

**1. Applicant's Name:** [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 20 October 2021**b. Date Received:** 25 October 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 general (under honorable conditions). The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable.

**b. Applicant Contention(s)/Issue(s):** The applicant requests relief contending, in effect, the characterization of service was unreasonable, applicant is requesting an upgrade for employment purposes, and states there is a new medical diagnosis.

**c. Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 12 December 2025, and by a 3-0 vote, the Board determined that the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Military Sexual Trauma (MST), which outweighed the offenses of using and possessing marijuana on multiple occasions. Therefore, the Board directed the issue of a new DD Form 214 changing the separation authority to AR 635-200, Chapter 15, and the narrative reason for separation to Secretarial Authority, with a corresponding separation code to JFF. The Board determined the RE code was proper and equitable and voted not to change it. 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 (Serious Offense) / AR 635-200, Paragraph 14-12c / JKQ / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

**b. Date of Discharge:** 9 February 2018

**c. Separation Facts:**

**(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 8 January 2018

**(2) Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons: The applicant wrongfully used marijuana between on or about 24 March 2017 and on or about 24 April 2017.

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

**(4) Legal Consultation Date:** 11 January 2018

**(5) Administrative Separation Board:** N/A

**(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** 23 January 2018 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

**4. SERVICE DETAILS:**

a. **Date / Period of Enlistment Under Review:** 29 December 2014 / 4 years

b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 18 / HS Graduate / 90

c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-4 / 92A1O, Automated Logistical Specialist / 3 years, 1 month, 11 days

d. **Prior Service / Characterizations:** None

e. **Overseas Service / Combat Service:** Germany (22 October 2015 – 9 February 2018)

f. **Awards and Decorations:** NDSM, GWOTSM, ASR, OSR

g. **Performance Ratings:** N/A

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

(1) Memorandum, subject: Confirmation of a Positive Urinalysis Result, 7 June 2017, reflects the applicant tested positive for THC 203.

(2) DA Form 4856 (Developmental Counseling Form) shows the applicant was counseled on 7 June 2017 for violation of Article 112a, wrongful use, possession, of controlled substances, and recommended for a Field Grade Article 15. The recommendation was due to the charges of wrongful usage of a controlled substance based on the collection dates of 24 April 2017 and 8 May 2017.

(3) Field Grade Article 15, 18 October 2017, for wrongful use of marijuana between on or about 26 March 2017 and 24 April 2017 and between on or about 9 April 2017 and 8 May 2017, and wrongful possession of 4.5 grams of marijuana on or about 7 May 2017. The applicant's punishment included reduction to E-1, forfeiture of \$799 for two months, 45 days extra duty, and an oral reprimand. The applicant appealed and it was denied on 22 October 2017. The appealing authority stated the proceedings were conducted in accordance with the law and regulation, and the punishment was reasonable.

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:** None

(2) **AMHRR provided:** None

**5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:** DD Form 293

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

**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 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 waivable and nonwaivable 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 reentry 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.

g. 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.

(c) 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.

(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.

(3) 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. If Secretarial Authority is granted normally correct the record to show the following:

- Separation Authority: Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 15
- Separation Code: JFF
- Reenlistment Code: RE1
- Narrative Reason for Separation: Secretarial Plenary Authority
- Character of Service: Honorable

(4) 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 "JKQ" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, Misconduct (Serious Offense).

**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 contends the characterization of service was unreasonable. The applicant was separated under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c, with a general (under honorable conditions) discharge. The narrative reason specified by Army Regulations for a discharge under this paragraph is "Misconduct (Serious Offense)," and the separation code is "JKQ." 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. Army Regulation 635-8 (Separation

Processing and Documents) governs preparation of the DD Form 214 and dictates the entry of the narrative reason for separation, entered in block 28 and separation code, entered in block 26 of the form will be as listed in tables 2-2 or 2-3 of AR 635-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes). The regulation stipulates no deviation is authorized.

c. The applicant is requesting an upgrade for employment purposes and states there is a new medical diagnosis. The Board does not grant relief to gain employment or enhance employment opportunities. Further, the applicant's AMHRR is void of a medical diagnosis and the applicant does not provide evidence of a medical diagnosis.

## 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/experiences: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Military Sexual Trauma (MST), and spousal abuse (primarily non-physical abuse).

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** MST and spousal abuse (primarily non-physical abuse).

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that given the trauma occurred prior to the drug use and the nexus between trauma and substance use, the basis is mitigated.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** Based on liberally considering all the evidence before the Board, the ADRB determined that the applicant's diagnoses of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Military Sexual Trauma (MST) outweighed the offenses of using and possessing marijuana on multiple occasions.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contention(s): The applicant contends the characterization of service was unreasonable. The Board acknowledged the applicant's statement regarding the circumstances surrounding the discharge and the impact of their medical diagnoses; ultimately, the Board granted relief by upgrading the characterization of service to Honorable Discharge.

d. The Board determined that the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Military Sexual Trauma (MST), which outweighed the offenses of using and possessing marijuana on multiple occasions. Therefore, the Board directed the issue of a new DD Form 214 changing the separation authority to AR 635-200, Chapter 15, and the narrative reason for separation to Secretarial Authority, with a corresponding separation code to JFF. The Board determined the RE code was proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

e. Rationale for Decision:

**ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE****AR20220000869**

(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 because the applicant's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Military Sexual Trauma (MST) outweighed the offenses of using and possessing marijuana on multiple occasions. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

(3) The Board voted to change the applicant's reason for discharge to Secretarial Authority with the accompanying SPD code of JFF, under the same pretexts.

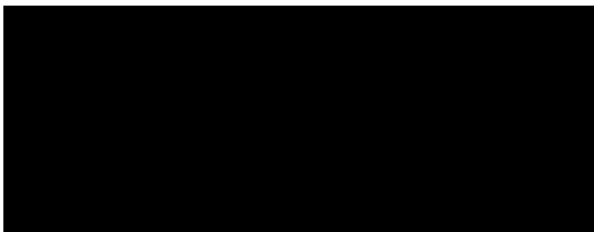
(4) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

**10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:**

- a. **Issue a New DD-214 / Separation Order:** Yes
- b. **Change Characterization to:** Honorable
- c. **Change Reason / SPD code to:** Secretarial Authority / JFF
- d. **Change RE Code to:** No Change
- e. **Change Authority to:** AR 635-200

**Authenticating Official:**

3/23/2026



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  
UOTH – Under Other Than  
Honorable Conditions  
VA – Department of Veterans  
Affairs