

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** December 06, 2021**b. Date Received:** December 13, 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 applicant contends that the discharge characterization of "under honorable conditions" is unjust and undeserved, as the applicant's service was honorable and the circumstances surrounding the discharge were not reflective of any wrongdoing. The applicant contends a medical evaluation board was under process at the time of the separation proceedings. The applicant was in the process of being medically boarded out when advised to sign for discharge under the premise that it would be faster and would avoid the lengthy medical board process. Upon signing, the applicant was not made aware that the discharge characterization would be listed as "under honorable conditions" rather than "honorable." The applicant did not commit any misconduct and was misled with incomplete and inaccurate information, seemingly for the convenience of those processing the discharge. The applicant is currently rated as 100% service-connected for conditions that were the basis of the medical board proceedings.

c. Board Type and Decision: In a telephonic personal appearance board conducted on 01 December 2025, and by a 3-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the circumstances surrounding the discharge (Adjustment Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder (questionable), Schizoaffective Disorder, Schizophrenia, and PTSD), and post-service accomplishments. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed to 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 reentry code is 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: Condition, Not a Disability / AR 635-200, Chapter 5-17 / JFV / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. Date of Discharge: 17 February 2017**c. Separation Facts:**

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 1 February 2017

(2) **Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons for separation was having adjustment disorder with mixed anxiety and depressed mood and committed misconduct: derelict in the performance of duties (willfully failed from possessing alcohol)

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

(4) **Legal Consultation Date:** 10 February 2017

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

(6) **Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** 14 February 2017 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. **Date / Period of Enlistment / Reenlistment Under Review:** 12 April 2016 / 6 years

b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 20 / HS Graduate / 117

c. **Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-2 / 68W10, Health Care Specialist / 10 months and 6 days

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

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

f. **Awards and Decorations:** NDSM

g. **Performance Ratings:** NA

h. **Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:** CG Record of Proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice, 9 November 2016, indicates the applicant was found to have willfully failed from possessing alcohol as it was the applicant's duty on or about 26 October 2016. The imposed punishment included a reduction to E-1, forfeiture of \$365.00; along with 14 days of extra duty and restriction.

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:** Letter of confirmation, 5 April 2022, reflects the applicant was evaluated by a Department of the Veteran Affairs (VA) medical doctor stating the applicant was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder while the applicant was in the army and is 100 percent service connected.

(2) VA rating letter, 28 April 2022, reflects the applicant receives 100 percent rating for schizophrenia a service-connected disability.

(3) **AMHRR Listed:** Report of Mental Status Evaluation (MSE), 8 December 2016, indicates the applicant was cleared for any administrative actions the command deemed appropriate. The applicant demonstrated the ability to understand and participate in administrative proceedings, appreciated the difference between right and wrong, and met medical retention requirements. The MSE notes the applicant was unfit for duty due to a personality disorder or other mental condition that does not amount to medical disability. The diagnoses reflect adjustment disorder with mixed anxiety and depressed mood. The MSE also

reflects the applicants recommended precautions and notes the applicants developed a depressed and anxious mood primarily in response to the stress of the military environment. The problems presented by the applicant are not amenable to further training, reclassification or any behavioral health treatment methods currently available in the military. The applicant failed to sufficiently benefit from two different treatment modalities. There is clear reason to believe that this adjustment disorder will be amenable to treatment once the service member is outside of the military environment. The command was advised to consider their influence.

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: DD Form 149, VA Statement in support of claim form, DD Form 214, VA rating letter, and VA letter of confirmation of diagnoses

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: None

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) 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 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations) 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.

(a) Paragraph 3-7a states 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) Paragraph 3-7b states 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.

(1) Chapter 5 provides for the basic separation of enlisted personnel for the convenience of the government.

(a) Paragraph 5-1 states a Soldier being separated under this paragraph will be awarded a characterization of service of honorable, general (under honorable conditions), or an uncharacterized description of service if in entry-level status. A general (under honorable conditions) discharge is normally inappropriate for individuals separated under the provisions of paragraph 5-14 (previously paragraph 5-17) unless properly notified of the specific factors in the service that warrant such characterization.

(b) Paragraph 5-14 (previously paragraph 5-17) specifically provides that a Soldier may be separated for other physical or mental conditions not amounting to a disability, which interferes with assignment to or performance of duty and requires that the diagnosis be so severe that the Soldier's ability to function in the military environment is significantly impaired.

(2) 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

(3) 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 "JFV" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 5-14 (previously Chapter 5-17), Condition, Not a Disability.

