

Air Force Family Support

See Air Force Instruction 36-2906, which is available at the Air Force publications Website: <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/pubfiles/af/36/afi36-2906/afi36-2906.pdf>

In cases alleging nonsupport of family members, paragraph 3.2.1 of AFI 36-2906 requires unit commanders to "Advise members of the Air Force policy that they are expected to provide adequate financial support to family members and the procedures which the family member may implement to obtain involuntary collection of support through garnishment or statutory allotments."

Para 3.1.2 of AFI 36-2906 states that in all cases unit commanders are to "Advise members and the complainant of Air Force policy, including the fact that the Air Force has no authority to arbitrate cases of nonsupport or personal indebtedness."

While commanders are told not to provide information to the complainant regarding administrative or disciplinary action contemplated or taken against the member, unit commanders are to consider, and if appropriate, initiate administrative or disciplinary action.

Commanders are also to assess BAH entitlements and inform members "They may not receive [BAH] at the with-dependent rate if they do not provide financial support to their spouse or children". The instruction then indicates that the commander should terminate BAH entitlement at the with-dependent rate and recoup the amount received by the member during periods of non-support (paragraph 3.2.3). It is important to note that the money recouped does not go to the family but rather to the government. The termination of the BAH entitlement does not negate the member's duty to support his/her family.

However, there are NO AMOUNTS of support listed as in regulations of all the other branches of service.

If the Air Force service member is getting any allowance for his family, the service member should use this to support his or her family. Financial responsibilities to, for example, children of prior relationships, may play into how much of that allowance might be paid to a current family.

The bottom line is that if the service member gets an allowance for dependent support, the service member should use it for support. All military members have a duty to support their family, regardless of whether they are receiving BAH at the "with dependent" rate or not. However, the Air Force has no authority and will not order its personnel to provide support. The Air Force, through the unit commander, can enforce the member's duty to support his/her family. It is done by administrative actions up to and including administrative discharge under AFI

36-3208 and non-judicial punishment. Beyond these official actions, it is up to the spouse to get a support order that can be enforced.