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Who is Eligible for Legal Assistance? A Guide for Retirees

Eligibility is established by federal law and is based on a direct, continuing relationship with the Department of Defense (DoD).

- **Military Retirees & Dependents:** You are fully eligible for legal assistance if you are a retired member of the U.S. Armed Forces entitled to or receiving military retirement pay. This benefit extends to your eligible dependents with a valid Uniformed Services ID Card.
- **"Grey Area" Retirees (Limited Eligibility):** If you are a member of the National Guard or Reserve who has completed your required years of service but are not yet receiving retirement pay (typically before age 60), you are considered a "Grey Area" retiree. Under AR 27-3, you have **limited** eligibility. This means services are provided on a space-available basis, as resources permit, and at the discretion of the Staff Judge Advocate. Full eligibility begins when you start receiving retired pay.
- **Veterans Receiving Only VA Benefits (Not Eligible):** It is important to understand the distinction between a military retiree and a veteran receiving benefits solely from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The Army Legal Assistance Program is a DoD-funded military benefit, not a VA benefit. Therefore, veterans whose only entitlement is VA benefits (even a 100% disability rating) are not eligible for our services unless they also receive military retired pay. The VA offers its own legal clinics and justice outreach programs, and we can help direct you to those resources.

Our Legal Services to Retirees

Our licensed attorneys provide confidential advice, prepare legal documents, and can negotiate on your behalf. Our services are focused on preventive law to help you manage your affairs and avoid future complications.

- **Estate Planning:** This is our most requested service. Proper planning ensures your wishes are honored and your family is protected.
 - **Wills and Testamentary Trusts:** Draft and update your Last Will and Testament to direct the distribution of your property.
 - **Advance Medical Directives:** Prepare living wills and durable powers of attorney for health care, allowing you to state your wishes regarding medical treatment if you become incapacitated.
 - **Powers of Attorney:** Draft general and special powers of attorney to appoint a trusted agent to handle your financial and legal affairs.
- **Family Law:** We offer confidential counsel on a range of family matters.
 - **Marital Relations:** Advice on divorce, legal separation, and annulment.
 - **Child-Related Matters:** Guidance on child custody, visitation, child support, paternity, and adoption.
 - **Former Spouse Protections:** Information on the Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act (USFSPA) and the division of military retired pay.
- **Economic and Consumer Affairs:** We help protect you from financial disputes and exploitation.

- **Contract and Lease Reviews:** Review of residential leases, purchase agreements, and other consumer contracts before you sign.
- **Landlord-Tenant Issues:** Advice on your rights and responsibilities, security deposit disputes, and other housing matters.
- **Notary Services:**
 - **Notarizations:** Free notary public services for official and personal documents.

Program Limitations: Please be aware that AR 27-3 prohibits our attorneys from providing in-court representation. We also cannot assist with civilian criminal issues, private business ventures, or claims against the U.S. Government. **We also no longer offer tax services.** In these cases, we will refer you to appropriate civilian resources.

Essential Resources for U.S. Retirees in the Netherlands

Living abroad involves navigating both U.S. and Dutch systems. This guide can help connect you with the right agencies.

- **U.S. Government Services:**
 - **U.S. Consulate General, Amsterdam:** For passports, Consular Reports of Birth/Death, and U.S. notarial services.
 - Address: Museumplein 19, 1071 DJ Amsterdam.
 - **Social Security & Veterans Affairs (VA):** All inquiries for U.S. citizens in the Netherlands are handled by the Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) at the U.S. Embassy in Dublin, Ireland.[23, 24]
- **Navigating Dutch Regulations:**
 - **Mandatory Health Insurance:** All residents in the Netherlands, including U.S. retirees, are legally required to purchase a basic Dutch health insurance plan (*basisverzekering*). TRICARE and Medicare do not satisfy this requirement.
 - **Residence Permit:** U.S. citizens staying longer than 90 days must obtain a residence permit from the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND).
 - **Taxes & Social Security:** The U.S. and the Netherlands have agreements to prevent double taxation of income and to coordinate Social Security benefits. You should consult a qualified tax professional for specific advice.

To provide the best service, we strongly recommend to make an appointment. Please bring your U.S. Uniformed Services ID Card and all documents related to your legal issue.

Request an appointment with our office at the following QR code:

