

1. Applicant's Name:

- a. **Application Date:** 11 September 2020
- b. **Date Received:** 18 September 2020
- c. **Counsel:** None

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 honorable conditions. The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable and a change in their separation code and narrative reason for separation.

(2) The applicant requests relief stating their discharge is unjust and should be upgraded to honorable. The drugs that were searched and found did not belong to them. They made a moral pact not to "rat-out" or be disloyal to those they served with, at that time, they would rather take the blame instead. Now that they are older and starting a family, it has become important to be truthful.

(3) They continue to work hard in the civilian life to build a future for their family and they also worked hard in the military, as evidenced by their medals, awards and badges. Their civilian background and record also demonstrates honorable service and being a hard worker. They are now entering the cyber security field to support their family, community, and country. This request to fix a wrongdoing is a crucial step in continuing their service in honor.

b. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 2 February 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 (Drug Abuse) / Army Regulations 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2) / JKK / RE-4 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. Date of Discharge: 13 February 2013

c. Separation Facts:

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 24 January 2013

(2) **Basis for Separation:** having knowledge of a lawful order, an order which it was their duty to obey, did, at Fort Bragg, NC, on or about 25 October 2012, fail to obey the same by wrongfully having herbal supplement with Chinese writing, measuring spoon, clear plastic bag containing two syringes containing an unknown black substance, a portable open burner, a PVC [polyvinyl chloride] pipe cement kit and a packet of red colored pills.

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

(4) Legal Consultation Date: 24 January 2013

(5) Administrative Separation Board: NA

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 28 January 2013 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Enlistment: 3 February 2009 / 5 years

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 18 / HS Graduate / 113

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-4 / 68W1P, Health Care Specialist / 4 years, 11 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: None

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: SWA / Afghanistan (27 April 2010 – 1 August 2010), Iraq (20 May 2011 – 27 November 2011)

f. Awards and Decorations: ACM-CS, ARCOM, AGCM, NDSM, GWTSM, AFSM, HSM, ICM-CS, ASR, NATOMDL, OSR

g. Performance Ratings: NA

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) On 16 September 2011, the applicant was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for exceptionally meritorious service as a platoon medic in direct support of Operation New Dawn in Iraq, from 25 May 2011 to 31 December 2011.

(2) A memorandum, Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, subject: Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct-Abuse of Illegal Drugs [Applicant], dated 24 January 2013, the applicant's company commander notified the applicant of their intent to separate them under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14-12c(2), misconduct-abuse of illegal drugs, with a recommended characterization of service general (under honorable conditions) for adverse action described in previous paragraph 3c(2). On the same day the applicant acknowledged the basis for the separation and of the right available to them.

(3) On 24 January 2013, the applicant completed their election of rights signing they had been advised by counsel of the basis for their separation and its effects and of the rights available to them. They elected not to submit statements in their behalf.

(4) A memorandum, Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, subject: Commander's Report – Proposed Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct-Abuse of Illegal Drugs [Applicant], the applicant's company commander submitted a request to separate them prior to their expiration term of service. The company commander states retaining the Soldier would have an adverse impact on military discipline, good order, and morale. Additionally, the company commander states there were no rehabilitation attempts made and the applicant has no other disciplinary actions.

(5) A memorandum, Headquarter, 2nd Brigade Combat Team subject: Separation under Army Regulation 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c(2), Misconduct-Abuse of Illegal Drugs [Applicant], dated 28 January 2013, the separation authority directed that the applicant be separated from the Army prior to the expiration of current term of service, and their service be characterized as Genera (Under Honorable Conditions).

(6) A DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) reflects the applicant was discharged on 13 January 2013, with 4 years, and 11 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) – 3 February 2011
- item 18 (Remarks) –Member has not completed first full term of service

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)
- Certificate of Live Birth
- Case Files for Approved Separation
- DD Form 214
- Civilian Background Documents and Records that demonstrate their honorable character and hard work ethic
- Character Reference Statement from their fiancé, to attest to their honorable service our country and stating they took full blame for the discovery of drugs that did not even belong to or was connected to

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 DoD Instruction 1332.28.

d. Army Regulation 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations), 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. 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 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.

