

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 27 March 2022**b. Date Received:** 7 April 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 under other than honorable conditions. The applicant requests an upgrade of their under other than honorable conditions discharge and a narrative reason change.

b. Applicant Contention(s)/Issue(s): The applicant requests relief contending, in effect, their packet shows not any of the documents the applicant provided to Commanding General (CG) H. were entered into the board proceedings, nor did the applicant have an opportunity to use the CG's open-door policy. As the approving authority, the brigade command sergeant major and colonel offered the applicant a general discharge. The applicant believed the general discharge was the lowest discharge the applicant could receive. At no point was the applicant counseled or told the applicant would receive an other than honorable discharge once the applicant requested a board hearing. According to the applicant's election of rights, the applicant had the right to request a board, or if the applicant was considered for an other than honorable, the applicant would have a board, but the applicant was never considered for an other than honorable. All the commanders recommended the applicant receive a general discharge, including the government's attorney during the board proceedings. The applicant was under the impression the division appointed the board, but the brigade held the position, and the applicant was the brigade master gunner. The brigade master gunner worked directly with two of the three members. The members were offended the applicant attempted suicide rather than request assistance. The applicant has a copy of the board's recording. The applicant appreciates a review of their case because it affects the rest of their life profoundly. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) are related to the request.

c. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 29 January 2026, and by a 3-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's extensive combat service, distinguished record of achievement, and the mitigating impact of diagnosed behavioral health conditions including PTSD, TBI, Adjustment Disorder, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS, which outweighed the wrongful use of heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, methamphetamines, and D-methamphetamine that formed the basis for separation. 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 / JKK / RE-4 / Under Other Than Honorable Conditions

b. Date of Discharge: 7 February 2022

c. Separation Facts:

(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate: 30 September 2021

(2) Basis for Separation: The applicant was informed of the following reasons: In that the applicant, did, at or near Fort Carson, Colorado, between on or about 12 and 16 March 2021, wrongfully use D-methamphetamine. In that the applicant, did, at or near Fort Carson, Colorado, between on or about 17 and 21 May 2021, wrongfully use heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, and methamphetamines.

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

(4) Legal Consultation Date: 30 September 2021

(5) Administrative Separation Board:

(a) On 30 September 2021, the applicant conditionally waived consideration by the administrative separation board, requesting a discharge characterized no less favorably than honorable.

(b) On 6 October 2021, the applicant requested consideration of their case by the administrative separation board.

(c) On 4 November 2021, the separation authority denied the conditional waiver and the case was referred to an administrative separation board.

(d) On 18 November 2021, the applicant received notification to appear before an administrative separation board and was advised of rights.

(e) On 18 December 2021, the administrative separation board convened, and the applicant appeared with counsel. The administrative separation board determined a preponderance of the evidence did support the listed reasons in the notification memorandum. It recommended the applicant's discharge with a characterization of service as under other than honorable conditions.

(f) On 27 January 2022, the separation authority approved the administrative separation board's findings and recommendations.

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 27 January 2022 / Under Other Than Honorable Conditions

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Reenlistment Under Review: 11 December 2019 / Indefinite

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 38 / One Year College / 109

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-7 / 13B4O, A7 8R Cannon Crewmember / 15 years, 3 months, 20 days

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: RA, 18 October 2006 – 19 January 2009 / HD

RA, 20 January 2009 – 11 September 2012 / HD
RA, 12 September 2012 – 3 February 2013 / HD
RA, 4 February 2013 – 6 February 2015 / HD
RA, 7 February 2015 – 10 December 2019 / HD

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: Alaska, Poland, SWA / Afghanistan (20 March 2011 – 8 March 2012, 7 October 2013 – 8 July 2014, 16 April 2015 – 7 January 2016); Iraq (24 September 2008 – 24 September 2009); Kuwait (18 February 2019 – 24 October 2019)

f. Awards and Decorations: BSM, MSM-2, ARCOM-4, AAM-6, MUC-2, ASUA, AGCM-4, NDSM, GWOTSM, ACM-2CS-2, ICM-CS-2, NCOPDR-3, ASR, OSR-5, GWOTEM-BSS, CAB / The AMHRR reflects the applicant was awarded three NATOMDLs; however, the awards are not reflected on the DD Form 214.

g. Performance Ratings: 19 November 2019 – 28 November 2020 / Highly Qualified

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) Electronic Copy of Specimen Custody Document – Drug Testing, 13 May 2021, indicates the applicant tested positive for 6am 48 (heroin) and DMETH 827 (D-methamphetamine) during an Inspection Unit (IU) urinalysis testing conducted on 16 March 2021.

(2) Field Grade Record of Proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice, 28 July 2021, indicates the applicant was found to have wrongfully used D-methamphetamine between 12 and 16 March 2021. The imposed punishment included forfeiture of \$2,380 pay per month for two months (suspended), along with 45 days of extra duty and a written reprimand.

