

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]

a. Application Date: 30 October 2021

b. Date Received: 1 November 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, their discharge was inequitable, rooted in defamation of character, poor leadership, and lack of support from their command despite reporting issues and seeking counseling. The applicant contends, with proper leadership, support, and medical attention, they could have succeeded and request a second chance to serve honorably.

c. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 13 November 2025, and by a 2-1 vote. The Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade to the characterization of service to Honorable and directed the issue of a new DD Form 214. The Board determined SPD and 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: Physical Standards / AR 635-200, Chapter 13-2E / JFT / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. Date of Discharge: 20 December 2018

c. Separation Facts: The case separation files were not properly stored in the Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR); however, the available details are listed below.

(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: NA

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 12 October 2018 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Enlistment Under Review: 15 August 2016 / 6 years, 24 weeks

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 19 / High School Diploma / 102

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-3 / 92G10 Culinary Specialist / 2 years, 4 months, 6 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: None

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: None

f. Awards and Decorations: NDSM, GWTSM, ASR

g. Performance Ratings: NA

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record: The Enlisted Record Brief provides the applicant was flagged (Suspend Favorable Personnel Actions (FLAG)) on 21 March 2018, for Army Physical Fitness Test Failure (JA) and on 25 September 2018, for field-initiated involuntary separation (BA).

(1) On 19 January 2018, an individual sick slip provides the applicant had Plantar Fasciitis and was directed to minimize stairs, no jumping, no lunges, walk to run at own pace/distance/tolerance for seven days. On or between 26 February and 11 March 2018, the applicant was on a physical profile for bilateral foot pain. The applicant was placed in a walk-to-run program, alternating walking and jogging at an easy pace every other day, stopping or reducing activity if pain exceeds mild levels, and applying ice for swelling. They may exit reconditioning and resume full training once they can run 30 minutes continuously without increased pain or symptoms.

(2) Between 23 July and 27 August 2018, the applicant completed their separation examinations. The applicant documented their bilateral foot pain, stated they were treated with physical therapy. A mental status evaluation indicates the BH provider psychiatrically cleared them for administrative proceedings with no diagnosis or recommendations listed. Medically, they were qualified for separation with no diagnosis and the recommendation to follow-up with the IBHC (Internal Behavioral Health Clinic) for sleep hygiene.

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: Application for the Review of Discharge; Self-Authored Statement; Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty; Partial Service Records

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: None was provided with this application.

7. STATUTORY, REGULATORY AND POLICY REFERENCE(S): 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.

a. 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.

b. 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.

c. 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.

d. 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.

e. 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:

(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.

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.

(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.

(d) A Bad Conduct discharge will only be given to a Soldier pursuant to an approved sentence of general or special court-martial. Enlisted service members and officers with less than six years of service are eligible for a Bad Conduct Discharge. Behaviors such as drug abuse, assault, theft, insubordination, and other actions that violate military law may be punished with a BCD.

(e) A Dishonorable discharge is the most severe type of discharge and will be given to a Soldier pursuant only to an approved sentence of general or special court-martial. The appellate review must be completed and affirmed sentence ordered duly executed. Behaviors such as fraud, desertion, treason, espionage, sexual Assault, and murder and other actions may be punished with a dishonorable discharge.

(f) An uncharacterized separation will be described as entry-level with service uncharacterized if processing is initiated while a Soldier is in entry-level status. Unless the DCS, G-1, on a case-by-case basis, determines that characterization of service as honorable is clearly warranted by the presence of unusual circumstances involving personal conduct and performance of duty. This characterization is authorized when the Soldier is separated by reason of selected changes in service obligation, convenience of the Government, and Secretarial plenary authority. A Soldier is in an entry-level status (ELS) if the Soldier has not completed more than 180 days of creditable continuous active duty prior to the initiation of separation action.

(2) Chapter 13 (Unsatisfactory Performance) contains the policy and outlines the procedures for separating individuals for unsatisfactory performance, and provides, in pertinent part, commanders will separate a member under this Chapter when, in the commander's judgment, the member will not develop sufficiently to participate satisfactorily in further training and/or become a satisfactory Soldier. Paragraph 13-2c (previously paragraph 13-2e) states in pertinent part, separation proceedings will be initiated for Soldiers without medical limitations that have two consecutive failures of the Army Physical Fitness Test. The reason for discharge will be shown as physical standards. Soldiers separated because of unsatisfactory performance will be characterized as honorable or under honorable conditions as warranted by their military records.

