



## FROM COUNSEL

A Preventive Law Service of The Office of The Judge Advocate General  
*Keeping You Informed On Personal Legal Affairs*

### *Legal Assistance Services*

21<sup>st</sup> Theater Sustainment Command Legal Assistance Offices offer free legal advice in Kaiserslautern, Mannheim, and Stuttgart, Germany, as well as Mons and Brussels, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

Certified military and/or Army civilian attorneys advise on most areas of civil law, including consumer law issues; contract disputes; landlord/tenant disputes; contract review; creditor problems; nonsupport; immigration; motor vehicle laws; merchant scams; wills; powers of attorney; bankruptcy and indebtedness; separation/divorce; notarizations and taxation.

For example --

- You may obtain a power of attorney, a document that authorizes your agent (the person you name) to act on your behalf when you are unavailable. You may make a general power of attorney (allows your agent to act on all matters); a special power of attorney (allows your agent to act only on those matters you listed); or a medical care power of attorney (allows your agent to act only to get medical treatment for minor family members).
- You may consult with a legal assistance attorney on your estate plan - the plan that allows you to decide how to transfer your property after your death. Your estate includes everything you own when you die (for example, your house, car, and personal property). A will is part of your estate plan. If you own some of your property jointly with right of survivorship, that is part of your estate plan. Other estate planning documents include an advance medical directive, health care proxy, and anatomical gifts.
- You may obtain a will - the document that tells who you want to receive your property when you die. A will is also important to nominate a guardian for your minor children. If you die without a will, the state of your domicile will decide how to divide your property based on its intestacy law. Consult your legal assistance office to decide if you need or want a will.

We do not advise on private commercial business activities or make appearances in civilian courts on behalf of an individual, concerning civilian or military criminal matters, lawsuits, or claims against the United States Government.

Your attorney must know all the facts, favorable or unfavorable. Do not hesitate to talk freely to him/her. An attorney must keep all information confidential unless you, the client, give the attorney permission to disclose information to a third party. Confidential communications are matters you tell your lawyer when seeking legal advice about your personal situation. The privilege may extend to conversations, letters, photographs, charts, and other documents and records. You may lose the privilege if you make the information public either by telling a friend or family members or otherwise communicating the information to unauthorized persons.

***FROM COUNSEL is one of a series of informative handouts containing general information on topics that legal assistance attorneys frequently advise on. Information provided is general in nature and does not constitute legal advice. Consult an attorney for specific legal advice for your particular situation. FROM COUNSEL is distributed to persons eligible for legal assistance under 10 USC 1044.***

**Army Legal Assistance Offices exist to advise you on your personal legal matters. As a client, you should expect:**

1. To be treated with courtesy and consideration at all times by Legal Assistance personnel.
2. An attorney capable of handling your legal matter competently and diligently, in accordance with our high professional standards. If you are unsatisfied, you may withdraw from the attorney-client relationship at any time. If we do not have the expertise appropriate to advise you, we will refer you to alternative legal assistance. While we will try to find you no-fee representation, however, that may not always be possible.
3. Your lawyer's independent professional judgment and undivided loyalty uncompromised by conflicts of interest.
4. To have your questions and concerns addressed in a timely manner and to have your telephone calls returned promptly.
5. To be kept informed as to the status of your matter and to request and receive copies of papers. We will provide you sufficient information to allow you to participate meaningfully in the resolution of your matter.
6. To have your legitimate objectives respected by your attorney, including whether or not to settle.
7. Privacy in your dealings with your lawyer and to have your secrets and confidences preserved to the extent permitted by law and regulation.
8. To have your attorney conduct himself or herself ethically in accordance with our Army Rules of Professional Responsibility (AR 27-26) and the Code of Professional Responsibility.
9. Free assistance from us without discussion on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin or disability.

For military court appearances or advice on Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice proceedings, you may want to contact the Trial Defense Service Field Office.

For information on claims against the United States contact, contact the Claims Division.

***FROM COUNSEL*** is distributed by the Netherlands Law Center, Legal Assistance Office, located at USAG Schinnen. You may call us for an appointment at DSN 360-7688 or Commercial 046-443-7688.