

YOUR MILITARY STATUS MAY ENTITLE YOU TO SPECIAL RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS

If you are involved in a legal case, letting the judge know about your military service may enable the court to consider special benefits and protections for you. Some examples of potential benefits include:

- › Consideration for alternative sentencing and restorative relief
- › Diversion in misdemeanor cases
- › Additional time in family law cases

To inform the court about your military service, you can fill out an optional Military Status Form (MIL-100). You, your attorney, family member, friend, or advocate can fill out this form if you:

- › Are a current or former military member
- › Are in the reserves or National Guard
- › Have combat service or no combat service
- › Have an honorable or dishonorable discharge

You can submit your completed MIL-100 form to the clerk, judge, or your attorney, at any point during your case.

For more information and to access the MIL-100 form, search “California Courts MIL-100,” from your browser.

ABOUT THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

Created by the Legislature in 1927, the State Bar is an administrative arm of the California Supreme Court. Its mission is to serve the people of California through careful oversight of the legal profession. The State Bar’s primary functions are:

- › Licensing the 250,000 attorneys in California
- › Regulating the profession and practice of law
- › Enforcing the Rules of Professional Conduct and State Bar Act for attorneys
- › Disciplining attorneys who violate rules and laws
- › Administering the California Bar Exam
- › Advancing access to justice
- › Promoting diversity and inclusion in the legal system

The State Bar cannot represent clients or refer them to a particular attorney. If you need an attorney, contact a lawyer referral service in your community.

Follow the State Bar :



www.calbar.ca.gov
866-44-CA-LAW

Information in this pamphlet is valid as of October 2019.

Legal Services for Those Who Serve or Have Served in the Military

FOR THOSE WHO SERVE OR HAVE SERVED IN THE MILITARY

California is home to the largest population of veterans in the United States, with more than 1.7 million known veterans in residence. California is also home to the largest number of active military service members, with more than 180,000 living in the state.

If you serve or have served in the military and need legal assistance, this pamphlet can help you navigate the network of organizations and services available to you and your family. These include legal services to help you with housing or homelessness, consumer fraud, wills and probate, employment, or other legal issues. Also included is information about Veterans Treatment Courts and special rights, and protections you may receive as a service member or veteran in California Courts.

While the State Bar cannot represent clients or refer you to a particular attorney, it can connect you with a certified lawyer referral service in your community.

If you are unable to pay for legal services, you may be eligible for low-cost or free (pro bono) legal assistance through the organizations listed in this pamphlet.



Looking for information about legal services in your native language?
Call the State Bar at 866-44-CA-LAW.



The State Bar
of California

This pamphlet is also available in:

Spanish Español • Vietnamese Tiếng Việt
Korean 한국어 • Chinese 中文
• Russian Русский • Tagalog

LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE WHO SERVE OR HAVE SERVED IN THE MILITARY



FOR ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBERS

If you are an active service member and you need legal help, a good place to start is with an armed forces legal assistance office. These offices are set up to serve your needs. You can use the Armed Forces Legal Assistance Online Locator: legalassistance.law.af.mil.

These offices can help you apply for benefits available through the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, a federal law that provides safeguards to members on active duty status in the area of financial management, including rental agreements, security deposits, evictions, installment contracts, credit card interest rates, mortgages, civil judicial proceedings, income tax payments, and more.

Those serving in California Military Departments, including the California National Guard, may contact the Legal Support Command: www.ca-jag.us.

system partners. The program cannot provide legal services but can refer you to legal assistance organizations in your community.

Consumer & Financial Issues

› **California Attorney General's Military Consumer Protection Section**
<https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/military>

Part of the Office of the Attorney General, this group investigates and prosecutes businesses that engage in deceptive practices targeting veterans, members of the armed forces, and their families. It also provides information on military consumer protection issues, including scam alerts. You can report businesses by submitting a complaint.

› **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Office of Servicemember Affairs**
www.consumerfinance.gov (search for OSA) or call 855-411-2372

The Office of Servicemember Affairs works to help military families and veterans overcome financial challenges by providing educational resources, monitoring complaints, and working with other agencies to solve problems.

› **Military Consumer**
www.militaryconsumer.gov

A joint initiative of numerous organizations including the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Defense, Military Consumer empowers retired and active-duty service members regarding financial and consumer issues.

General Legal Issues/Other Resources

› **State Bar of California**
www.calbar.ca.gov or call 866-44-CA-LAW

Search for "resources veterans" or "resources active military" on the State Bar website for updated information about organizations providing legal services to military service members, veterans, and their families.

For information about lawyer referral services in California, go to www.calbar.ca.gov/Lawyer-Referral or call 800-843-9053 (Outside California: 415-538-2250)

› **California Association of County Veterans Service Officers**
www.cacvso.org or call 844-SERV-VET

County Veterans Service Officers play a critical role in the veteran's advocacy system in California. They provide information about county-specific services and advocacy for veterans, their dependents, and survivors.

› **California Department of Veterans Affairs**
www.calvet.ca.gov or call 800-952-5626 or (TDD) 1-800-324-5966

The California Department of Veterans Affairs serves California veterans and their families to ensure that they get the state and federal benefits and services they have earned and deserve. They also provide assistance with benefits, health care, housing, education, employment, and more.

› **eBenefits**
www.ebenefits.va.gov or call 800-827-1000

Affiliated with U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, eBenefits provides legal assistance related to veteran benefits and more.

› **Swords to Plowshares**
www.swords-to-plowshares.org or call 415-252-4788

Swords to Plowshares assists veterans with issues related to pensions, mental health exams, military records, benefits, and more. They also provide online self-help guides.

› **Veterans Legal Institute**
www.vetslegal.com or call 714-852-3492

The Veterans Legal Institute provides pro bono legal assistance to homeless, at-risk, disabled, and low-income current and former service members to eradicate barriers to housing, health care, education, and employment, and foster self-sufficiency.

FOR VETERANS

Homelessness Issues

› **Veterans Justice Outreach Program**
www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp

Part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, this program provides direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved veterans in local courts and jails and works with local justice

VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS

Veterans Treatment Courts resolve criminal cases for veterans through treatment and support in more than 30 counties in California. Through these courts, veterans participate in programs tailored to their needs. Participants meet frequently with a judicial officer, other veterans, treatment providers, mentors, and support teams. For more information, go to the California Courts website, www.courts.ca.gov and search "veterans courts."