

**1. Applicant's Name:** [REDACTED]

a. **Application Date:** 14 September 2022

b. **Date Received:** 19 September 2022

c. **Counsel:** None

**2. REQUEST, ISSUES, BOARD TYPE, AND DECISION:**

a. **Applicant's Requests and Issues:** The current characterization of service for the period under review is general (under honorable conditions). The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable or a medical discharge.

b. The applicant seeks relief contending, in effect, the applicant's discharge characterization does not reflect the applicant's mental health disability. The applicant under honorable conditions discharge was due to missing drill weekends in the Reserves, however the applicant did not attend because of severe back injury and depression, which is documented in the applicant's personnel records from that time and is service connected through the VA. During the applicant's time in the service after the applicant's initial injury, the applicant made several attempts to address medical concerns which the applicant firmly believes were the sole contributing factors to the circumstances leading to the applicant's conduct at the time and general discharge. Unfortunately, despite following the prescribed protocols and filing the necessary paperwork, the applicant's unit negligently misplaced or lost the applicant's documents, and the applicant's efforts to secure a medical discharge went unheeded.

c. **Board Type and Decision:** In a records review conducted on 7 February 2025, and by a 5-0 vote, the board determined the discharge was inequitable based on full medical mitigation (Major Depressive DO), length of service and prior honorable discharge, which mitigate the misconduct - AWOL. Accordingly, 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 135-178, paragraph 11-1a, and the narrative reason for separation to Misconduct (Minor Disciplinary Infractions). There is no SPD code or RE-Code provided because the applicant was in the U.S. Army Reserves.

*Please see Section 9 of this document for more detail regarding the Board's decision.*

*(Board member names available upon request)*

**3. DISCHARGE DETAILS:**

a. **Reason / Authority / Codes / Characterization:** Unsatisfactory Participation / AR 135-178, Chapter 13 / NA / NA / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. **Date of Discharge:** 24 March 2014

c. **Separation Facts:**

(1) **Date of Notification of Intent to Separate:** NIF

(2) **Basis for Separation:** The applicant was informed of the following reasons: As of 1 May 2012, the applicant has received nine or more unexcused absences from unit training assemblies (UTA). The applicant has failed to keep the unit informed of the applicant's current

contact information. This is the second time during the applicant's first term as an Army Reserve member that the applicant has been declared an unsatisfactory participant.

**(3) Recommended Characterization:** Under Other Than Honorable Conditions

**(4) Legal Consultation Date:** NIF

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

**(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization:** NIF

**4. SERVICE DETAILS:**

**a. Date / Period of Enlistment:** 14 April 2008 / 8 years

**b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 18 / High School Graduate / NIF

**c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-3 / 21C10, Bridge Crewmember / 5 years, 11 months, and 10 days

**d. Prior Service / Characterizations:** USAR (IADT), 8 May 2008 - 22 August 2008 / HD

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

**f. Awards and Decorations:** NDSM, ASR

**g. Performance Ratings:** NA

**h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:**

**(1)** The Certificate and Acknowledgment USAR Service Requirements and Methods of Fulfillment, 15 April 2008, the applicant acknowledged understating that as a member of the USAR, the applicant must participate satisfactory during the entire period of the applicant's enlistment, reenlistment, immediate reenlistment, transfer, assignment, or reassignment in accordance with the rules and regulations now in effect, or which may hereafter be placed in effect, by the proper authority. As a member of a Selected Reserve Troop Program Unit (TPU) the applicant's satisfactory participation is determined by the following -

**(a)** The applicant would serve as a member of a TPU for the entire period specified in the terms of the applicant's service agreement unless otherwise reassigned or separated by proper authority.

**(b)** The applicant would be required to attend all scheduled unit training assemblies (at least 48 per year) unless they are excused by proper authority. If the applicant accrued nine or more unexcused absences during a continuous 365-day period, the applicant would be declared an unsatisfactory participant.

**(c)** The applicant must keep their commander advised of their current mailing address, where the applicant would receive official correspondence, and the applicant must reply to and comply with all official orders and correspondence that the applicant may receive.

(2) A DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) reflects on 22 August 2008; the applicant was honorably released from active duty training after completing their initial active duty training and being award a military occupational specialty.

(3) Two Developmental Counseling Forms shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 5 and 6 March 2011. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

(4) Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 7 March 2011, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or multiple unit training assembly (MUTA) for the following period(s): 5 and 6 March 2011. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 13 unexcused absences within one-year period.

(5) Developmental Counseling Form, 28 April 2011, states the applicant had nine or more unexcused absences, however, was determined to be a recovered Soldier after returning to a positive drill status. The applicant signed this counseling.