(5) 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 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.

g. Army Regulation 600-85 (Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)) dated 28 December 2012, provided a comprehensive alcohol and drug abuse prevention and control policies, procedures, and responsibilities for Soldiers of all components. 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, the Warrior Ethos, and the standards of performance, discipline, and readiness necessary to accomplish the Army's mission.

(1) 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.

(2) ASAP participation is mandatory for all Soldiers who are command referred. Failure to attend a mandatory counseling session may constitute a violation of Article 86 (Absence Without Leave) of the UCMJ.

(3) Alcohol and/or other drug abusers, and in some cases dependent alcohol users, may be enrolled in the ASAP when such enrollment is clinically recommended. Soldiers who fail to participate adequately in, or to respond successfully to, rehabilitation will be processed for administrative separation and not be provided another opportunity for rehabilitation except under the most extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the Clinical Director in consultation with the unit commander.

(4) All Soldier who test positive for illicit drugs for the first time will be evaluated for dependency, disciplined, as appropriate, and processed for separation within 30 calendar days of the company commander receiving notification of the positive result from the ASAP. Retention should be reserved for Soldiers that show clear potential for both excellent future service in the Army and for remaining free from substance abuse. Soldiers diagnosed as drug dependent will be offered rehabilitation prior to separation.

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 the following 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. The applicant's Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR) reflects the applicant did not received nonjudicial punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for their misconduct (drug abuse) nor did their AMHRR reflect any adverse information. The applicant's

DD Form 214 indicates their discharge under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 14-12c(2), by reason of Misconduct (Drug Abuse), with a characterization of service of general (under honorable conditions). The applicant completed 4 years and 11 days of net active service and did not complete their first full term of service of 5 years.

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 [REDACTED] 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**

(1) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **N/A**

(2) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **N/A**

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contentions:

(1) The applicant contends the drugs that were searched and found did not belong to them. They made a moral pact not to "rat-out" or be disloyal to those they served with, at that time, they would rather take the blame instead. Now that they are older and starting a family, it has become important to be truthful.

The Board considered this contention and determined that the applicant's "moral pact not to 'rat-out' or be disloyal to those they served with, at that time", did not outweigh the seriousness of the applicant's offense- having knowledge of a lawful order, an order which it was their duty to obey, did, at Fort Bragg, NC, on or about 25 October 2012, fail to obey the same by wrongfully having herbal supplement with Chinese writing, measuring spoon, clear plastic bag containing two syringes containing an unknown black substance, a portable open burner, a PVC [polyvinyl chloride] pipe cement kit and a packet of red colored pills.. The Board also determined that there is insufficient evidence in the applicant's official record or provided by the applicant that

the drugs that were searched and found did not belong to them. Therefore, no change is warranted.

(2) The applicant contends they continue to work hard in the civilian life to build a future for their family and they also worked hard in the military, as evidenced by their medals, awards and badges.

The Board considered this contention and determined that the applicant's Post-Service Accomplishments do not outweigh the misconduct based on the seriousness of the applicant's offense of Wrongful Drug Abuse. The Board recognizes and appreciates the applicant's willingness to serve and the applicant's 4 years and 11 days years of service to include combat and awards received by the applicant but determined that these factors did not outweigh the applicant's offense of Wrongful Drug Abuse.

(3) The applicant contends their civilian background and record also demonstrates honorable service and being a hard worker.

The Board considered this contention during board proceedings along with the totality of the applicant's service record.

(4) The applicant contends they are now entering the cyber security field to support their family, community, and country. This request to fix a wrongdoing is a crucial step in continuing their service in honor.

The Board considered the applicant's this contention but determined that these factors did not outweigh the applicant's offense of Wrongful Drug Abuse.

d. 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.

e. 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, there were no medical diagnoses or other experiences that could excuse or mitigate the offenses of Misconduct (Drug Abuse). 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.

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

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:

2/11/2024

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