

**1. Applicant's Name:**

- a. **Application Date:** 29 June 2023
- b. **Date Received:** 3 July 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 General (Under Honorable Conditions). The applicant requests an upgrade to Honorable, a narrative reason change, and changes to both their separation and reentry codes.

b. The applicant seeks relief contending, they made a mistake and desire to reenter the Armed Forces to better provide for their family, as they were young and irresponsible back then and are no longer the unmotivated, immature individual they once were.

c. **Board Type and Decision:** In a telephonic personal appearance hearing conducted on 6 May 2024, and by a 5-0 vote, the Board denied the request upon finding the separation was both proper and equitable.

*Please see Section 10 of this document for more detail regarding the Board's decision.*

**3. DISCHARGE DETAILS:**

a. **Reason / Authority / Codes / Characterization:** Misconduct (Drug Abuse) / AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c(2) / JKK / RE-3 / General (Under Honorable Conditions)

b. **Date of Discharge:** 3 December 2020

**c. Separation Facts:**

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

(2) **Basis for Separation:** NIF

(3) **Recommended Characterization:** NIF

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

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

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

**4. SERVICE DETAILS:**

a. **Date / Period of Enlistment:** 18 June 2018 / 4 years

b. **Age at Enlistment / Education / GT Score:** 17 / High School Diploma / 113

**c. Highest Grade Achieved / MOS / Total Service:** E-4 / 25U10 Signal Operations Support Specialist / 2 years, 5 months, 16 days

**d. Prior Service / Characterizations:** None

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

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

**g. Performance Ratings:** NA

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

(1) On 18 June 2018, the applicant enlisted in the Regular Army at 17 years of age, for 4 years as a PVT.

(2) The Enlisted Record Brief provides they promoted up to SPC (18 June 2020) and on 23 September 2020, was demoted to PVT. On 5 November 2020, the applicant was flagged, Suspend Favorable Personnel Actions (FLAG), for field-initiated involuntary separation (BA).

(3) The AMHRR is void of the majority of the separation proceedings; however, on 20 November 2020, the separation approval authority approved the discharge, with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization of service.

(4) On 24 November 2020, their separation orders were issued. A DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) reflects the applicant was discharged accordingly on 3 December 2020, with 3 years, 7 months, and 2 days of total service, noting the following:

- Authority: AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c (2)
- Narrative: Misconduct (Drug Abuse)
- SPD Code: JKK
- Reentry Code: RE-3
- Service Characterization: General (Under Honorable Conditions)
- Total NET Active Service this Period: 2 years, 5 months, 16 days
- Remarks: Delayed Entry Program: 3 May 2017 – 17 June 2018; they have not completed their first full term of service.
- Lost Time: None
- Signature: Electronically signed.

**i. Lost Time / Mode of Return:** None

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

(1) **Applicant provided:** None

(2) **AMHRR Listed:** None

**5. APPLICANT-PROVIDED EVIDENCE:** DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record); DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty); MEPS Enlistee Record

**6. POST SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** None submitted with this 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.

**(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 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 "JKK" as the appropriate code to assign enlisted Soldiers who are discharged under the provisions of Army Regulation 635-200, Chapter 14-12c (2), Misconduct (Drug Abuse).

**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:

**(1)** 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.

**(2)** 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.

**(3)** 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 600-85 (Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)), provided a comprehensive alcohol and drug abuse prevention and control policies, procedures, and responsibilities for Soldiers for ASAP services. The ASAP is a command program that emphasizes readiness and personal responsibility. 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 mission.

**(1)** Unit commanders must intervene early and refer all Soldiers suspected or identified as alcohol and/or drug abusers to the ASAP. The unit commander should recommend enrollment based on the Soldier's potential for continued military service in terms of professional skills, behavior, and potential for advancement.

**(2)** ASAP participation is mandatory for all Soldiers who are command referred. Failure to attend a mandatory counseling session may constitute a violation of Article 86 (Absence Without Leave) of the UCMJ.

(3) Alcohol and/or other drug abusers, and in some cases dependent alcohol users, may be enrolled in the ASAP when such enrollment is clinically recommended. Soldiers who fail to participate adequately in, or to respond successfully to, rehabilitation will be processed for administrative separation and not be provided another opportunity for rehabilitation except under the most extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the Clinical Director in consultation with the unit commander.