(6) The applicant provided:

(a) P\_W. B\_ Sworn Statement, 1 May 2011, states during February 2011 battle assembly, the applicant was experienced back spasms and pain in the leg. On 13 February 2011, the medic said the applicant most likely had a slight muscle pull in the lower back and prescribed ibuprofen.

(b) D\_R. V\_ Sworn Statement, 1 May 2011, states on 12 February 2011, the applicant was experiencing lower back pain and could not get up. On 13 February 2011, the applicant recovered enough to rise from the bunk but not enough to continue training.

(c) Statement of Medical Examination and Duty, 29 June 2011, reflects the applicant had an accident in February 2011 at Fort Lewis, WA. The applicant was seen at Rebound Neurosurgery for back and right leg pain.

(d) Statement of Medical Examination and Duty, 18 January 2013, reflects the applicant was seen at Rebound Neurosurgery due to the applicant's back would hurt during military exercises.

(7) Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 22 May 2012, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 20 May 2012. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 2 unexcused absences within one-year period.

(8) Developmental Counseling Form, 22 July 2012, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 22 July 2012. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

(9) Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 23 July 2012, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 22 July 2012. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 4 unexcused absences within one-year period.

(10) Developmental Counseling Form, 8 September 2012, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 8 September 2012. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

(11) Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 10 September 2012, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 8 and 9

September 2012. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 8 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(12)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 15 October 2012, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 13 and 14 October 2012. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 12 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(13)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 3 December 2012, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 1 December 2012. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 14 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(14)** On 5 January 2013, the company commander initiated action to separate the applicant from the USAR under AR 135-178, chapter 13, paragraph 13-1 for unsatisfactory participation because the applicant accrued nine or more unexcused absences from UTA during a one year period two times and failed to keep contact information current.

**(15)** Developmental Counseling Form, 6 January 2012, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 6 January 2012. The applicant was being recommended for separation from the Army Reserve for unsatisfactory participation under Army Regulation 135-178 (Enlisted Administrative Separations), chapter 13. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(16)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 7 January 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 5 and 6 January 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 18 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(17)** Developmental Counseling Form, 3 February 2013, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 3 February 2013. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(18)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 4 February 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 2 and 3 February 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 22 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(19)** Developmental Counseling Form, 5 May 2013, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 4 and 5 May 2013. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(20)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 6 May 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 4 and 5 May 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 30 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(21)** Developmental Counseling Form, 16 June 2013, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 15 and 16 June 2013. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(22)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 17 June 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 15 and 16 June 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 32 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(23)** Developmental Counseling Form, 18 August 2013, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 16 through 18 August 2013. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(24)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 19 August 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 17 and 18 August 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 34 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(25)** Developmental Counseling Form, 22 September 2013, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 21 and 22 September 2013. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(26)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 25 September 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 21 and 22 September 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 34 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(27)** Developmental Counseling Form, 17 November 2013, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 16 and 17 November 2013. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(28)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 20 November 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 16 and 17 November 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 34 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(29)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 16 December 2013, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 14 and 15 December 2013. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 36 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(30)** Developmental Counseling Form, 12 January 2014, shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 11 and 12 January 2014. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(31)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 13 January 2014, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 11 and 12 January 2014. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 36 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(32)** An Affidavit of Service by Mail, reflects memorandum, 5 January 2013, subject: Separation under AR 135-178, Chapter 13, Unsatisfactory Participation, was mailed to the applicant via certified mail. On 17 January 2013, delivery was attempted to the address or applicant, and was returned as undelivered.

**(33)** Two Developmental Counseling Forms shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 15 and 16 February 2014. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(34)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 18 February 2014, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 15 and 16 February 2014. Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 36 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(35)** Two Developmental Counseling Forms shows the applicant failed to attend UTA on 8 and 9 March 2014. The applicant was unavailable for signature.

**(36)** Letter of Instruction, Unexcused Absence, 11 March 2014, reflects the applicant was absent from the scheduled UTA or MUTA for the following period(s): 8 and 9 March 2014.

Unless the absences indicated were excused, the applicant would have accrued 36 unexcused absences within one-year period.

**(37)** The applicant provided Orders 14-083-00477, 24 March 2014, shows the applicant was discharged from the USAR effective 24 March 2014 with a general (under honorable conditions) characterization of service.

**i. Lost Time / Mode of Return:** NIF

**j. Behavioral Health Condition(s):**

**(1) Applicant provided:**

**(a)** The Vancouver Clinic, 6 February 2013, reflects a diagnosis for anxiety disorder due to back pain.

**(b)** Legacy Health, Portland, OR, 10 August 2013, reflects the applicant was suicidal and had a previous diagnosis of depression.

**(c)** Kaiser Permanente Regional Process Center Medical document, 8 May 2015, reflects a diagnosis for major depressive disorder, recurrent episode, anxiety disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

**(d)** Western Psychological Counseling Services, P.C., 26 July, 4 August, and 5 September 2018, reflects a diagnosis for major depressive disorder, recurrent severe with psychotic symptoms.

**(e)** Kaiser Permanente Regional Process Center Medical document, 31 December 2018, reflects a diagnosis for major depressive disorder, recurrent episode, mild.

**(f)** Adventist Health Primary Care - Portland Letter, 24 November 2020, reflects a written statement in support of the applicant's connection between the applicant's physical injury that was sustained while on military duty and the applicant's current diagnosis of major depressive disorder with suicidal ideation. The applicant has been in Dr. G\_\_ R\_\_'s care since 12 January 2020. It is in Dr. R\_\_'s professional opinion that it is highly likely that the applicant's mental condition is a direct result of the applicant's injury caused while in military service.

**(g)** Department of Veterans Affairs Summary of Benefits Letter, 14 March 2024, reflects the applicant was rated 100 percent disabled for major depressive disorder and radiculopathy, left lower extremity. On 5 November 2023, the applicant was approved to be totally and permanently disabled due solely to service connected disabilities.

**(2) AMHRR Listed:** None

**5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:** DD Form 149; medical records; two sworn statements; two Statement of Medical Examination and Duty; separations orders; VA Mental Health Diagnostic Study Note; VA Rating Decision; two VA Summary of Benefits; and VA 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.** Multiple Department of Defense Policy Guidance Memoranda published between 2014 and 2018. The documents are commonly referred to by the signatory authorities' last names (2014 Secretary of Defense Guidance [Hagel memo], 2016 Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [Carson memo], 2017 Official Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [Kurta memo], and 2018 Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [Wilkie memo].

**(1)** Individually and collectively, these documents provide further clarification to the Military Discharge Review Boards and Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records when considering requests by Veterans for modification of their discharge due to mental health conditions, including PTSD; TBI; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Liberal consideration will be given to Veterans petitioning for discharge relief when the application for relief is based in whole or in part on matters relating to mental health conditions, including PTSD; TBI; sexual assault; or sexual harassment. Special consideration will be given to VA determinations that document a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment potentially contributed to the circumstances resulting in a less than honorable discharge characterization. Special consideration will also be given in cases where a civilian provider confers diagnoses of a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment if the case records contain narratives supporting symptomatology at the time of service or when any other evidence which may reasonably indicate that a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment existed at the time of discharge might have mitigated the misconduct that caused a discharge of lesser characterization.

**(2)** Conditions documented in the service record that can reasonably be determined to have existed at the time of discharge will be considered to have existed at the time of discharge. In cases in which a mental health condition, including PTSD; TBI; or sexual assault/harassment may be reasonably determined to have existed at the time of discharge, those conditions will be considered potential mitigating factors in the misconduct that caused the characterization of service in question. All Boards will exercise caution in weighing evidence of mitigation in cases in which serious misconduct precipitated a discharge with a less than Honorable characterization of service. Potentially mitigating evidence of the existence of undiagnosed combat related PTSD, PTSD-related conditions due to TBI or sexual assault/harassment as causative factors in the misconduct resulting in discharge will be carefully weighed against the severity of the misconduct. PTSD is not a likely cause of premeditated misconduct. Caution shall be exercised in weighing evidence of mitigation in all cases of misconduct by carefully considering the likely causal relationship of symptoms to the misconduct.

**c.** 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.

**d.** Army Regulation 135-91 states a member is an unsatisfactory participant when nine or more unexcused absences from scheduled drills accrue during a one-year period and attempts to have the Soldier respond or comply with orders or correspondence have resulted in - the Soldier's refusal to comply with orders or correspondence; or a notice sent by certified mail was refused, unclaimed, or otherwise undeliverable; or verification the Soldier has failed to notify the command of a change of address and reasonable attempts to contact the Soldier have failed. Discharge action may be taken when the Soldier cannot be located or is absent in the hands of civil authorities in accordance with the provisions of AR 135-91, paragraph 2-18, and Chapter 3, section IV, of AR 135-178.

**e.** Army Regulation 135-178 (Enlisted Administrative Separations) prescribes the policies, standards, and procedures to ensure the readiness and competency of the U.S. Army while providing for the orderly administrative separation of Army National Guard of the United States (ARNGUS) and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) enlisted Soldiers for a variety of reasons. Readiness is promoted by maintaining high standards of conduct and performance.

**(1)** An honorable characterization 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.

**(2)** A general discharge is if a Soldier's service has been honest and faithful, it is appropriate to characterize that service as under honorable conditions. Characterization of service as general (under honorable conditions) is warranted when significant negative aspects of the Soldier's conduct or performance of duty outweigh positive aspects of the Soldier's military record.