(3) Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4th Infantry Division Artillery, Fort Carson, memorandum, subject: Separation under AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c(2), Misconduct-Abuse of Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], undated, reflects the applicant was notified the immediate commander was initiating separation and recommending a general (under honorable conditions) characterization of service. The separation authority was the Commander, Headquarters, 4th Infantry Division Artillery, Fort Carson. The intermediate and the separation authority were not bound by the immediate commander's recommendation as to characterization of service. The separation authority may direct the applicant service be characterized as honorable, general (under honorable conditions), under other than honorable conditions, or entry-level, if in an entry level status. However, the separation authority may not direct the issuance of a type of discharge less favorable than that recommended by the board should the applicant request a hearing before an administrative board. The applicant acknowledged the notification.

(4) Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4th Infantry Division Artillery, Fort Carson, memorandum, subject: Separation under AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c(2), Misconduct-Abuse of Illegal Drugs, [Applicant], 6 October 2021, reflects the applicant understood they were entitled to administrative separation board if the applicant had six or more years of total active and reserve military service or if the applicant had been notified they were subject to a characterization of service of under other than honorable conditions. The applicant did not believe the applicant suffered from PTSD or TBI as a result of deployment overseas in support of a contingency operation during the previous 24 months.

(5) Formal AR 15-6 Investigation Findings and Recommendations, 18 December 2021, indicates the administrative separation board determined the basis for separation in that the

applicant wrongfully used D-methamphetamine, heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, and amphetamines was supported by the preponderance of the evidence and recommended separation with an other than honorable character of service. The Summary of Proceedings is void of any challenges or objections to the proceedings.

(6) Two Developmental Counseling Forms document instances of the applicant testing positive for DMETH and personnel favorable actions being suspended because of pending 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:** Traumatic Brain Injury Clinic Note, 8 November 2021, reflects the applicant's problems and past medical history is listed as alcohol dependence, anxiety, cognitive deficit in attention, concussion injury of brain, heroin dependence, history of TBI, methamphetamine dependence, opioid abuse, and obstructive sleep apnea.

(2) **AMHRR Listed:**

(a) Report of Medical History with Chronological Record of Medical Care, 25 June 2021, reflects the applicant reported receiving Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Clinical Care (SUDCC) treatment; having excessive worry from four combat deployments; being treated for trauma and addiction; being prescribed various medications used to treat sleep issues, anxiety or mood, pain or anxiety; and experiencing dizziness, headaches, and falling or hitting their head. The physician assistant noted medical issues were reviewed and the applicant was recently discharged from Cedar Springs.

(b) Report of Mental Status Evaluation (MSE), 23 July 2021, indicates the applicant was cleared for an administrative separation. There were no behavioral health concerns which would have caused the applicant to fall below retention standards. The applicant was diagnosed with other specified anxiety disorder.

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: Application for the Review of Discharge; 13 Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports; various Recommendations for Award, narratives, and awards; numerous training certificates; two Service School Academic Reports (exceeded course standards); Distinguished Honor Graduate Diploma; two promotion orders, two trial defense services memorandums; medical documents; two Honorable Discharge Certificates; two Oaths of Reenlistment; article, “Big Save: Family credits Army staff sergeant with fire rescue,” and 25 character references.

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.
- 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 3-7c states an under other-than-honorable-conditions discharge is an administrative separation from the Service under conditions other than honorable and it may be issued for misconduct, fraudulent entry, security reasons, or in lieu of trial by court martial based on certain circumstances or patterns of behavior or acts or omissions that constitute a significant departure from the conduct expected of Soldiers in the Army.

(d) 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, 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 of their under other than honorable conditions character of service 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 available evidence shows the applicant's immediate commander initiated separation because between 12 and 16 March 2021, the applicant wrongfully used D-methamphetamine, and between 17 and 21 May 2021, wrongfully used heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, and methamphetamines. The immediate and intermediate commanders recommended separation with a general (under honorable conditions) character of service. The applicant submitted a conditional waiver contingent upon receiving an honorable discharge; however, the separation authority denied the conditional waiver and referred the case to an administrative

separation board. The separation board convened and recommended separation with an other than honorable discharge, and the separation authority approved the recommendation.

c. The applicant contends:

(1) The applicant suffered from PTSD and TBI. The applicant provided medical documents reflecting a history of TBI, alcohol dependence, anxiety, cognitive deficit in attention, heroin dependence, methamphetamine dependence, opioid abuse, and obstructive sleep apnea. The applicant provided third-party letters from fellow Soldiers, which suggest the applicant may have had mental health issues after returning from combat to support the applicant's contention. The applicant's AMHRR shows the applicant underwent a mental status evaluation (MSE) on 23 July 2021, which indicates the applicant had no behavioral health concerns which would have caused the applicant to fall below retention standards. The applicant was diagnosed with other specified anxiety disorder. The separation authority considered the MSE.

