

# MAKING SOMEONE A MILITARY DEPENDENT

*Introduction: As a service to our legal assistance clients, we have prepared this handout with frequently asked questions on making someone your military dependent. It is, of course, very general in nature because no handout can answer all your specific questions.*

## **Who can qualify as a military dependent?**

Certain family members, such as a spouse or child, are automatically entitled to dependency status. Other family members such as parents and siblings require special review before they can be considered dependents. They must be registered and enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) as a family member or dependent. Typically, this requires an initial dependency determination by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS).

## **How can I make my minor sister, nephew, cousin, or foster child a dependent?**

To seek dependent status for a minor child for whom you have legal custody or guardianship, you must submit the child's birth certificate, DD Forms 137-7 and 1172, and the original or certified copies of the guardianship or other relevant court documents to DFAS.

## **How can I make my parent a dependent?**

To seek dependent status for an adult family member, such as a father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, stepparent, or someone *in loco parentis*, DFAS will apply a financial test to determine whether the family member receives over half of his/her income from the Servicemember. You must submit the Servicemember's or spouse's birth certificate and proof of the relationship, DD Forms 137-3 and 1172 to show financial dependency, and proof of the family member's identity to DFAS.

## **If I have other questions, what should I do?**

For additional information, you may visit the DFAS website at <http://www.dfas.mil/militarypay/secondarydependencyinformation.html>. More importantly, speak with a legal assistance attorney. Your lawyer can answer many questions and help you to make a fair and intelligent decision about your choices, options, and alternatives. The Netherlands Law Center stands ready, willing, and able to help you in these matters. When you go to your appointment, please bring a copy of all documents or court papers that relate to your legal issue. Please contact our office at DSN 360-7688 or Commercial 046-443-7688 if you have questions.