

5 Ways Command Leaders Can Unite Against Domestic Abuse



Domestic abuse is incompatible with military values and reduces mission readiness. It is the duty of every leader to recognize and take seriously reports and signs of an abusive relationship.

1. Educate yourself

Make sure you understand your responsibility to report and respond to allegations of domestic abuse. Your installation's Family Advocacy Program office can provide information and resources to help you fulfill that responsibility. Find more information online: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/Leaders-End-Abuse>.

The Family Advocacy Program is congressionally mandated and is a key element of the DOD's coordinated community response for preventing and responding to reports of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse in military families.

2. Raise awareness

Raise awareness of domestic abuse in the military and clearly communicate the Defense Department's commitment to unite against abuse within your command. Share Family Advocacy Program information about preventing domestic abuse with all command members. This toolkit can help: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/abuse-help-leaders>

Share the following resources:

Immediate crisis support
National Domestic Violence Hotline
Call 800-799-7233
<https://www.thehotline.org/>

Local support, 24/7
Domestic Abuse Victim Advocate Locator
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/DAVALocator>

Support for teens
Love is Respect | Text "LOVEIS" to 866-331-9474
<https://www.loveisrespect.org/>

3. Take action immediately

Show anyone who reports abuse to you that you take all their concerns seriously by:

- Explaining how you will address their concerns and take action
- Connecting them with a domestic abuse victim advocate who can help them document their abuse, make a safety plan and access military and civilian services
- Offering to follow up with them (via phone call or email) to ensure they received all the services and support they need

4. Show compassion to victims

Tell anyone who raises a concern about abuse that you believe them, that they are not alone and that help and support are available. Kindness can save a life.

5. Unite with other leaders against abuse

Coordinate with other command leaders and departments throughout your installation to provide consistent and easily accessible domestic violence awareness and prevention education, resources and support.

Installation support