

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 25 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 and a narrative reason change.

b. Applicant Contention(s)/Issue(s): The applicant seeks relief, contending in effect, the discharge characterization was unjust due to mental health conditions directly resulting from deployment to Iraq. Family members observed a significant change in behavior before and after deployment, and supporting medical evidence confirms service-connected Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Following the discharge, the Department of Veterans Affairs assigned a 70 percent disability rating for PTSD, later increased to 100 percent with unemployability, reflecting permanent and total disability justifying the upgrade. The applicant asserts the discharge failed to account for these mitigating circumstances and requests correction of the discharge characterization.

c. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 4 September 2025, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge was inequitable. It granted relief by upgrading the characterization of service to Honorable, changing the separation authority to AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12a, and revising the narrative reason for separation to Misconduct (Minor Infractions), with a corresponding separation code of JKN. The Board also determined that the RE Code was proper and equitable and voted to leave it unchanged.

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: Pattern of Misconduct / AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12b / JKA / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. Date of Discharge: 14 December 2011

c. Separation Facts:

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 5 October 2011

(2) **Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons: The applicant went AWOL from 24 March 2011 until 30 March 2011 and failed to report to two formations.

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

(4) **Legal Consultation Date:** 13 October 2011

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

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 14 November 2011 / General
(Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Enlistment / Reenlistment Under Review: 4 June 2010 / 4 years

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 21 / GED / 85

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-4 / 92Y10, Unit Supply Specialist /
5 years, 6 months, 11 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: USAR, 19 May 2006 – 5 March 2008 / HD
IADT, 13 June 2006 – 8 August 2007 / UNC
(Concurrent Service)
RA, 6 March 2008 – 3 June 2010 / HD

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: SWA / Iraq (4 August 2009 – 21 July 2010)

f. Awards and Decorations: ARCOM, AAM, NDSM, ICM-CS, ASR, OSR

g. Performance Ratings: NA

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) Two Personnel Action forms indicate the applicant's duty status changed as follows:

From Present for Duty (PDY) to Absent Without Leave (AWOL), effective 24 March 2011;
From AWOL to PDY, effective 30 March 2011.

(2) Field Grade Record of Proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice, 26 April 2011, indicates the applicant was found on or about 24 March 2011, without authority to be absent and did remain absent until on or about 30 March 2011. The imposed punishment included a reduction to E-2, forfeiture of \$822 pay per month for two months (suspended), along with 45 days of extra duty and restriction.

i. Lost Time / Mode of Return: 5 days (AWOL, 24 March 2011 – 29 March 2011) / NIF

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 Listed:

(a) Report of Medical History, 23 June 2011, reflects the applicant was being treated for insomnia and receiving counseling.

(b) Report of Mental Status Evaluation (MSE), 13 July 2011, indicates the applicant demonstrated the ability to understand and participate in administrative proceedings, appreciated the difference between right and wrong, and met medical retention requirements.

PTSD and mTBI screenings were conducted, but the conditions were either absent or did not meet AR 40-501 criteria for a medical evaluation board. The applicant was diagnosed with adjustment disorder mixed with disturbance of emotions and conduct.

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: Application for the Review of Discharge; The Army Review Board Agency letter; VA VR&E letter; VA Summary of Benefits letter.

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The applicant sought help from the VA and received a PTSD diagnosis.

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.

(c) Paragraph 3-9 states a separation will be described as entry-level with service uncharacterized if processing is initiated while a Soldier is in entry-level status.

(d) 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. Paragraph 14-12b, addresses a pattern of misconduct consisting of either discreditable involvement with civilian or military authorities or discreditable conduct and conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline including conduct violating the accepted standards of personal conduct found in the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Army Regulations, the civilian law and time-honored customs and traditions of the Army.

(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: RE-1
- Narrative Reason for Separation: Secretarial Plenary Authority
- Character of Service: Honorable

h. 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 "JKA" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 12b, pattern of misconduct.

