

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 29 January 2021**b. Date Received:** 8 March 2021**c. Counsel:** [REDACTED]**2. REQUEST, ISSUES, BOARD TYPE, AND DECISION:****a. Applicant's Requests and Issues:**

(1) The current characterization of service for the period under review is General (Under Honorable Conditions). The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable, a change of their separation code, reentry code and the narrative reason for separation.

(2) The applicant, through counsel, seeks relief contending they were erroneously discharged. Their discharge was both procedurally and substantively defective. The discharge was unfair at the time and is unfair now. They were traumatized during their time in the military. Their behavioral health issues are service connected and relate directly to the misconduct and the trauma. They should be given liberal consideration. Their discharge is inequitable and has served its purpose.

(3) The underlying basis of their separation was procedurally defective at the time of the discharge, the adverse action, to include the administrative discharge, was unfair at the time; and the "General (Under Honorable Conditions)" discharge is inequitable now. During their deployment to Afghanistan they began to suffer increasing anxiety and depression from their duties. They were diagnosed with anxiety disorder and was taking antidepressants. They began to lose interest in their job and began using drugs that were not prescribed. They were given a random drug test and tested positive for cocaine which led to being chaptered out of the U.S. Army.

(4) Since they have been discharged from the U.S. Army they have been working as a medical lab technician and will soon complete their bachelor's degree. They feel their command should have followed through with their treatment. They believe this would have made a difference in their Army career and their personal issues with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and subsequent drug use they developed during their deployment to Afghanistan.

(5) Their behavioral health issues were directly related to self-medication and their misconduct. These service-connected disabilities should be considered and they should receive liberal consideration for the discharge upgrade. Their discharge was substantially deficient. There was no fully determined reason to initiate their discharge. They were not allowed to "fix" their problem, they were never offered or provided with rehabilitation. Their command did not have the proper authority to administratively separate them. Their "General (Under Honorable Conditions)" discharge does not serve a further purpose. The events took place are no longer relevant to their life and they have lived since in a responsible a manner as they could. There is no valid equitable purpose in leaving the discharge in place.

b. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 13 June 2025, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service, the circumstances surrounding the discharge

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(Anxiety Disorder NOS, Cocaine Disorder, hypo/manic and derealization symptoms, combat trauma). Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed 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. The Board determined the reentry code is proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

3. DISCHARGE DETAILS:

a. Reason / Authority / Codes / Characterization: Misconduct (Drug Abuse) / Army Regulations 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2) / JKK / RE-4 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. Date of Discharge: 3 May 2014

c. Separation Facts:

(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate: 13 January 2014

(2) Basis for Separation: on 11 March 2013, received a Company Grade Article 15 for failure to obey a lawful general order by wrongfully misusing a Government vehicle and on 15 October 2013, tested positive on a unit urinalysis for cocaine.

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

(4) Legal Consultation Date: 4 February 2014

(5) Administrative Separation Board: NA

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 25 February 2014 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Reenlistment: 14 October 2008 / 6 years

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 18 / HS Graduate / 117

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-5 / 68K1P, Medical Laboratory Specialist / 5 years, 6 months, 20 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: None

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: SWA / Afghanistan (5 January 2011 – 5 September 2011)

f. Awards and Decorations: ACM-2CS, JSCM, AGCM, NDSM, GWTSM, NCOPDR, ASR

g. Performance Ratings: 1 January 2012 – 31 December 2012 / Fully Capable

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) A DA Form 2627 (Record of Proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)) dated 11 March 2013 reflects the applicant received nonjudicial punishment for, at or near Fort Bragg, NC, on or about 16 February 2013 to 18 February 2013, failed to obey a lawful general regulation, by willfully misusing a Government motor vehicle, in violation of Article 92, UCMJ. Their punishment consisted of forfeiture of \$590.00 pay and extra duty for 14 days. The applicant elected not to appeal.

(2) A DA Form 2627 (Record of Proceedings under Article 15, UCMJ) dated 4 November 2013 reflects the applicant received nonjudicial punishment for, at or near Fort Bragg, NC, between on or about 15 September 2013 and on or about 15 October 2013, wrongfully used cocaine, a schedule II controlled substance, in violation of Article 112a, UCMJ. Their punishment consisted of a reduction in rank/grade from sergeant/E-5 to specialist/E-4, forfeiture of \$1,152.00 pay for two months and extra duty for 45 days. The applicant elected not to appeal.

(3) A memorandum, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations)(Airborne), U.S. Army Special Operations Command, subject: Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], dated 13 January 2014, reflects the applicant receive notification of the initiation of separation action against them from their company commander for Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs. The reason for the proposed separation action is described above in paragraph 3c(2). The company commander recommended the applicant's service be characterized as General (Under Honorable Conditions). On the same day, the applicant acknowledged receipt of their notification of separation and of the rights available to them.

