

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]

- a. **Application Date:** 21 September 2021
- b. **Date Received:** 27 September 2021
- c. **Counsel:** None

2. REQUEST, ISSUES, BOARD TYPE, AND DECISION:

a. **Applicant Requests:** The current characterization of service for the period under review is under honorable conditions (general). The applicant requests an honorable characterization of service.

b. **Applicant Contention(s)/Issue(s):** The applicant requests relief contending, in effect the applicant made a one-time mistake using cocaine before the applicant's third deployment.

c. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 27 August 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, and post-service accomplishments outweighed the applicant's offenses of one-time drug use, FTR, and false statement. 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. Please see **Board Discussion and Determination** section for more detail regarding the Board's decision. Board member names are available upon request.

3. DISCHARGE DETAILS:

a. **Reason / Authority / Codes / Characterization:** Misconduct (Drug Abuse) / JKK / RE-4 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. **Date of Discharge:** 7 July 2011

c. Separation Facts:

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 27 May 2011

(2) **Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons: the applicant tested positive for cocaine on 20 January 2011; gave a false official statement to a noncommissioned officer on 22 March 2010; and failed to be at the applicant's appointed place of duty on 24 March 2010.

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

(4) **Legal Consultation Date:** 27 May 2011

(5) **Administrative Separation Board:** None

(6) **Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** 30 May 2011 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. **Date / Period of Enlistment/Reenlistment Under Review:** 23 April 2009 / reenlistment packet NIF

b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 21 / HS Graduate / 100

c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-4 / 19D10, Calvary Scout / 5 years, 6 months, 11 days

d. **Prior Service / Characterizations:** RA / 27 December 2005 - 21 April 2009 / HD

e. **Overseas Service / Combat Service:** Korea, SWA / Iraq 12 December 2008 - 20 July 2009 and 3 December 2010 - 20 June 2011

f. **Awards and Decorations:** ICM - 2; ARCOM; AAM; MUC; AGCM; GWOTSM; ASR; OSR;

g. **Performance Ratings:** None

h. **Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:**

(1) Company Grade Article 15, 8 July 2010, reflects the applicant failed to go to the appointed place of duty at the time prescribed on 24 March 2010 and on 22 March 2010, made a false statement to a noncommissioned officer. The punishment consisted of a reduction to E-3; extra duty for 14 days; and forfeiture of \$513.00 suspended if not automatically remitted if not vacated before 29 September 2010.

(2) Field Grade Article 15, 2 May 2011, reflects the applicant wrongfully used cocaine between on or about 17 January 2011 and 20 January 2011. The applicant's punishment consisted of a reduction to E-1; forfeiture of \$783.00 pay per month for two months; extra duty for 30 days; and restriction for 30 days.

i. **Lost Time / Mode of Return:** None

j. **Behavioral Health Condition(s):** The following documents have been provided to the ARBA Medical Advisor, if applicable. See "**Board Discussion and Determination**" for Medical Advisor Details.

(1) **Applicant provided:** N/A

(2) **AMHRR provided:** N/A

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: The applicant provided a DD Form 293 (Application for the Review of Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States).

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The applicant is currently a junior in college and is participating in the CITT Program.

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. Office, Secretary of Defense memorandum (Supplemental Guidance to Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Discharge Upgrade Requests by Veterans Claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), 3 September 2014, directed the Service Discharge Review Boards (DRBs) and Service Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NRs) to carefully consider the revised PTSD criteria, detailed medical considerations and mitigating factors when taking action on applications from former service members administratively discharged UOTHC and who have been diagnosed with PTSD by a competent mental health professional representing a civilian healthcare provider in order to determine if it would be appropriate to upgrade the characterization of the applicant's service.