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 was discharged under the provisions of AR 635-200, paragraph 5-17, by reason of "Condition, Not a Disability," with a characterization of service of General (Under Honorable Conditions). Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR) includes the Report MSE, 8 December 2016, indicates the applicant was cleared for any administrative actions the command deemed appropriate. The applicant demonstrated the ability to understand and participate in administrative proceedings, appreciated the difference between right and wrong, and met medical retention requirements. The MSE notes the applicant was unfit for duty due to a personality disorder or other mental condition that does not amount to medical disability. The diagnoses reflect adjustment disorder with mixed anxiety and depressed mood. The MSE also reflects the applicants recommended precautions and notes the applicants developed a depressed and anxious mood primarily in response to the stress of the military environment. The problems presented by the applicant are not amenable to further training, reclassification or any behavioral health treatment methods currently available in the military. The applicant failed to sufficiently benefit from two different treatment modalities. There is clear reason to believe that this adjustment disorder will be amenable to treatment once the service member is outside of the military environment. The command was advised to consider their influence.

c. The applicant's Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR) includes a properly constituted DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty), which was not 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 5, paragraph 5-17, by reason of Condition, Not a Disability, with a characterization of service of general (under honorable conditions).

d. The applicant contends that the discharge characterization of "under honorable conditions" is unjust and undeserved, as the applicant's service was honorable and the circumstances surrounding the discharge were not reflective of any wrongdoing. The applicant was separated under Chapter 5, paragraph 5-17, AR 635-200 provisions at the time, with a general (under honorable conditions) discharge. The narrative reason specified by Army Regulations for a discharge under this paragraph is "Condition, Not a Disability," and the separation code is "JFV." Army Regulation 635-8 (Separation Processing and Documents) governs the 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 exactly as listed in tables 2-2 or 2-3 of AR 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes). The regulation stipulates no deviation is authorized. There is no provision for entry of any other reason under this regulation.

e. The applicant contends a medical evaluation board was under process at the time of the separation proceedings. The Department of Defense disability regulations do not preclude a disciplinary separation while undergoing a medical board. Appropriate regulations stipulate separations for misconduct take precedence over potential separations for other reasons. Whenever a member is being processed through the Physical Evaluation Board and is subsequently processed for an involuntary administrative separation or referred to a court-martial for misconduct, the disability evaluation is suspended. The Physical Evaluation Board case remains in suspense pending the outcome of the non-disability proceedings. If the action includes either a punitive or administrative discharge for misconduct, the medical process is stopped, and the board report is filed in the member's medical record.

9. DOCUMENTS / TESTIMONY PRESENTED DURING PERSONAL APPEARANCE: In addition to the evidence in the record, the Board carefully considered the additional document(s) and testimony presented by the applicant at the personal appearance hearing.

- a. **The applicant submitted the following additional document(s):** None
- b. **The applicant presented the following additional contention(s):** None
- c. **Counsel / Witness(es) / Observer(s):** None

10. 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, Borderline Personality Disorder (questionable), Schizoaffective Disorder, Schizophrenia, and PTSD.

(2) Did the condition exist or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** Adjustment Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder (questionable), psychosis, and trauma.

(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 misdiagnosis and resulting improper treatment, a Chapter 5-17 typically being an Honorable characterization unless there is egregious misconduct, and the misconduct before the mental health crisis not being egregious, an upgrade is recommended.

(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 Schizophrenia disorder or experience outweighed the minor misconduct found in the file.

- b. **Prior Decisions Cited:** None
- c. **Response to Contention(s):**

(1) The applicant contends that the discharge characterization of "under honorable conditions" is unjust and undeserved, as the applicant's service was honorable and the circumstances surrounding the discharge were not reflective of any wrongdoing. The applicant contends a medical evaluation board was under process at the time of the separation proceedings. The Board liberally considered this contention and determined that it was valid due to the applicant's Adjustment Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder (questionable), Schizoaffective Disorder, Schizophrenia, and PTSD outweighing the minor misconduct elsewhere in the file. Therefore, a discharge upgrade is warranted.

d. The Board determined: The Board carefully considered the applicant's request, supporting documents, evidence in the records, a medical review, and published Department of Defense guidance for liberal consideration of discharge upgrade requests. The Board concurred with the conclusion of the medical advising official that the applicant's misdiagnosis (Schizophrenia and PTSD) resulted in an improper separation and warrants a change to the

character and narrative reason for separation. Based on a preponderance of evidence, the Board determined that the reason for the applicant's separation was inequitable. The Board voted to retain the reentry code based on the medical diagnosis.

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 to Honorable because the applicant's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Schizophrenia outweighed the applicant's minor misconduct. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

(3) The Board voted to change the reason for discharge to Secretarial Authority under the same pretexts, thus the reason for discharge is no longer appropriate. The SPD code associated with the new reason for discharge is JFF.

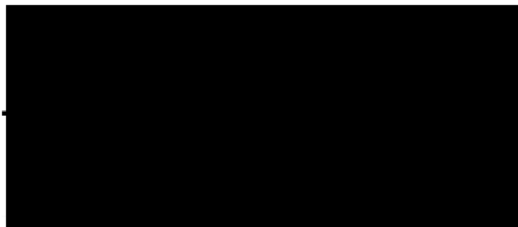
(4) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

11. 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, Chapter 15**

Authenticating Official:

12/3/2025



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