

1. Applicant's Name: [REDACTED]**a. Application Date:** 3 January 2023**b. Date Received:** 9 January 2023**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 under other than honorable conditions. The applicant requests an upgrade to honorable, and a narrative reason change.

The applicant states in effect, they served honorably for nineteen months in Afghanistan and for five years in the regular Army before they received an Article 15 after their second deployment.

b. Board Type and Decision: In a records review conducted on 29 April 2025, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board determined the discharge is inequitable based on the applicant's length and quality of service, to include combat service and post-service accomplishments. Therefore, the Board voted to grant relief in the form of an upgrade of the characterization of service to Honorable and changed to 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 reenry code is proper and equitable and voted not to change it.

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: Pattern of Misconduct / AR 635-200 / JKA / RE-3 / Under Other Than Honorable Conditions.

b. Date of Discharge: 16 December 2013**c. Separation Facts:**

(1) Date of Notification of Intent to Separate: 30 September 2013

(2) Basis for Separation: The applicant was informed of the following reasons:

- On 11 June 2013 they were caught in the ASAP building smoking spice.
- On 29 June 2013 and on 10 August 2013 they wrongfully possessed spice for the purpose of inhaling it.
- On 10 August 2013 they were derelict in the performance of their duties; they fell asleep while assigned extra duty.
- On 20 August 2013 they tested positive on a urinalysis for cocaine.

(3) Recommended Characterization: Other Than Honorable

(4) Legal Consultation Date: Waived, 30 Septemeber 2013

(5) Administrative Separation Board: Waived, 17 September 2013

(6) Separation Decision Date / Characterization: 20 November 2013 / UOTHC

4. SERVICE DETAILS:

a. Date / Period of Enlistment: 30 October 2012 / 4 years.

b. Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score: 22 / NIF / 99

c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service: E-5 / 13B1P Cannon Crewmember / 5 years, 4 months, 17 days.

d. Prior Service / Characterizations: RA; 20080730 – 20121030 / Concurrent Service

e. Overseas Service / Combat Service: None / Afghanistan; 20090901 – 20100901, Afghanistan; 20120228 – 20120831

f. Awards and Decorations: ACM-CS, ARCOM-2, AAM-2, AGCM, NDSM, GWTSM, ASR, OSR, NATO MDL,

g. Performance Ratings: 20120901 – 20130627; Marginal

h. Disciplinary Action(s) / Evidentiary Record:

(1) An Enlistment/ Reenlistment Document indicates that the applicant reenlisted in the Army at the pay grade of E-5 with an active duty obligation of 4 years on 30 October 2012. It was their first reenlistment.

(2) On 17 Septemeber 2013 the applicant waived consideration of their case by an administrative separation board.

(3) On 30 Septemeber 2013 the applicant's immediate commander notified them of their intent to separate them for a Pattern of Misconduct. The commander recommended an other than honorable conditions characterization of service. The applicant acknowledged the commander's notification and basis for separation and declined the opportunity to consult with counsel.

(4) On 20 November 2013 the Staff Judge Advocate recommended approval of the applicant's unconditional waiver with a Under Other Than Honorable Conditions characterization of service.

(5) On 20 November 2013 the appropriate authority approved the applicant's unconditional waiver of the administrative separation board and directed an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions characterization of service with a reduction to the lowest enlisted pay grade.

(6) A Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214) indicates that the applicant was discharged accordingly on 16 December 2013. Block 18 (Remarks) of the

document provides administrative error "Member has not completed first full term of service." The applicant enlisted on 30 July 2008, and they reenlisted for the first time (concurrent service) on 30 October 2012.

i. Lost Time / Mode of Return: None.

j. Behavioral Health Condition(s):

(1) Applicant provided:

(2) AMHRR Listed: Substance abuse.

5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE: A DD Form 149 (Correction of Military Records) application, and a copy of their DD Form 214.

6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: None submitted in support of their 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 Department of Veterans Affairs (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), dated 25 September 2019, 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 635-200 provides the basic authority for the separation of enlisted personnel provides the authorized types of characterization of service or description of separation.

(1) 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.

(2) 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.

(3) 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.

(4) 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 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. A soldier subject to this

discharge under this regulation will be considered and processed for discharge even though he/she has filed an appeal or has stated his/her intention to do so. Paragraph 14-12c, states a Soldier is subject to action per this section for commission of a serious military or civilian offense, if the specific circumstances of the offense warrant separation and a punitive discharge is, or would be, authorized for the same or a closely related offense under the Manual for Courts-Martial.