(4) All Soldiers who are identified as drug abusers, without exception, will be referred to the ASAP counseling center for screening; be considered for disciplinary action under the UCMJ, as appropriate; and be processed for administrative separation in accordance with Army Regulation 635-200.

**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, a narrative reason change, and changes to both their separation and reentry codes. A review of the records provides there was administrative irregularity in the proper retention of official military records, specifically, the referral to ASAP [a two-part mandatory clinical assessment, required within 4 days of the first positive urinalysis], a charge sheet, investigation report(s), and most of the separation package.

b. The available evidence provides the applicant enlisted in the Regular Army at the age of 17, as a PVT, promoted to SPC, and served for 2 years, 3 months, and 5 days prior to having received nonjudicial punishment and as a result, was demoted to PVT. They were flagged and separated under the provisions of AR 635-200, Chapter 14-12c (2), Misconduct (Drug Abuse), with a General (Under Honorable Conditions) characterization of service.

(1) The record provides no evidence of the required separation mental status and medical examinations.

(2) The applicant served 2 years, 5 months, and 16 days of their 4 year contractual obligation.

c. Chapter 14 establishes policy and prescribes procedures for separation members 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.

d. 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. DOCUMENTS / TESTIMONY PRESENTED DURING PERSONAL APPEARANCE:** In addition to the evidence in the record, the Board carefully considered the additional document(s) and testimony presented by the applicant at the personal appearance hearing.

- a. **The applicant submitted the following additional document(s):**
- b. **The applicant presented the following additional contention(s):**
- c. **Counsel / Witness(es) / Observer(s):**

**10. 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? **No.** The Board's Medical Advisor reviewed DoD and VA medical records and found no mitigating BH diagnoses on the applicant. The applicant provided no documents or testimony of a condition or experience, that, when applying liberal consideration, could have excused, or mitigated a discharge.

(2) Did the condition exist or experience occur during military service? **N/A**

(3) Does the condition or experience actually excuse or mitigate the discharge?  
**N/A**

(4) Does the condition or experience outweigh the discharge? **N/A**

b. Prior Decisions Cited: None

c. Response to Contention(s): The applicant contends, they made a mistake and desire to reenter the Armed Forces to better provide for their family, as they were young and irresponsible back then and are no longer the unmotivated, immature individual they once were.

The Board considered this contention and determined that the applicant's youth and immaturity did not outweigh the seriousness of the applicant's offense-Misconduct Drug Abuse. Therefore, no change is warranted.

d. The Board determined that the discharge is, at this time, proper and equitable, in light of the current evidence of record. The applicant has exhausted all available appeal options available with ADRB. However, the applicant may still apply to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records. The applicant is responsible for satisfying the burden of proof and providing documents or other evidence sufficient to support the applicant's contention(s) that the discharge was improper or inequitable.

e. Rationale for Decision:

(1) The Board voted not to change the applicant's characterization of service based on the following reasons. The Board carefully considered the applicant's request, supporting documents, evidence in the records, and published Department of Defense guidance for liberal consideration of discharge upgrade requests. The Board considered the applicant's statement, record of service, the frequency and nature of misconduct, and the reason for separation. The Board found insufficient evidence of in-service

mitigating factors that outweighed the applicants misconduct drug abuse. The applicant did not provide any significant information to mitigate the drug abuse. The Board determined that the reason for the applicant's separation and the character of service the applicant received upon separation were proper and equitable.

**(2)** The Board voted not to change the applicant's reason for discharge or accompanying SPD code under the same pretexts, as the reason the applicant was discharged was both proper and equitable.

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

**11. BOARD ACTION DIRECTED:**

- a. Issue a New DD-214 / Separation Order:** No
- b. Change Characterization to:** No change
- c. Change Reason / SPD code to:** No change
- d. Change RE Code to:** No change
- e. Change Authority to:** No change

**Authenticating Official:**

8/29/2024

**X**

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Presiding Officer, COL, U.S. ARMY  
Army Discharge Review Board

**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