

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]

- a. **Application Date:** 4 November 2021
- b. **Date Received:** 18 January 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 seeks relief contending in effect, the Army doctor told the applicant they would never run again. The applicant's first lieutenant stated they would discharge the applicant with an honorable character of service because personnel numbers needed to be lowered. However, the applicant received a general (under honorable conditions) character of service.

c. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 7 October 2025, and by a 4-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge was inequitable due to the mitigating effect of the applicant's PTSD, Dysthymia, and Acute Stress Reaction. 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 Board determined both the narrative reason for separation and the RE code were proper and equitable, and therefore no changes were warranted. 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:** 3 November 2011

c. Separation Facts:

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** 29 August 2011

(2) **Basis for Separation:** The unit commander notified the applicant of recommendation for separation, under AR 635-200, Chapter 13, Unsatisfactory Performance, of the following reasons: On 5 November the applicant failed to meet the minimum standards during a record Army Physical Fitness Test. On 25 May 2011, the applicant again failed to meet the minimum standards on a second consecutive record Army Physical Fitness Test.

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

(4) **Legal Consultation Date:** 14 September 2011

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

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: On 15 September 2011, the separation authority approved the applicant's separation under AR 635-200, Chapter 13, for unsatisfactory performance. / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Enlistment Under Review: 14 August 2008 / 5 years

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 21 / High School Graduate / 106

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-4 / 31B1O, Military Police / 3 years, 2 months, 20 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: None

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: SWA / Iraq (31 July 2009 – 17 June 2010)

f. Awards and Decorations: MUC, NDSM, GWOTSM, ICM-CS, ASR, OSR

g. Performance Ratings: NA

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) Army Physical Fitness Test Scorecard reflects the applicant failed three record APFTs on 5 April 2010, 2 June 2010, and 1 November 2010.

(2) Army Physical Fitness Test Scorecard reflects the applicant failed record APFT on 25 May 2011.

(3) Three Developmental Counseling Forms document instances of the applicant failing the Army Physical Fitness Test and administrative separation.

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 Listed: Report of Mental Status Evaluation (MSE), 14 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.

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

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

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

a. Section 1553, Title 10, United States Code (Review of Discharge or Dismissal) provides for the creation, composition, and scope of review conducted by a Discharge Review Board(s) within established governing standards. As amended by Sections 521 and 525 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, 10 USC 1553 provides specific guidance to the Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records and Discharge Review Boards when considering discharge upgrade requests by Veterans claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), sexual trauma, intimate partner violence (IPV), or spousal abuse, as a basis for discharge review. The amended guidance provides that Boards will include, as a voting board member, a physician trained in mental health disorders, a clinical psychologist, or a psychiatrist when the discharge upgrade claim asserts a mental health condition, including PTSD, TBI, sexual trauma, IPV, or spousal abuse, as a basis for the discharge. Further, the guidance provides that Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records and Discharge Review Boards will develop and provide specialized training specific to sexual trauma, IPV, spousal abuse, as well as the various responses of individuals to trauma.

b. Office, Secretary of Defense memorandum (Supplemental Guidance to Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Discharge Upgrade Requests by Veterans Claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), 3 September 2014, directed the Service Discharge Review Boards (DRBs) and Service Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NRs) to carefully consider the revised PTSD criteria, detailed medical considerations and mitigating factors when taking action on applications from former service members administratively discharged UOTHC and who have been diagnosed with PTSD by a competent mental health professional representing a civilian healthcare provider in order to determine if it would be appropriate to upgrade the characterization of the applicant's service.

c. Office, Under Secretary of Defense memorandum (Clarifying Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Requests by Veterans for Modification of their Discharge Due to Mental Health Conditions, Sexual Assault, or Sexual Harassment), 25 August 2017 issued clarifying guidance for the Secretary of Defense Directive to DRBs and BCM/NRs when considering requests by Veterans for modification of their discharges due in whole or in part to mental health conditions, including PTSD; Traumatic Brain Injury; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Boards are to give liberal consideration to Veterans petitioning for discharge relief when the application for relief is based in whole or in part to those conditions or experiences. The guidance further describes evidence sources and criteria and requires Boards to consider the conditions or experiences presented in evidence as potential mitigation for misconduct that led to the discharge.

d. Office, Under Secretary of Defense memorandum (Guidance to Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Regarding Equity, Injustice, or Clemency Determinations), 25 July 2018 issued guidance to Military DRBs and BCM/NRs regarding equity, injustice, or clemency determinations. Clemency generally refers to relief specifically granted from a criminal sentence. However, the guidance applies to more than clemency from a sentencing in a court-martial; it also applies to other corrections, including changes in a discharge, which may be warranted based on equity or relief from injustice.

