

**1. Applicant's Name:**

- a. **Application Date:** 8 January 2021
- b. **Date Received:** 26 January 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.
- b. The applicant seeks relief contending they were approved for leave from their flight sergeant; however, their flight sergeant did not pass the message along to their captain. After that incident, the captain had it out for them and they felt targeted and bullied.
- c. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 23 August 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:** Pattern of Misconduct / Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12b / JKA / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)
- b. **Date of Discharge:** 1 August 2007
- c. **Separation Facts:** The applicant's case separation file is void of several documents from the Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR). On 30 August 2021 the Army Review Boards Agency requested the applicant provide their discharge packet (case separation files), as of this date there has been no response.

**4. SERVICE DETAILS:**

- a. **Date / Period of Enlistment:** 17 September 2008 / 4 Years, 25 weeks
- b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 20 / HS Graduate / NIF
- c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-3 / 42A1O, Human Resources Specialist / 2 years, 6 months, 9 days
- d. **Prior Service / Characterizations:** None
- e. **Overseas Service / Combat Service:** Korea / None
- f. **Awards and Decorations:** AAM, NDSM, GWTSM, KDSM, ASR, OSR

**g. Performance Ratings: NA**

**h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:** On 31 March 2011 the applicant was discharged from the Regular Army. Their DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) provides they completed 2 years, 6 months, and 9 days of net active service this period. Their DD Form 214 shows in:

- item 4a (Grade, Rate or Rank) – Private
- item 4b (Pay Grade) – E-1
- item 12h (Effective Date of Pay Grade) – 14 February 2011
- item 18 (Remarks) – MEMBER HAS NOT COMPLETED FIRST FULL TERM OF SERVICE
- item 24 (Character of Service) – General (Under Honorable Conditions)
- item 25 (Separation Authority) – Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12b
- item 26 (Separation Code) – JKA
- item 27 (Reentry Code) – 3
- item 28 (Narrative Reason for Separation) – Pattern of Misconduct
- item 29 (Dates of Time Lost During This Period) – 20101124 - 20101128

**i. Lost Time / Mode of Return: 5 days / NIF**

**j. Behavioral Health Condition(s): None**

**5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:** None submitted with the application.

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

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

**a.** Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1553, (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, Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 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 (DoD) 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; Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1553; and DoD Directive 1332.41 and Instruction 1332.28.

**d.** Army Regulation 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations), dated 17 December 2009, set policies, standards, and procedures to ensure the readiness and competency of the force while providing for the orderly administrative separation of Soldiers for a variety of reasons. Readiness is promoted by maintaining high standards of conduct and performance.

**(1)** 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.

**(2)** 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.

**(3)** A Under Other Than Honorable Conditions Discharge is an administrative separation from the Service under conditions other than honorable. It may be issued for misconduct, fraudulent entry, security reasons, or in lieu of trial by court-martial.

**(4)** Chapter 1 (General Provisions) sets policies, standards, and procedures to ensure readiness and competency of the force while providing for the orderly administrative separation of Soldiers, it provides in pertinent part:

**(a)** When a separation is ordered, the approved proceedings will be sent to the commander who has the Soldier's records for separation processing. The original copy of the proceedings will be filed in the permanent part of the Soldier's official personnel record.

**(b)** Army leaders at all levels must be continually aware of their obligation to provide purpose, direction, and motivation to Soldiers. It is essential that Soldiers who falter, but have the potential to serve honorably and well, be given every opportunity to succeed. Except as otherwise indicated, commanders must make maximum use of counseling and rehabilitation before determining that a Soldier has no potential for further useful service and ensure it occurs prior to initiating separation proceedings for reason to include Minor Disciplinary Infractions (14-12a) or a Pattern of Misconduct (14-12b).

**(5)** Chapter 14 (Separation for Misconduct) established policy and prescribed procedures for separating members for misconduct. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impractical or unlikely to succeed. Paragraph 14-12b (Pattern of Misconduct), stated, a pattern of misconduct consisting of one of the following – discreditable involvement with civil or military authorities, or discreditable conduct and conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline including conduct violating the accepted standards of personal conduct found in the UCMJ, Army regulations, the civil law, and time-honored customs and traditions of the Army.

**(6)** Paragraph 14-3 (Characterization of Service or Description of Separation) prescribed 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.

**(7)** Chapter 15 (Secretarial Plenary Authority), currently in effect, provides explicitly for separation under the prerogative of the Secretary of the Army. Secretarial plenary separation authority is exercised sparingly and seldom delegated. Ordinarily, it is used when no other provision of this regulation applies, and early separation is clearly in the Army's best interest. Separations under this paragraph are effective only if approved in writing by the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary's approved designee as announced in updated memoranda. Secretarial separation authority is normally exercised on a case-by-case basis.

**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 "JKA" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 12b, (Pattern of Misconduct).

**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 DoD Instructions 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:

**(1)** RE-1 Applies to: Person completing his or her term of active service who is considered qualified to reenter the U.S. Army. Eligibility: Qualified for enlistment if all other criteria are met.

**(2)** 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.

**(3)** 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):**

**a.** The Army Discharge Review Board considers applications for upgrade as instructed by Department of Defense Instruction 1332.28.

**b.** A review of the available evidence provides an administrative irregularity in the proper retention of records, specifically the AMHRR is void of the case files for approved separation. Due to the lack of evidence the specific facts and circumstances surrounding the pattern of misconduct to be discharged under the provision on Army Regulation 635-200, paragraph 14-12b are unknown. Notwithstanding the absence of records, the DD Form 214, provides the applicant was discharged with a character of service of general (under honorable conditions) for a pattern of misconduct. They completed 2 years, 6 months, and 9 days of their 4-year, 25 week contractual obligation and did not complete their first full term of service.

**c.** Chapter 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for separation members for misconduct. Specific categories include minor disciplinary infractions, a pattern of misconduct, commission of a serious offense and convictions by civil authorities. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impracticable or is unlikely to succeed. 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.

**d.** Published Department of Defense guidance indicates that the guidance is not intended to interfere or impede on the Board's statutory independence. The Board will determine the relative weight of the action that led to the discharge and whether it supports relief or not. In reaching its determination, the Board shall consider the applicant's petition, available records and/or submitted documents in support of the petition.

**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? **No.** The Board's Medical Advisor reviewed DoD and VA medical records and found no mitigating BH diagnoses on the applicant. The applicant provided no documents or testimony

of a condition or experience, that, when applying liberal consideration, could have excused or mitigated a discharge.

- (2)** Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **N/A.**
- (3)** Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **N/A.**
- (4)** Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **N/A.**

**b.** Response to Contention(s): The applicant contends they were approved for leave from their flight sergeant; however, their flight sergeant did not pass the message along to their captain. After that incident, the captain had it out for them and they felt targeted and bullied. The Board considered this contention and determined that there is insufficient evidence in the applicant's official record or provided by the applicant that the applicant's "captain had it out for them." The board believed there was not enough evidence provided to the board to make an upgrade.

**c.** The Board determined that the discharge is, at this time, proper and equitable, in light of the current evidence of record. The applicant has exhausted their appeal options available with ADRB. However, the applicant may still apply to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records. 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 of all the evidence before the Board, the applicant did not have a BH condition or experience that may excuse or mitigate the offense of AWOL. 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 rationale, as 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**  
**AR20210007007**

**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:**

9/16/2024

**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  
UOTHC – Under Other Than Honorable Conditions  
VA – Department of Veterans Affairs