



FORT GORDON CYBER CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE
Legal Assistance Office



This Information Paper from the Fort Gordon Legal Assistance Office contains general legal information on a topic upon which Legal Assistance Attorneys typically advise. The information provided is general in nature and does not constitute formal, specific legal advice. If you wish to receive legal advice specific to your situation, please consult an attorney.

CYBER ADVOCACY: MAKING SOMEONE A MILITARY DEPENDENT

1. **PURPOSE:** To provide Legal Assistance clients with basic information on making someone their military dependent.
2. **FACTS.** Certain family members, such as a spouse or child, are automatically entitled to dependency status. Other family members (such as a parent, brother, sister, or a child over the age of twenty-one) require special review before they can be considered dependents.
 - a. To seek dependent status for a person for whom you have legal custody or legal guardianship, you must bring the original or certified copies of the court ordered guardianship or other relevant court documents to the Finance Office in Darling Hall. For a minor, in addition to the documents mentioned above, you must bring the minor's birth certificate. The court that issues the guardianship order must be associated with the United States (like Puerto Rico) or the order must be entered for enforcement by a court in the United States. A guardianship power of attorney is not sufficient to meet this requirement. Additionally, you will need to complete the applicable DD Form 137. You will next be sent to your unit to complete DD Form 1172 to enroll the dependent in DEERS and obtain an ID card, if needed. In order to obtain an ID card, you will need to show that a court has granted you legal guardianship for at least 6 months.
 - b. To seek dependent status for a parent or family member without a court order, Army and Air Force personnel must submit the completed application via the secure DFAS link <https://corpweb1.dfas.mil/askDFAS/custMain.action?mid=5340> and upload the following documents:
 - (1) Completed DD Form 137, blank forms are available at the Finance Office or on the web at <https://armypubs.army.mil/>;
 - (2) Proof (such as copies of cancelled checks) that you provide 51% or more of the individual's financial support.

For Navy and Marines, use the following link to obtain the DFAS address for your respective service:

<https://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/SecondaryDependency/SDC/secondarydepnoffices.html>.

DFAS will send the proposed dependent a questionnaire verifying your information and his/her desire to become your dependent. The dependent must sign the questionnaire and have his or her signature notarized. You will then receive notice that DFAS is processing your application. If the proposed dependent is approved, you must bring the approval document to your unit Personnel Administration Center (PAC) and request a DD Form 1172.

c. To have a son or daughter who is born out-of-wedlock listed as a dependent, the male Servicemember must first complete one of the following:

- (1) File a Petition for Legitimation through the Georgia court system;
- (2) Marry the mother of the child; or
- (3) Adopt the child.

Georgia no longer allows voluntary acknowledgment of paternity for children born after July 1, 2016. If applying in a state other than Georgia, the Servicemember must properly execute a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity (if the state allows) from either the state which is the home of record of the Soldier or from the state where the mother and child reside.

In addition to the above mentioned, a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, and a copy of the child's social security card must be presented to DEERS for the child to be listed as a dependent.

Female Servicemembers will follow the same process as if the child was born during wedlock.

d. In addition to assisting with the DD Form 1172, your unit PAC should assist you with family travel, command sponsorship, and other personnel actions for your new dependent.

e. For specific questions about your situation log in to the DFAS website at: <https://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/SecondaryDependency/SDC.html>.

Additional Information

For additional information, the Fort Gordon Legal Assistance Office is located at 267 Heritage Park Lane, Building 35202, Fort Gordon, Georgia. You may reach the office by calling (706) 791-7812 / 7813. Please be advised you must have an appointment to consult with one of the attorneys; however, paralegals are available during hours of operation to answer general questions and notarize documents.