

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]

- a. **Application Date:** 1 October 2020
- b. **Date Received:** 5 October 2020
- 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 under honorable conditions (general). The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable, and a narrative reason change.

The applicant states in effect, they are trying to attend electrician school with requirements to receive half of their e-benefits. Due to not having an honorable discharge they have not been able to attend the school. If their discharge was upgraded, it would present more career opportunities for them by providing them with more educational benefits to better themselves.

b. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 1 March 2024, and by a 3-2 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's one-time drug use, overseas service in Korea, and post-service accomplishments mitigate the applicant's misconduct (drug use). 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 to Misconduct (Minor Infractions), with a corresponding separation code of JKN, and the reentry code to RE-3.
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 (Drug Abuse) / AR 635-200, CH 14-12c / JKK / RE-4 / General (under honorable conditions).

b. **Date of Discharge:** 20 March 2019

c. Separation Facts:

- (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:** N/A
- (6) **Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** NIF

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

- a. **Date / Period of Enlistment:** 25 October 2016
- b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 18 / Highschool Graduate / 106
- c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-3 / 25U10 Signal Support Systems Specialist / 2 years, 4 months, 26 days.
- d. **Prior Service / Characterizations:** None
- e. **Overseas Service / Combat Service:** South Korea / None
- f. **Awards and Decorations:** NDSM, KDMS, ASR
- g. **Performance Ratings:** N/A
- h. **Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:**

(1) An Enlistment/ Reenlistment Document provides that the applicant enlisted in the United States Army at the rank of private (E-2) for a period of 4 years on 8 September 2016.

(2) Orders 157-022 , provides the applicant had permanent change of station; reported to Fort Hood, Texas 28 June 2017.

(3) An Enlisted Record Brief dated 21 March 2019 provides the applicant advanced to rank of E-3 on 25 October 2017.

- Demoted to E-1; 20 January 2019
- Flagged with code B; 7 February 2019

(4) A Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active-Duty document (DD Form 214) provides on 20 March 2019 the applicant was discharged from the army.

- Authority: 635-200, Chapter 14-12c
- Narrative Reason: Misconduct (Drug Abuse)
- Service Characterization: Under Honorable Conditions (general)
- Remarks: Member has not completed first term of service
- Foreign Service: 6 months
- Net Service: 2 years, 4 months, and 26 days
- Signature: Electronically signed by the applicant

- i. **Lost Time / Mode of Return:** None
- j. **Behavioral Health Condition(s):** None

(1) **Applicant provided:**

(2) **AMHRR Listed:**

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: 2- DD Form 293 (Discharge Review) applications, and two letters of recommendation in support of their application.

- A character letter from an AIT instructor, provides they are not sure what led to the applicants fall from excellence but the soldier they knew was on the way to becoming an outstanding leader in the army.
- A character letter from a former first sergeant provides the applicant is not the same person they were when they left the military, they have witnessed a lot of change in them. They describe the applicant has efficient, detail-oriented, and extremely competent.

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: They are currently employed as a delivery driver; their continued success and driving record led them to be recommended and selected as one of the first drivers of the company's new fleet vehicles which requires a commercial driver's license. They have shown tremendous growth since their discharge.

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), dated 25 September 2019, 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 provides the basic authority for the separation of enlisted personnel provides the authorized types of characterization of service or description of separation.

(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) An Under other-than-honorable-conditions discharge is an administrative separation from the Service under conditions other than honorable and it may be issued for misconduct, fraudulent entry, security reasons, or in lieu of trial by court martial based on certain circumstances or patterns of behavior or acts or omissions that constitute a significant departure from the conduct expected of Soldiers in the Army.

(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. 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. A soldier subject to this discharge under this regulation will be considered and processed for discharge even though he/she has filed an appeal or has stated his/her intention to do so. Paragraph 14-12c, states 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.