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 and a narrative reason change. The applicant's Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR), the issues, and documents submitted with the application were carefully reviewed.

b. The applicant was recommended for separation because the applicant went AWOL from 24 March 2011 until 30 March 2011 and failed to report to two formations. The applicant was

separated in accordance with AR 635-200, paragraph 14-12b, a pattern of misconduct, with a characterization of general (under honorable conditions).

c. The applicant contends being considered permanent and total disability and unemployable by the VA because of PTSD directly resulting from deployment to Iraq. The applicant provided a VA summary of benefits letter reflecting the applicant received a 90 percent service connection and being paid at the 100 percent rate because the applicant is unemployable due to service-connected disabilities. The applicant is considered to be totally and permanently disabled. The applicant's AMHRR contains documentation supporting an in-service diagnosis of adjustment disorder with mixed disturbance of emotions and conduct. The record shows the applicant underwent a mental status evaluation (MSE) on 13 July 2011, which indicates the applicant was mentally responsible and was able to recognize right from wrong. The separation authority considered the MSE.

d. The applicant contends family members observed a significant change in behavior before and after deployment, and supporting medical evidence confirms service-connected Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The applicant did not provide supporting evidence beyond their statement to support the contention. The applicant's AMHRR includes no documentation of a PTSD diagnosis. The AMHRR does not indicate or provide evidence of arbitrary or capricious actions by the command.

e. The applicant contends the Army should change the narrative reason for the discharge to "Discharged Honorably". Under Chapter 14, paragraph 14-12b of AR 635-200, the Army separated the applicant with an "general (under honorable conditions)" discharge. Army Regulations designate "Pattern of Misconduct," as the narrative reason for discharge under this provision and assign the separation code "JKA." Army Regulation 635-8 (Separation Processing and Documents) governs how officials prepare the DD Form 214. This regulation mandates that block 28 must list the narrative reason for separation, and block 26 must show the corresponding separation code, both as specified in tables 2-2 or 2-3 of AR 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes). The regulation prohibits any deviation and does not allow officials to enter any other reason.

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: PTSD.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found that the applicant was diagnosed in service with an Adjustment Disorder and is service connected by the VA for PTSD.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that there is evidence of BH conditions. The applicant was diagnosed in service with an Adjustment Disorder and is service connected by the VA for PTSD. Given the nexus between PTSD and avoidance, the AWOL and FTRs that led to the separation are 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 condition or experience outweighed the basis of separation.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contention(s):

(1) The applicant contends being considered permanent and total disability and unemployable by the VA because of PTSD directly resulting from deployment to Iraq. The Board considered this contention and determined that the applicant's service-connected PTSD, supported by VA documentation and in-service diagnosis of Adjustment Disorder, mitigated the misconduct and warranted an upgrade to Honorable.

(2) The applicant contends family members observed a significant change in behavior before and after deployment, and supporting medical evidence confirms service-connected Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The Board considered this contention and acknowledged the applicant's statement regarding behavioral changes post-deployment but found no additional supporting evidence in the record beyond the applicant's claim.

(3) The applicant contends the Army should change the narrative reason for the discharge to "Discharged Honorably". The Board considered this contention and granted relief by upgrading the characterization of service to Honorable and changing the narrative reason to Misconduct (Minor Infraction), consistent with regulatory authority.

d. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's PTSD. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable, changed the separation authority to AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12a, and the narrative reason for separation to Misconduct (Minor Infraction), with a corresponding separation code to JKN. The Board voted and determined the reentry eligibility (RE) code was proper and equitable due to applicant's BH diagnoses.

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. However, the applicant may request a personal appearance hearing to address further issues before the Board. The applicant is responsible for satisfying the burden of proof and providing documents or other evidence sufficient to support the applicant's contention(s) that the discharge was improper or inequitable.

(2) The Board voted to upgrade the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable because, after applying liberal consideration to all the evidence before it, including the VA confirmed diagnosis of PTSD and in service Adjustment Disorder, the applicant's behavioral health condition was found to mitigate the offenses of AWOL and failure to report

(3) The Board voted not to change the applicant's reason for discharge or accompanying SPD code under the same pretexts, as the reason the applicant was discharged was both proper and equitable.

ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE

AR20220003673

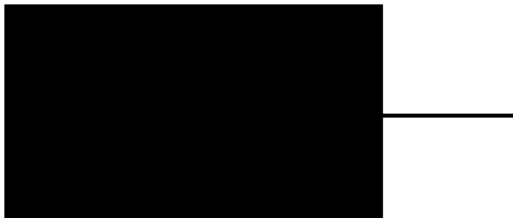
(4) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

- a. Issue a New DD-214 / Separation Order: Yes
- b. Change Characterization to: Honorable
- c. Change Reason / SPD code to: Misconduct (Minor Infractions)/JKN
- d. Change RE Code to: No Change
- e. Change Authority to: No Change

Authenticating Official:

9/16/2025



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