c. Office, Under Secretary of Defense memorandum (Clarifying Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Requests by Veterans for Modification of their Discharge Due to Mental Health Conditions, Sexual Assault, or Sexual Harassment), 25 August 2017 issued clarifying guidance for the Secretary of Defense Directive to DRBs and BCM/NRs when considering requests by Veterans for modification of their discharges due in whole or in part to mental health conditions, including PTSD; Traumatic Brain Injury; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Boards are to give liberal consideration to Veterans petitioning for discharge relief when the application for relief is based in whole or in part to those conditions or experiences. The guidance further describes evidence sources and criteria and requires Boards to consider the conditions or experiences presented in evidence as potential mitigation for misconduct that led to the discharge.

d. Office, Under Secretary of Defense memorandum (Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Regarding Equity, Injustice, or Clemency Determinations), 25 July 2018 issued guidance to Military DRBs and BCM/NRs regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations. Clemency generally refers to relief specifically granted from a criminal sentence. However, the guidance applies to more than clemency from a sentencing in a court-martial; it also applies to other corrections, including changes in a discharge, which may be warranted based on equity or relief from injustice.

(1) This guidance does not mandate relief but rather provides standards and principles to guide Boards in application of their equitable relief authority. In determining whether to grant relief on the basis of equity, injustice, or clemency grounds, DRBs shall consider the prospect for rehabilitation, external evidence, sworn testimony, policy changes, relative severity of misconduct, mental and behavioral health conditions, official governmental acknowledgement that a relevant error or injustice was committed, and uniformity of punishment.

(2) Changes to the narrative reason for discharge and/or an upgraded character of service granted solely on equity, injustice, or clemency grounds normally should not result in separation pay, retroactive promotions, and payment of past medical expenses or similar

benefits that might have been received if the original discharge had been for the revised reason or had the upgraded service characterization.

e. 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.

f. Army Regulation 635-200 provides the basic authority for the separation of enlisted personnel.

(1) Chapter 3, Section II provides the authorized types of characterization of service or description of separation. It states:

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(2) 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. 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.

8. SUMMARY OF FACT(S): Standard of Review. 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 Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR), the issues, and documents submitted with the application were carefully reviewed.

b. The applicant accepted nonjudicial punishment under the provisions of Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice on 8 July 2010 for failure to go to the appointed place of duty at the time prescribed on 24 March 2010 and on 22 March 2010, for making the false statement to a noncommissioned officer. The applicant accepted nonjudicial punishment again on 2 May 2011 for wrongfully using cocaine between on or about 17 January 2011 and 20 January 2011.

c. The applicant contends the applicant made a one-time mistake using cocaine before the applicant's third deployment. There is no evidence in the AMHRR the applicant ever sought assistance before committing the misconduct, which led to the separation action under review.

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 made a one-time mistake using cocaine before their third deployment.

The Board considered this contention during deliberations and determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service, and post-service accomplishments outweighed the applicant's offenses of one-time drug use, FTR, and false statement.

c. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service, and post-service accomplishments that outweighed the one-time drug use, FTR, and false statement.

d. Rationale for Decision:

(1) Published Department of Defense guidance indicates the guidance is not intended to interfere or impede on the Board's statutory independence. The Board determines the relative weight of the action that was the basis for the discharge and whether it supports relief or not. In reaching its determination, the Board considers the application, available records and any supporting documents included with the application.

(2) The Board voted to change the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service, and post-service accomplishments outweighed the applicant's offenses of one-time drug use, FTR, and false statement. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

(3) The Board voted to change the reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) under the same rationale, thus the reason for discharge is no longer appropriate. The SPD code associated with the new reason for discharge is JKN.

(4) 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

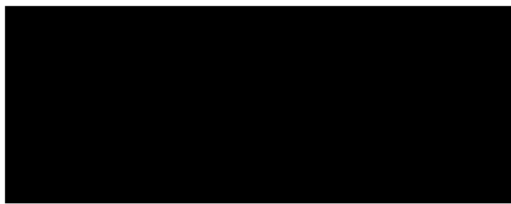
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10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

- 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, paragraph 14-12a

Authenticating Official:

10/13/2025



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
FTR – Failure to Report

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