

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 14 March 2022**b. Date Received:** 14 March 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 and a narrative reason change.

b. Applicant Contention(s)/Issue(s): The applicant requests relief, contending in effect an undiagnosed mental health disorder contributed to the first offense in more than 13 years.

c. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 9 February 2026, and by a 3-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable because the applicant's service-connected behavioral health conditions, including Major Depressive Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Anxiety Disorder NOS, outweighed the offense of drug abuse. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed the separation authority to AR 635-200, paragraph 14- 12a, the narrative reason for separation to Misconduct (Minor Infractions), with a corresponding separation code of JKN. 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: Misconduct (Drug Abuse) / AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c (2) / JKK / RE-4 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. Date of Discharge: 9 July 2020

c. Separation Facts:

(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate: 20 April 2020

(2) Basis for Separation: The applicant was informed of the following reasons: The applicant tested positive for dexamphetamine monophosphate on or about 9 January 2020.

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

(4) Legal Consultation Date: 20 April 2020

(5) Administrative Separation Board: On 17 June 2020, the applicant conditionally waived consideration by the administrative separation board, requesting a discharge characterized no less favorably than general (under honorable conditions).

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 18 June 2020 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

- a. Date / Period of Reenlistment Under Review:** 6 August 2018 / Indefinite
- b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 31 / Associate Degree / 112
- c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-6 / 42R3O, 8R Army Bandperson / 14 years, 8 months, 15 days
- d. Prior Service / Characterizations:** USAR, 25 October 2005 – 30 September 2007 / NA
RA, 1 October 2007 – 8 October 2008
RA, 9 October 2008 – 31 October 2013 / HD
RA, 1 November 2013 – 5 August 2018 / HD
- e. Overseas Service / Combat Service:** Korea / None
- f. Awards and Decorations:** ARCOM-6, AAM-5, AGCM-4, NDSM, GWOTSM, KDSM, NCOPDR-2, ASR, OSR-2
- g. Performance Ratings:** 1 December 2017 – 14 September 2018 / Qualified
15 September 2018 – 7 November 2019 / Qualified
- h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:**
 - (1)** Electronic Copy of Specimen Custody Document – Drug Testing, 5 February 2020, indicates the applicant tested positive for DAMP 6235 (D-Amphetamine) and DMETH 94930 (D-Methamphetamine) during an Inspection Unit (IU) urinalysis testing conducted on 9 January 2020.
 - (2)** Field Grade Record of Proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice, [date], indicates the applicant was found to have wrongfully use dexamphetamine monophosphate between on or about 5 January and 9 January 2020. The imposed punishment included a reduction to E-5, forfeiture of \$1,750 pay per month for two months (suspended), along with 45 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: None

(2) AMHRR Listed: Report of Mental Status Evaluation (MSE), 2 April 2020, 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 stimulant use disorder, severe. The diagnosis did not constitute matters in extenuation tat related to the basis of administrative separation.

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: Application for the Review of Discharge; Soldier Record Brief; Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, VA Summary of Benefits letter.

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 their 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 3-5c, provides the reasons for separation, including the specific circumstances that form the basis for the separation, will be considered on the issue of characterization. As a general matter, characterization will be based upon a pattern of behavior other than an isolated incident. There are circumstances, however, in which the conduct or performance of duty reflected by a single incident provides the basis for characterization.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

(d) 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.

(2) Chapter 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for separating members for misconduct. Specific categories include minor disciplinary infractions, a pattern of misconduct, and commission of a serious offense, to include abuse of illegal drugs, convictions by civil authorities and desertion or being absent without leave. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impractical or unlikely to succeed.

(a) Paragraph 14-3, prescribes a discharge under other than honorable conditions is normally appropriate for a Soldier discharged under this chapter. However, the separation authority may direct a general discharge if such is merited by the Soldier's overall record.

(b) Paragraph 14-12c (2) terms abuse of illegal drugs as serious misconduct. It continues; however, by recognizing relevant facts may mitigate the nature of the offense. Therefore, a single drug abuse offense may be combined with one or more minor disciplinary infractions or incidents of other misconduct and processed for separation under paragraph 14-12a or 14-12b as appropriate.

