

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

(3) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE

AR20210000711

10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

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

Authenticating Official:

10/29/2024

X

Presiding Officer, COL, U.S. ARMY
Army Discharge Review Board

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
UOTHHC – Under Other Than
Honorable Conditions
VA – Department of Veterans
Affairs