(4) On 4 February 2014 the applicant completed their Election of Rights acknowledging they have accepted the opportunity to speak with an attorney. They elected to submit statement on their own behalf [Note: statements in their own behalf are not in evidence for review.]

(5) A memorandum, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations)(Airborne), U.S. Army Special Operations Command, subject: Commander's Report – Proposed Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs, (Applicant), dated 21 February 2014, reflects the applicant's company commander's recommendation to separate them from the Army prior to the expiration of their current term of service. The commander stated the description of rehabilitation attempts as, the applicant has been enrolled and participated in the Army Substance Abuse Program since the positive drug test. A report of mental status evaluation or psychiatric report are attached [Note: the evaluation and report are not in evidence for review.]

(6) A memorandum, Headquarters, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations)(Airborne), U.S. Army Special Operations Command, subject Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], dated 23 February 2014, reflects the applicant's battalion commander recommended the applicant be separated from the Army prior to the expiration of their current term of service. They recommended the applicant's service be characterized as General (Under Honorable Conditions). The separation is in the best interest of both the Army and the Soldier.

(7) A memorandum, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations)(Airborne), U.S. Army Special Operations Command, subject: Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct – Abuse of Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], dated 25 February 2014 reflects the separation authority reviewed the separation packet of the applicant and after careful consideration of all matters directed the applicant be separated from the Army prior to the expiration of their current term of service. They directed the applicant's service be

characterized as General (Under Honorable Conditions). After reviewing the rehabilitative transfer requirements they have determined the requirements do not apply to this action. The separation is in the best interest of both the Army and the Soldier.

(8) A DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) reflects the applicant was discharged on 3 May 2014, with 5 years, 6 months, and 20 days of net active service this period. The DD Form 214 show in –

- item 4a (Grade, Rate or Rank) – Specialist
- item 4b (Pay Grade) – E-4
- item 12i (Effective Date of Pay Grade) – 4 November 2013
- item 18 (Remarks) – in part, Continuous Honorable Active Service – MEMBER HAS COMPLETED FIRST FULL TERM OF SERVICE
- item 24 (Character of Service) – General (Under Honorable Conditions)
- item 26 (Separation Code) – JKK
- item 27 (Reentry Code) - 4
- item 28 (Narrative Reason for Separation) – Misconduct (Drug Abuse)

i. Lost Time / Mode of Return: NA

j. Behavioral Health Condition(s): None

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:

- DD Form 293 (Application for the Review of Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States)
- Counsel's Legal Brief in Support of Discharge Upgrade
- DD Form 214
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Form 21-4138 (Statement in Support of Claim) – 3rd Party Statement

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 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 DoD Instruction 1332.28.

d. Army Regulation 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations) effective 6 September 2011, 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. It prescribes the policies, procedures, and the general provisions governing the separation of Soldiers before expiration term of service or fulfillment of active duty obligation to meet the needs of the Army and its Soldiers.

(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) Paragraph 1-16 (Counseling and Rehabilitative Requirements) stated Army leaders at all level must be continually aware of their obligation to provide purpose, direction, and motivation to Soldiers. It is essential that Soldiers who falter, but have potential to serve honorably and well, be given every opportunity to succeed. Commanders must make maximum use of counseling and rehabilitation before determining that a Soldier has no potential for further useful service and, therefore, should be separated. The rehabilitative transfer requirements may be waived by the separation authority in circumstances where common sense and sound judgment indicate that such transfer will serve no useful purpose or produce a quality Soldier.

(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 14-12c(2) (Abuse of Illegal Drugs is Serious Misconduct), stated, however; relevant facts may mitigate the nature of the offense. Therefore, a single drug abuse offense may be combined with one or more minor disciplinary infractions or incidents of other misconduct and processed for separation. 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) 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 "JKK" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 12c(2), misconduct (drug abuse).

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 waivable. Eligibility: Ineligible unless a waiver is granted.

(3) 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.

g. 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. 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 mission. Unit commanders must intervene early and refer all Soldiers suspected or identified as alcohol and/or drug abusers to the ASAP. The unit commander should recommend enrollment based on the Soldier's potential for continued military service in terms of professional skills, behavior, and potential for advancement.

h. Manual for Courts-Martial, United States (2012 Edition) stated, military law consists of the statutes governing the military establishment and regulations issued thereunder, the constitutional powers of the President and regulations issued thereunder, and the inherent authority of military commanders. Military law includes jurisdiction exercised by courts-martial and the jurisdiction exercised by commanders with respect to nonjudicial punishment. The purpose of military law is to promote justice, to assist in maintaining good order and discipline in the Armed Forces. Appendix 12 (Maximum Punishment Chart) Manual for Courts-Martial shows the maximum punishments include punitive discharge for violating Article 92 (Failure to Obey Order, Regulation) and Article 112a (Wrongful Use, Possession, etc., of Controlled Substances).