(5) 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.

e. Army Regulation 635-5-1 (Separation Program Designator (SPD) Codes) provides the specific authorities (regulatory or directive), reasons for separating Soldiers from active duty, and the SPD codes to be entered on the DD Form 214. It identifies the SPD code of "JKA" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14, paragraph 12b, pattern of misconduct.

f. Army Regulation 600-85 (Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)) governs the program and identifies Army policy on alcohol and other drug abuse, and responsibilities. The ASAP is a command program that emphasizes readiness and personal responsibility. It provides the ultimate decision regarding separation or retention of abusers is the responsibility of the Soldier's chain of command. Abuse of alcohol or the use of illicit drugs by military personnel is inconsistent with Army values and the standards of performance, discipline, and readiness necessary to accomplish the Army's missions. Individuals who do not self-refer for treatment and are subsequently identified as positive for controlled substances for which they do not have a valid prescription may be considered in violation of the UCMJ for drug misuse/abuse.

g. 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.

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. The applicant's DD Form 214 indicates that they received an other than honorable conditions characterization of service (UOTHC) which is normally considered appropriate for a soldier discharged under Chapter 14 for misconduct.

b. Based on the available evidence the applicant enlisted in the army at the age of 18, they deployed to Afghanistan twice and reenlisted for the first time on 30 October 2012. Eight months after the applicant reenlisted, they were caught smoking spice while they were in the ASAP building. The applicant's misconduct continued when they wrongfully possessed spice on two additional occasions. Additionally, the applicant tested positive for cocaine on 20 August 2013.

c. The applicant waived consideration of their case by an administrative separation board, the appropriate authority approved their unconditional waiver and directed and UOTHC discharged. The applicant's DD Form 214 indicates that they were discharged under the provisions of AR 635-200, CH 14-12b, by reason of pattern of misconduct with an other than honorable conditions characterization of service.

d. Chapter 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for members being separated for misconduct. Specific categories include minor disciplinary infractions, a pattern of misconduct, commission of a serious offense and convictions by civil authorities. Action will be taken to separate a member for misconduct when it is clearly established that rehabilitation is impracticable or is unlikely to succeed. 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.

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: Anxiety Disorder NOS and, by applicant assertion alone, PTSD.

(2) Did the condition exist, or experience occur during military service? **Yes.** Anxiety Disorder NOS and, by applicant assertion alone, PTSD.

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge? **No.** The Board's Medical Advisor applied liberal consideration and opined that the applicant does not hold a known PTSD diagnosis, and the in-service diagnosis is not mitigating as there is a lack of clarity on whether the Anxiety Disorder NOS pre-existed the misconduct.

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **No** Based on liberally considering all the evidence before the Board, the ADRB determined that the condition did not outweigh the basis of separation because the condition may or may not have existed prior to the offenses.

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None.

c. Response to Contention(s):

(1) Applicant contends good service for 5 years should have earned an Honorable discharge. The Board determined that this contention was valid and voted to upgrade the characterization of service due to the applicant's 5years 4months and quality of service, including service in a combat zone, outweighed the minor misconduct found in the file.

d. The Board determined: There was sufficient evidence of in-service mitigating factors (Length, Combat, Quality) and concurred that these factors along with the length of time since discharge does mitigate the applicant's basis for separation. Based on a preponderance of evidence, the Board determined that the character of service the applicant received upon separation was inequitable and warranted an upgrade.

e. Rationale for Decision:

(1) The Board voted to change the applicant's characterization of service to Honorable because the applicant's Length, Combat, and Quality outweighed the applicant's misconduct. Thus, the prior characterization is no longer appropriate.

(2) The Board voted to change the reason for discharge to Misconduct (Minor Infractions) under the same pretexts, thus the reason for discharge is no longer appropriate. The SPD code associated with the new reason for discharge is JKN.

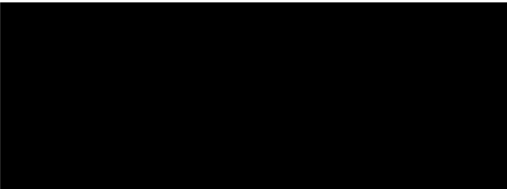
(3) The RE code will not change, as the current code is consistent with the procedural and substantive requirements of the regulation.

ARMY DISCHARGE REVIEW BOARD CASE REPORT AND DIRECTIVE**AR20230004143****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:

7/22/2025

**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