(5) Chapter 15 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 600-85 (Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)) governs the program and identifies Army policy on alcohol and other drug abuse, and responsibilities. The ASAP is a command program that emphasizes readiness and personal responsibility. It provides the ultimate decision regarding separation or retention of abusers is the responsibility of the Soldier's chain of command. Abuse of alcohol or the use of illicit drugs by military personnel is inconsistent with Army values and the standards of performance, discipline, and readiness necessary to accomplish the Army's missions. Individuals who do not self-refer for treatment and are subsequently identified as positive for controlled substances for which they do not have a valid prescription may be considered in violation of the UCMJ for drug misuse/abuse.

f. Army Regulation 600-8-2 (Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions (Flag)) provides the policies, operating rules and steps governing the suspension of favorable personnel actions. A flag is emplaced during some type of disciplinary or administrative action until that action is concluded. The Flag should be initiated within 3 working days after identification of the soldiers' unfavorable status and removed within 3 working days after determination of the final disposition. Commanders and general office staff will establish necessary internal controls to ensure requirements are met: DA Form 268 is prepared to reflect that favorable personnel actions are suspended; the Flag is input into HR systems without delay.

- Flag code "B" is a nontransferable code used when involuntary separation or discharge is initiated (field)

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

h. 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-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.

- RE-3 Applies to: Person who is not considered fully qualified for reenry or continuous service at time of separation, but disqualification is waivable. Eligibility: Ineligible unless a waiver is granted.
- RE-4 Applies to: Person separated from last period of service with a nonwaivable 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.

a. The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable. The applicant's DD-214 provides that the applicant received a General (under honorable conditions) characterization of service, rather than an under other than honorable conditions (UOTCH) discharge, which is normally considered appropriate for a soldier discharged under CH 14 for misconduct.

b. Based on the available evidence the applicant enlisted in the army at the age of 18, they advanced to the rank of E-3. They were demoted to E-1 and was flagged for involuntary separation on 7 February 2019 and subsequently processed for administrative separation.

c. A Review of the record provides administrative irregularity occurred in the proper retention of official records, specifically, the AMHRR is void of the applicant's entire separation packet to include documentation to support if the applicant consulted with counsel and if they received the required medical and mental health separation examinations. Due to the lack of evidence, we are unable to provide all the specific facts and circumstances surrounding the applicant's involuntary separation. Notwithstanding the lack of evidence, the record provides a properly constituted DD Form 214 signed by the applicant, that shows they were discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14 Misconduct (Drug Abuse) with an under honorable conditions (general) characterization of service on 20 March 2019.

d. Chapter 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for members being separated 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.

e. 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): None

c. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's one-time drug use, overseas service in Korea, and post-service accomplishments mitigate the applicant's misconduct (drug use). 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 to Misconduct (Minor Infractions), with a corresponding separation code of JKN, and the reentry code to RE-3.

d. Rationale for Decision:

(1) The Board voted to change the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable based on the applicant's one-time drug use, overseas service in Korea, and post-service accomplishments mitigate the applicant's misconduct (drug use). 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 Board voted to change the RE code to RE-3.

10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

a. Issue a New DD-214: Yes

b. Change Characterization to: Honorable

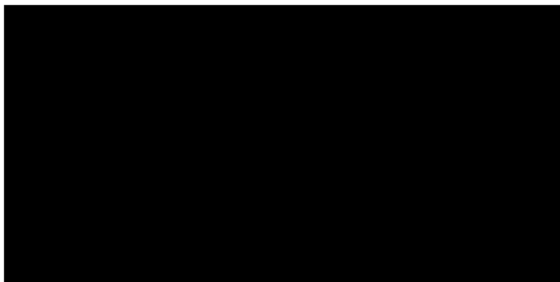
c. Change Reason / SPD Code to: Misconduct (Minor Infractions)/JKN

d. Change RE Code to: RE-3

e. Change Authority to: AR 635-200

Authenticating Official:

3/8/2024



ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE

AR20210008592

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