

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]

- a. **Application Date:** 3 December 2022
- b. **Date Received:** 3 December 2022
- 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, undiagnosed physical and mental health conditions precipitated an isolated incident of drug abuse resulting in the applicant's discharge. The applicant's admission of drug use accompanies sincere regret. The applicant's self-medication efforts addressed domestic stressors and concurrent health challenges. The applicant's prior service record demonstrates honorable conduct, including graduation from Air Assault School and completion of the Warrior Leaders Course, receipt of two Army Achievement Medals and an Army Good Conduct Medal. The achievement of multiple scores above 300 on the Army physical fitness test, and waivers for promotion. A general discharge does not represent the applicant's complete military career. Demonstration of readiness for combat and unwavering commitment defined service until a moment of vulnerability months before ETS. The chain of command imposed extra duty and reduced rank and pay without provision of support for underlying health conditions.

c. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 26 August 2025, and by a 4-1 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service. 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 and change the reentry code to 3.

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) / AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c (2) / JKK / RE-4 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. **Date of Discharge:** 18 June 2013

c. Separation Facts:

- (1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** NIF
- (2) **Basis for Separation:** NIF
- (3) **Recommended Characterization:** NIF
- (4) **Legal Consultation Date:** NIF

(5) **Administrative Separation Board:** NIF

(6) **Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** 29 May 2013 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. **Date / Period of Enlistment:** 11 January 2010 / 4 years

b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 19 / High School Graduate / NIF

c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-4 / 92A10, Automated Logistical Specialist / 3 years, 5 months, 8 days

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

e. **Overseas Service / Combat Service:** None

f. **Awards and Decorations:** AAM-2, AGCM, NDSM, GWOTSM, NCOPDR, ASR

g. **Performance Ratings:** NA

h. **Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:** Orders 159-0117, 8 June 2013, indicate the applicant was reassigned to the U.S. Army Transition Point and scheduled for discharge from the Regular Army on 18 June 2013.

The applicant's DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) indicates the applicant had not completed the first full term of service. The applicant was discharged under the authority of AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12c (2), with a narrative reason of Misconduct (Drug Abuse). The DD Form 214 was authenticated with the applicant's electronic signature.

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:** Patient Chart, 31 December 2022, reflects a diagnosis of Major depressive disorder, recurrent severe without psych features chronic.

Department of Veterans Affairs letter, 3 December 2022, reflects a combined service-connected evaluation of 50 percent.

(2) **AMHRR provided:** None

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: Application for the Review of Discharge; Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty; VA Letter; Patient Chart.

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The applicant sought treatment for the applicant's mental health.

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 waiverable and nonwaiverable separations. Table 3-1, defines reentry eligibility (RE) codes:

- RE-1 Applies to: Person completing his or her term of active service who is considered qualified to reenter the U.S. Army. Eligibility: Qualified for enlistment if all other criteria are met.
- RE-3 Applies to: Person who is not considered fully qualified for reentry or continuous service at time of separation, but disqualification is waiverable. Eligibility: Ineligible unless a waiver is granted.
- 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 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) Paragraph 3-5c, provides the reasons for separation, including the specific circumstances that form the basis for the separation, will be considered on the issue of characterization. As a general matter, characterization will be based upon a pattern of behavior other than an isolated incident. There are circumstances, however, in which the conduct or performance of duty reflected by a single incident provides the basis for characterization.

(b) 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.

(c) 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 (2), terms abuse of illegal drugs as serious misconduct. It continues; however, by recognizing 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 under paragraph 14-12a or 14-12b as appropriate.

(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 "JKK" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, Misconduct (Drug Abuse).

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's Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR) includes partial facts and circumstances concerning the events leading to the discharge from the Army. The reason for the applicant's discharge from the U.S. Army was not available for review. The applicant's AMHRR includes a properly constituted DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty), which was authenticated by the applicant's electronic signature. The applicant's DD Form 214 indicates the applicant was discharged under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 14-12c (2), by reason of Misconduct (Drug Abuse), with a characterization of service of general (under honorable conditions).

c. The applicant contends coping with mental health issues. The applicant provided a Patient Chart, 31 December 2022, reflecting a diagnosis of Major depressive disorder, recurrent severe without psych features chronic. A Department of Veterans Affairs letter, 3 December 2022, reflecting a combined service-connected evaluation of 50 percent. The AMHRR is void of a mental status evaluation.

d. The applicant contends the event leading to discharge from the Army was an isolated incident. Army Regulation 635-200, paragraph 3-5, state certain circumstances allow a single act of conduct or duty performance to serve as the basis for service characterization. The Board acknowledged this contention during proceedings.

e. The applicant contends the chain of command did not provide any support for the applicant for health issues. The applicant provided no supporting evidence beyond their statement to support the contention. The AMHRR does not indicate or provide evidence of arbitrary or capricious actions by the command.

f. The applicant contends good service. The Board evaluated the applicant's service accomplishments and overall quality of service in accordance with DODI 1332.28.

g. The applicant contends seeking treatment for mental health. The Army Discharge Review Board has the authority to consider post-service factors when reviewing discharge recharacterization requests. However, no law or regulation permits upgrading an unfavorable discharge solely due to time passed or good conduct in civilian life. The Board evaluates each case individually to determine whether post-service achievements indicate previous in-service misconduct was an anomaly rather than a reflection of the applicant's overall character.

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. The applicant self-asserts that his misconduct was secondary to mental health factors.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found the applicant self-asserts his misconduct was secondary to mental health issues.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **No.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that a review of the available information reflects the applicant does not have a BH condition that mitigates her misconduct. The applicant has in-service BH conditions of Alcohol Abuse and Cannabis Abuse. These conditions in absence of a comorbid BH condition are not offered relief under liberal consideration. Also, while the applicant has a post service diagnosis of Depression Unspecified, the condition was diagnosed in May 2023 secondary to psycho-social stressor proximal to the period and not considered connected to military service. In absence of a mitigating BH condition, upgrade base on medical mitigation is not supported.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **No.** After applying liberal consideration to the evidence, including the Board Medical Advisor's opine, the Board determined that the available evidence did not support a conclusion that the applicant had a condition to outweigh the reason for discharge.

b. Prior Decisions Cited:

c. Response to Contentions:

(1) The applicant contends coping with mental health issues. The Board considered this contention and determined that the applicant self-asserts that his misconduct was secondary to mental health factors.

(2) The applicant contends the event leading to discharge from the Army was an isolated incident. The Board considered this contention.

(3) The applicant contends the chain of command did not provide any support for the applicant's health issues. The Board considered this contention and determined that the applicant provided no supporting evidence beyond their statement to support the contention. The AMHRR does not indicate or provide evidence of arbitrary or capricious actions by the command.

(4) The applicant contends good service. The Board considered the totality of the applicant's service.

(5) The applicant contends seeking treatment for the applicant's mental health. The Board acknowledged this contention.

d. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service. 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 and change the reentry code to 3.

e. 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 based on length, quality and post-service accomplishments for mitigating the offenses of the basis of separation.

(3) The Board voted to change the applicant's reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) with accompanying SPD code JKN.

(4) The Board voted to change the RE code to RE-3.

10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

- a. Issue a New DD-214: Yes
- b. Change Characterization to: Honorable
- c. Change Reason / SPD Code to: Misconduct (Minor Infractions)/JKN
- d. Change RE Code to: RE-3
- e. Change Authority to: AR 635-200

Authenticating Official:

10/3/2025



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