



VSBLMLS SAILOR LEGAL READINESS SUPPORT

Military Legal Assistance Eligibility and Location



As a member of the armed forces on active duty you have rights and benefits that your civilian counterparts do not enjoy. There are laws like the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) and the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act (USERRA) written specifically to enhance and protect the servicemembers rights. Many states have laws to protect your rights. You have medical, commissary and exchange benefits that your civilian counterparts also do not have. You have another powerful benefit – you have access to the largest law firm in the world, Military Legal Assistance. To help avoid legal problems and to assist with resolving legal problems when they arrive the military provides free legal support from licensed attorneys. When you have a legal issue, tell the other party, “I will need to speak with my attorney before I sign that contract?”

The primary mission of the Navy Legal Assistance Program is to provide legal assistance support to enhance combat readiness – SAILOR LEGAL READINESS. Legal assistance is intended primarily for active duty personnel, including **Reservists** and members of the National Guard on **active federal duty for 30 days or more**. Legal assistance may be provided to dependents, or the legally appointed fiduciary (agent), of active duty personnel on behalf of personnel incapacitated or otherwise incapable of seeking such assistance personally:

For **legal issues that relate to serious wounds, illnesses, or injuries** incurred during the period of mobilization, **legal assistance is available to members of the Reserve component following release from active duty** under a call or order to active duty for more than 30 days **for a period of time not less than twice the length of the period served on active duty**. The period of post recall eligibility begins on the date of the release.

Reservists on active duty for single periods of 29 days or less and their dependents may be provided legal assistance in emergency cases as determined by the head of the legal assistance office. (it never hurts to ask for legal assistance)

Servicemembers eligible for legal assistance may be seen by attorney from any Service on any base providing legal assistance services. **To locate the legal assistance office nearest your location go to <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil/content/locator.php>**

Reservists, especially those in mobilization status should seek assistance as soon as they are aware of orders. They should review the Reserve Legal Assistance Readiness Checklist and seek assistance as needed.

While legal assistance generally is not available for reservists who have not been mobilized for more than 30 days, for the purpose of enhancing the readiness of Reserve personnel for mobilization, pre-mobilization legal counseling and assistance may be provided to meet mobilization readiness needs. Pre-mobilization assistance normally will consist of **drafting or updating wills, advance medical directives, and powers of attorney. Other assistance may be provided if it relates to recall or mobilization. Examples of such assistance include advice concerning rights under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) or the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).** Pre-mobilization legal assistance services are not authorized for dependents with the exception of dependents of Reserve personnel with mobilization orders for more than 30 days.