(1) This guidance does not mandate relief but rather provides standards and principles to guide Boards in application of their equitable relief authority. In determining whether to grant relief on the basis of equity, injustice, or clemency grounds, DRBs shall consider the prospect for rehabilitation, external evidence, sworn testimony, policy changes, relative severity of misconduct, mental and behavioral health conditions, official governmental acknowledgement that a relevant error or injustice was committed, and uniformity of punishment.

(2) Changes to the narrative reason for discharge and/or an upgraded character of service granted solely on equity, injustice, or clemency grounds normally should not result in separation pay, retroactive promotions, and payment of past medical expenses or similar benefits that might have been received if the original discharge had been for the revised reason or had the upgraded service characterization.

e. Army Regulation 15-180 (Army Discharge Review Board) 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.

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.

(2) Chapter 13 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.

(a) 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.

(b) Paragraph 13-8 stipulates the service of 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 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 "JFT" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, in effect at the time, 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. The applicant's Army Military Human Resources Record (AMHRR), the issues, and documents submitted with the application were carefully reviewed.

b. The unit commander notified the applicant of recommendation for separation, under AR 635-200, Chapter 13, Unsatisfactory Performance, of the following reasons: On 5 November the applicant failed to meet the minimum standards during a record Army Physical Fitness Test. On 25 May 2011, the applicant again failed to meet the minimum standards on a second consecutive record Army Physical Fitness Test. The applicant was separated with a general (under honorable conditions) character of service.

c. Based on the applicant's AMHRR, someone in the discharge process erroneously entered in the applicant's DD Form 214, block 25, "AR 635-200, Para 13-2E." The discharge packet confirms the separation authority approved the discharge under the provisions AR 635-200, Chapter 13, Unsatisfactory Performance. Army Regulations state a Soldier separated under this provision will receive a narrative reason of Unsatisfactory Performance and a Separation Code of "JHJ."

d. The applicant contends being promised an honorable character of service but received a general (under honorable conditions) character of service. The applicant provided no supporting evidence beyond their statement to support the contention. The separation authority is not bound by the recommendations of the initiating or intermediate commander and has

complete discretion to direct any discharge and characterization of service authorized by the applicable provisions of the regulation as stated in Army Regulation 635-200, chapter 2-2c. The AMHRR does not indicate or provide evidence of arbitrary or capricious actions by the command.

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, Dysthymia, Acute Stress Reaction.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found the applicant is 30 percent SC 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 a review of the available information reflects the applicant is 30 percent SC for PTSD and was diagnosed in-service with PTSD, Dysthymia, and Acute Reaction to Stress subsumed by PTSD. Records suggest the conditions were effectively treated during deployment and the EMR is void of any post-deployment BH treatment. However, in apply liberal consideration, the applicant's preexisting conditions were exacerbated by combat and could have persisted post deployment, despite him not seeking. As such, given the nexus between his BH conditions and increased fatigue, lack of energy, and decreased motivation, his inability to pass his APFT is mitigated by his BH conditions and upgrade based on medical mitigation is supported.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** Based on liberal consideration of all evidence, the Board determined that the applicant's PTSD, Dysthymia, and Acute Stress Reaction substantially mitigated the basis for separation.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contention(s): The applicant contends being promised an honorable character of service but received a general (under honorable conditions) character of service. The Board considered this contention, but determined that the applicant's discharge was initially inequitable due to the mitigating impact of their diagnosed conditions, necessitating an upgrade to Honorable

d. The Board determined the discharge was inequitable due to the mitigating effect of the applicant's PTSD, Dysthymia, and Acute Stress Reaction. 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 Board determined both the narrative reason for separation and the RE code were proper and equitable, and therefore no changes were warranted.

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

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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 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, Dysthymia, and Acute Stress Reaction, these behavioral health conditions were found to mitigate the applicant's inability to pass the APFT.

(3) The Board voted not to change the applicant's reason for discharge, finding it to be both proper and equitable.

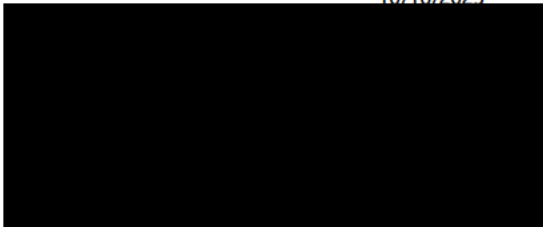
(4) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

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:

10/16/2025



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