(3) Chapter 15 provides explicitly for separation under the prerogative of the Secretary of the Army. Secretarial plenary separation authority is exercised sparingly and seldom delegated. Ordinarily, it is used when no other provision of this regulation applies, and early separation is clearly in the Army's best interest. Separations under this paragraph are effective only if approved in writing by the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary's approved designee as announced in updated memoranda. Secretarial separation authority is normally exercised on a case-by-case basis. If Secretarial Authority is granted normally correct the record to show the following:

- Separation Authority: Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 15
- Separation Code: JFF
- Reenlistment Code: RE1
- Narrative Reason for Separation: Secretarial Plenary Authority
- Character of Service: Honorable

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

8. SUMMARY OF FACT(S): Standard of Review. The Army Discharge Review Board considers applications for upgrade as instructed by Department of Defense Instruction 1332.28.

a. The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable 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 notified of recommendation for separation because The applicant tested positive for dexamphetamine monophosphate on or about 9 January 2020. The applicant was separated with a general (under honorable conditions) under the prevision of AR 635-200 14-12C(2).

c. The applicant contends the Army should change the narrative reason for the discharge. Under Chapter 14, paragraph 14-12c (2), of AR 635-200, the Army separated the applicant with an "general (under honorable conditions)" discharge. Army Regulations designate "Misconduct (Drug Abuse)," as the narrative reason for discharge under this provision and assign the separation code "JKK." 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.

d. The applicant contends an undiagnosed mental health disorder contributed to the first offense in more than 13 years. The applicant submitted a VA Benefits Summary letter showing the applicant received 100 percent service connected disability rating. The applicant's AMHRR contains documentation supporting an in-service diagnosis. The record shows the applicant underwent a mental status evaluation (MSE) on 2 April 2020, which indicates the applicant was mentally responsible and was able to recognize right from wrong. The separation authority considered the MSE. Army Regulation 635-200, paragraph 3-5, state certain circumstances allow a single act of conduct or duty performance to serve as the basis for service characterization. The 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: Anxiety Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified (NOS); Social Anxiety Disorder; Social Phobia; Major Depressive Disorder (MDD). Note: The diagnosis of Persistent Depressive Disorder is subsumed under MDD; the diagnosis of Social Phobia is subsumed under Social Anxiety Disorder.

(2) Did the condition exist or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found that all listed diagnoses, with the exception of MDD, were made during active service. VA service connection for MDD establishes a nexus with active duty.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that that the applicant has several mitigating BH conditions, MDD, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Anxiety Disorder. [Note diagnosis of Persistent Depressive Disorder is subsumed under diagnosis of MDD; diagnosis of Social Phobia is subsumed under diagnosis of Social Anxiety Disorder.] As there is an

association between MDD, Social Anxiety Disorder and Anxiety Disorder and self-medication with alcohol and/or illicit drugs, there is a nexus between these conditions their positive Urinalysis (UA) for methamphetamine.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** After applying liberal consideration to the evidence, including the Board Medical Advisor's opinion, the Board determined that the applicant's diagnosed behavioral health conditions of major depressive disorder, social anxiety disorder, and anxiety disorder outweighed the positive UA.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contention(s):

(1) The applicant contends an undiagnosed mental health disorder contributed to the first offense in more than 13 years. The Board considered this contention and agreed that the applicant's behavioral health conditions supported the explanation for the isolated incident.

d. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable because the applicant's service-connected behavioral health conditions, including Major Depressive Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Anxiety Disorder NOS, outweighed the offense of drug abuse. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed the separation authority to AR 635-200, paragraph 14- 12a, the narrative reason for separation to Misconduct (Minor Infractions), with a corresponding separation code of JKN. The Board determined the reentry code is proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

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 service-connected behavioral health conditions, including Major Depressive Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Anxiety Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, outweighed the misconduct of drug abuse.

(3) The Board voted to change the applicant's reason for discharge Minor Misconduct with accompanying SPD code of JKN, under the same pretexts.

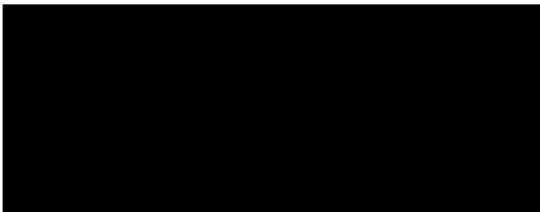
(4) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

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: AR 635-200

Authenticating Official:

2/19/2026



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