(2) The applicant was not informed they could receive an other than honorable discharge once the applicant requested an administrative separation board. The applicant's AMHRR reflects the applicant was notified the immediate commander was initiating separation and recommending a general (under honorable conditions) character of service. The intermediate and the separation authority were not bound by the immediate commander's recommendation as to the character of service. The separation authority may direct the applicant service be characterized as honorable, general (under honorable conditions), under other than honorable conditions, or entry-level, if in an entry level status. However, the separation authority may not direct the issuance of a type of discharge less favorable than that recommended by the board should the applicant request a hearing before an administrative board. The applicant acknowledged the notification.

(3) There were administrative separation board members who were biased and the documents the applicant submitted to the CG were not presented at the proceedings. The Summary of Proceedings is void of any objections made by the applicant or the defense counsel during the proceedings. The AMHRR does not indicate or provide evidence of arbitrary or capricious actions by the command

(4) The applicant provided good service, including a four combat tours. The applicant provided several third party statements to support the contention. The Board evaluated the applicant's service accomplishments and overall quality of service in accordance with DODI 1332.28.

(5) The Army should change the narrative reason for the discharge. Under Chapter 14, paragraph 14-12c (2), of AR 635-200, for abuse of illegal drugs, 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.

(6) An upgrade would provide access to educational benefits through the GI Bill. Eligibility for veterans' benefits, including Post-9/11 or Montgomery GI Bill educational

assistance, does not fall under the purview of the Army Discharge Review Board. The applicant should contact a local Department of Veterans Affairs office for further assistance.

9. BOARD DISCUSSION AND DETERMINATION:

a. As directed by the 2017 memo signed by A.M. Kurta, the board considered the following factors:

(1) Did the applicant have a condition or experience that may excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor, a voting member, reviewed the applicant's DOD and VA health records, applicant's statement, and/or civilian provider documentation and found that the applicant has the following potentially mitigating diagnoses/experiences: Adjustment Disorder, PTSD, TBI, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS.

(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, TBI, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS 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 that mitigate the basis of separation. The applicant was diagnosed in service with an Adjustment Disorder, TBI, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS and is 100% service connected by the VA for PTSD. Given the nexus between PTSD, TBI, Anxiety Disorder NOS, Depressive Disorder NOS and using substances for self-medication, the wrongful use of heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, and methamphetamines that led to the separation is mitigated.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **Yes.** After applying liberal consideration to the evidence, including the Board Medical Advisor's opine, the Board determined that the applicant's extensive combat service, long and distinguished record of achievement, and documented behavioral health conditions including PTSD, TBI, Adjustment Disorder, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS outweighed the wrongful use of heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, methamphetamines, and D-methamphetamine.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contention(s):

(1) The applicant contends suffering from PTSD and TBI. The Board considered this contention and noted that the applicant's documented behavioral health conditions were fully reviewed under liberal consideration and found to have mitigated the misconduct. These conditions were incorporated into the Board's final determination.

(2) The applicant contends they were not informed they could receive another than honorable discharge once the applicant requested an administrative separation board. The Board considered this contention and found that the applicant acknowledged in writing the potential consequences of the separation process, including the possibility of another than honorable characterization. The Board determined the notification requirements were met.

(3) The applicant contends there were administrative separation board members who were biased and the documents the applicant submitted to the CG were not presented at the proceedings. The Board considered this contention and found no evidence in the record

demonstrating improper influence, procedural error, or the exclusion of required documents that would have materially affected the outcome. The proceedings were determined to have been conducted in accordance with regulatory standards.

(4) The applicant contends good service, including a four combat tours. The Board considered this contention and gave substantial weight to the applicant's lengthy and honorable service, including multiple combat deployments. This service was a significant factor in the Board's decision to apply liberal consideration and assess the overall equity of the discharge.

(5) The applicant contends an upgrade would provide access to educational benefits through the GI Bill. The Board determined that eligibility for Veteran's benefits, to include educational benefits under the Post-9/11 or Montgomery GI Bill, healthcare, or VA loans, do not fall within the purview of the Army Discharge Review Board. Accordingly, the applicant should contact a local office of the Department of Veterans Affairs for further assistance.

d. The Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's extensive combat service, distinguished record of achievement, and the mitigating impact of diagnosed behavioral health conditions including PTSD, TBI, Adjustment Disorder, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS, which outweighed the wrongful use of heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, methamphetamines, and D methamphetamine that formed the basis for separation. 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 upgrade the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable because, after applying liberal consideration to all the evidence before it, the applicant's extensive combat service, long and distinguished record of achievement, and documented behavioral health conditions including PTSD, TBI, Adjustment Disorder, Anxiety Disorder NOS, and Depressive Disorder NOS mitigated the wrongful use of heroin, codeine, hydromorphone, morphine, methamphetamines, and D-methamphetamine.

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

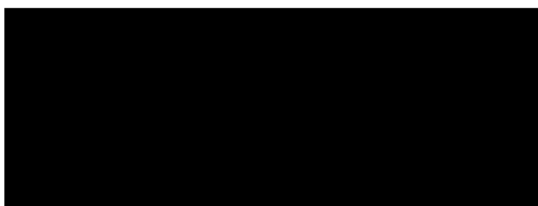
(4) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

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, paragraph 14- 12a

Authenticating Official:

2/6/2026



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