**(3)** An under other than honorable conditions discharge, service may, but is not required to be characterized as under other than honorable conditions only when discharge is for misconduct, fraudulent entry, homosexual conduct, unsatisfactory participation, or security reasons. When a Soldier is to be discharged under other than honorable conditions, the separation authority will direct an immediate reduction to private/E-1.

**(4)** Chapter 12 (previously Chapter 13) provides in pertinent part, that individuals can be separated for being an unsatisfactory participant. Soldier is subject to discharge for unsatisfactory participation when it is determined that the Soldier is unqualified for further military service because: The Soldier is an unsatisfactory participant as prescribed by AR 135-91, chapter 4; Attempts to have the Soldier respond or comply with orders or correspondence.

**(5)** Paragraph 12-3 prescribes the service of Soldiers separated under this chapter will be characterized as honorable or under honorable conditions as determined under chapter 2, section III, unless an uncharacterized description of service is warranted under paragraph 2-11.

**(6)** Chapter 13 (previously Chapter 14) 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 memorandums. Secretarial separation authority is normally exercised on a case-by-case basis.

**8. SUMMARY OF FACT(S):** 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 or a medical discharge. The applicant's AMHRR, the issues, and documents submitted with the application were carefully reviewed.

**b.** A review of the available evidence provided by the applicant and the AMHRR shows the applicant was declared an unsatisfactory participant and was involuntary separated from the USAR.

**c.** A review of the available medical evidence provided by the applicant shows the applicant had diagnoses of anxiety disorder due to back pain (2013), depression (2013), major depressive disorder, recurrent episode (2015), anxiety disorder (2015), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (2015), major depressive disorder, recurrent severe with psychotic symptoms (2018), major depressive disorder, and recurrent episode, mid (2018). The Department of Veterans Affairs rated the applicant 100 percent disabled for major depressive disorder and radiculopathy, left lower extremity.

**d.** A request for a medical discharge does not fall within this board's purview. The applicant may apply to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR), using the enclosed DD Form 149 regarding this matter. A DD Form 149 may also be obtained from a Veterans' Service Organization.

**e.** Published Department of Defense guidance indicates that the guidance is not intended to interfere or impede on the Board's statutory independence. The Board will determine the relative weight of the action that led to the discharge and whether it supports relief or not. In reaching its determination, the Board shall consider the applicant's petition, available records and/or submitted documents in support of the petition.

## **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: Major Depressive DO (MDD-100%SC).

**(2)** Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor found that VA service connection establishes the nexus between the applicant's diagnoses of MDD and his military service.

**(3)** Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **Yes.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that the applicant has a mitigating BH condition, Major Depressive Disorder. As there is an association between MDD, avoidant behaviors and impaired concentration, there is a nexus between his diagnosis of MDD, his multiple unexcused absences from unit training and his failure to keep his unit informed of his current address.

**(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 – AWOL.

**b.** Response to Contention: The applicant contends, in effect, the applicant's discharge characterization does not reflect the applicant's mental health disability. The applicant's under honorable conditions discharge was due to missing drill weekends in the Reserves, however the applicant did not attend because of severe back injury and depression. During the applicant's time in the service after the applicant's initial injury, the applicant made several attempts to address medical concerns which the applicant firmly believes were the sole contributing factors to the circumstances leading to the applicant's conduct at the time and general discharge. Unfortunately, despite following the prescribed protocols and filing the necessary paperwork, the applicant's unit negligently misplaced or lost the applicant's documents, and the applicant's efforts to secure a medical discharge went unheeded. The board determined that this contention was valid and voted to upgrade the discharge based on the applicant's medical diagnosis (MDD), length and quality of service, to include combat service, which mitigate the misconduct – AWOL.

**c.** The board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's MDD mitigating the applicant's AWOL. 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 135-178, paragraph 11-1a, and changed the narrative reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Disciplinary Infractions). There is no SPD and RE code as the applicant was a member of the U.S. Army Reserves.

**d.** Rationale for Decision:

**(1)** The board voted to change the applicant's characterization of service to honorable because the applicant's medical diagnosis (MDD) mitigates the applicant's misconduct - AWOL. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

**(2)** The board voted to change the reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Disciplinary Infractions) under the same rationale, thus the reason for discharge is no longer appropriate. There is no SPD code as the applicant was a member of the U.S. Army Reserves.

**(3)** As there were no RE Codes listed on the applicant's discharge paperwork, due to being in the Army Reserves, no upgrade actions are required for this item.

# ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE

AR20220011154

## 10. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:

- a. Issue a New Separation Order: Yes
- b. Change Characterization to: Honorable
- c. Change Authority to: AR 135-178, Para 11-1a

## Authenticating Official:

3/3/2025



### 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

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