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 reflects the applicant received two occurrences of nonjudicial punishment in violation of Article 92 (Failure to Obey Order, Regulation) and Article 112a (Wrongful Use, Possession, etc., of Controlled Substances). and was involuntarily discharged from the U.S. Army. Their DD Form 214 provides they were discharged with a character of service of General (Under Honorable Conditions) for misconduct (drug abuse). They completed 5 years, 6 months, and 20 days of net active service and completed their first full term of service; however, they did not complete their 6-year enlistment obligation.

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; to include abuse of illegal drugs; 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. The applicant's AMHRR does not reflect documentation of a diagnosis of PTSD or other mental health diagnoses, nor did the applicant provide evidence of such, during their military service.

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? **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: Anxiety Disorder NOS, Cocaine Disorder, hypo/manic and derealization symptoms, and PTSD with derealization and subsumed diagnoses.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** Anxiety Disorder NOS, Cocaine Disorder, hypo/manic and derealization symptoms, combat trauma

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Partial.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that given the trauma occurred prior to the UA and nexus between substances and anxiety/trauma, the drug use is mitigated. However, records do not support the misuse of a government vehicle was secondary to substance actions, e.g. transportation to purchasing.

(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 condition or experience outweighed the listed basis for separation for the aforementioned reasons.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contentions:

(1) The applicant contends the underlying basis of their separation was procedurally defective at the time of the discharge, the adverse action, to include the administrative discharge, was unfair at the time, and the "General (Under Honorable Conditions)" discharge is inequitable now.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(2) The applicant contends during their deployment to Afghanistan they began to suffer increasing anxiety and depression from their duties. They were diagnosed with anxiety disorder and was taking antidepressants.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(3) The applicant contends since they have been discharged from the U.S. Army they have been working as a medical lab technician and will soon complete their bachelor's degree. 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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(4) The applicant contends they feel their command should have followed through with their treatment. They believe this would have made a difference in their Army career and their personal issues with PTSD and subsequent drug use they developed during their deployment to Afghanistan.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(5) The applicant contends their behavioral health issues were directly related to self-medication and their misconduct.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(6) The applicant contends these service-connected disabilities should be considered and they should receive liberal consideration for the discharge upgrade.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(7) The applicant contends their discharge was substantially deficient. There was no fully determined reason to initiate their discharge.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(8) The applicant contends they were not allowed to "fix" their problem, they were never offered or provided with rehabilitation. Their command did not have the proper authority to administratively separate them.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

(9) The applicant contends their "General (Under Honorable Conditions)" discharge does not serve a further purpose. The events took place are no longer relevant to their life and

they have lived since in a responsible a manner as they could. There is no valid equitable purpose in leaving the discharge in place.

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 trauma and BH diagnoses, along with the applicant's length and quality of service and combat service outweighing the applicant's basis for separation.

d. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service, the circumstances surrounding the discharge (Anxiety Disorder NOS, Cocaine Disorder, hypo/manic and derealization symptoms, combat trauma). Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed 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. The Board determined the reentry code is proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

e. Rationale for Decision:

(1) The Board carefully considered the applicant's request, supporting documents, evidence in the records, a medical review, and published Department of Defense guidance for liberal consideration of discharge upgrade requests. The Board considered the applicant's statement, record of service, the frequency and nature of misconduct, and the reason for separation. The Board found sufficient evidence of in-service mitigating factors (Length, Combat, Quality) and concurred with the conclusion of the medical advising official that given the trauma occurred prior to the UA and nexus between substances and anxiety/trauma, the drug use is mitigated. The Board excused the additional misconduct based on the applicant's service record. Based on a preponderance of evidence, the Board determined that the character of service the applicant received upon separation was inequitable and warranted an upgrade..

(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.

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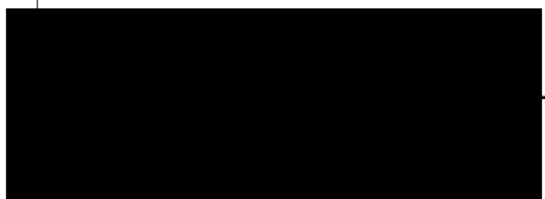
(3) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

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:

3/21/2026

**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