(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, it will 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

g. 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 "JFT" as

the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 13-2E, Physical Standards.

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. A review of the records provides there was administrative irregularity in the proper retention of official military records, specifically, partial case separation files.

(1) An authenticated DD Form 214 provides the applicant was discharged under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chapter 13-2e for physical standards with a general (under honorable conditions) characterization of service. The applicant was flagged for two APFT failures (20 June and 19 September 2018) and involuntary separation. They served 2 years, 4 months, and 6 days of a 6 year, 24-week contractual obligation.

(2) The applicant requests relief contending, their discharge was inequitable, rooted in defamation of character, poor leadership, and lack of support from their command despite reporting issues and seeking counseling. The applicant contends, with proper leadership, support, and medical attention, they could have succeeded and request a second chance to serve honorably.

(a) The applicant provided an individual sick slip, dated 19 January 2018, identifying a diagnosis of Plantar Fasciitis. They were directed to minimize stairs, no jumping, no lunges, walk to run at own pace/distance/tolerance for seven days. They were on a physical profile between 26 February and 11 March 2018, for bilateral foot pain.

(b) A mental status evaluation indicates the BH provider psychiatrically cleared them for administrative proceedings with no diagnosis/recommendations listed. Medically, they were qualified for separation with the recommendation to follow-up at the IBHC (Internal Behavioral Health Clinic) for sleep hygiene.

b. Chapter 13 contains the policy and outlines the procedures for separating individuals for unsatisfactory performance, and provides, in pertinent part, the commanders will separate a member under this Chapter when, in the commander's judgment, the member will not develop sufficiently to participate satisfactorily in further training and/or become a satisfactory Soldier. Army policy states that a general, under honorable conditions discharge is normally considered appropriate; however, an honorable discharge may be granted in meritorious cases.

c. Published Department of Defense guidance indicates the guidance is not intended to interfere or impeded on the Board's statutory independence. The Board will determine the relative weight of the action that led to the discharge and whether its 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/experiences: Adjustment Disorder w/Depressed Mood.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found the applicant was diagnosed with Adjustment Disorder w/Depressed Mood while on AD.

(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 has a BH condition that potentially mitigates her misconduct as outlined in the BoS. The applicant was diagnosed during her TIS with Adjustment Disorder w/Depressed Mood. However, the condition was not of a severity to impact judgement, cognition, or behavior at the time of the applicant's APFT failures and therefore was not a mitigating factor. Records reflect that on 5 March the applicant stated that her BH symptoms had significantly improved, and that she was no longer in need of BH treatment; and the EMR was void of any subsequent BH treatment. Additionally, during her Chapter MSE, the applicant screen negative PTSD, depression, anxiety, and insomnia, and did not endorse any BH concerns. Given the evidence supports the applicant was not struggling with BH related concerns during the time of the APFT failures, the failures are not mitigated by her BH condition and upgrade based 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: NA – Applies to Personal Appearances only.

c. Response to Contention(s): The applicant requests relief contending, their discharge was inequitable, rooted in defamation of character, poor leadership, and lack of support from their command despite reporting issues and seeking counseling. The applicant contends, with proper leadership, support, and medical attention, they could have succeeded and request a second chance to serve honorably. The Board reviewed this contention but found insufficient evidence in the applicant's Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR) or in the evidence provided by the applicant to substantiate the claim that the command acted in an arbitrary or capricious manner, aside from the applicant's statement. Nevertheless, the Board voted to grant relief by upgrading the characterization of service to Honorable.

d. The Board determined the Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that the applicant was diagnosed during her TIS with Adjustment Disorder w/Depressed Mood. However, the condition was not of a severity to impact judgement, cognition, or behavior at the time of the applicant's APFT failures and therefore was not a mitigating factor. Records reflect that on 5 March the applicant stated that her BH symptoms had significantly improved, and that she was no longer in need of BH treatment; and the EMR was void of any subsequent BH treatment. However, the board agreed to offer an upgrade on the basis of length of service and clemency. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade to the characterization of service to Honorable and directed the issue of a new DD Form 214. The Board determined SPD and RE Code was proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

e. Rationale for Decision:

ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE

AR20220002281

(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 grant relief in the form of an upgrade to the characterization of service to Honorable and directed the issue of a new DD Form 214.

(3) The Board voted not to change the applicant's SPD code as the discharged was both proper and equitable.

(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: No Change
- d. Change RE Code to: No Change
- e. Change Authority to: No Change

Authenticating Official:

2/24/2026

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