



CLIENT SERVICES & POLICY DIVISION Legal Assistance Office



HOW TO MAKE A RELATIVE A MILITARY DEPENDENT (SECONDARY DEPENDENCY)

Certain family members, such as a spouse or child under 21, are automatically entitled to dependency status; a Servicemember needs to complete a DD Form 1172-2 (Application for Identification Card/DEERS Enrollment) and provide the necessary proof. Other family members, such as parents, siblings, and adult children who are full-time students or incapacitated require an initial secondary dependency determination by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) prior to registration in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) as a family member or dependent.

Your **personnel or finance office** can help get you answers to secondary dependency questions. When you're ready to submit your **initial application or redetermination package**, make sure you send it to the correct DFAS office:

<https://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/SecondaryDependency/SDC/secondarydeproffices/>

Make sure you review instructions and required documents for Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps secondary dependency applications.

Preparing and submitting applications to have eligible persons included as your secondary dependents can ensure you receive the benefits and allowances you and your dependents are entitled to. These may include:

- Increased Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) not to exceed full BAH with dependents
- Uniformed Services Identification and Privileges Card
- Travel allowances

Who can be secondary dependents?

Secondary (non-primary) dependents can include:

- **Parent, parent-in-law, step-parent, parent by adoption**, or any person who stood '**in-loco parentis**' (in the place of a parent) to you for at least five years prior to your emancipation.
- **Unmarried children ages 21 and 22** who are enrolled in an accredited institution of higher education on a full-time basis.
- **Ward of the court**, unmarried, and placed in the permanent legal physical custody of the member, or if not permanent custody for a period of at least 12 consecutive months.
- **Unmarried child over age 21 incapable of self-support** because of mental or physical incapacity that occurred while the child was considered a dependent of yours as a member or retired member, or is considered the dependent of a deceased member (while under age 21 or under age 23 and a full-time student).

To qualify as a secondary dependent, the individual's income, not including your contribution, must be less than one-half of the actual living expenses. The law requires the individual to be 'in fact' dependent on you, the service member. Your contribution must be more than one-half of the dependent's actual monthly living expenses. Documentation to prove living expenses and your contribution must **ALWAYS** be provided.

How can I make my minor sister, nephew, cousin, or foster child a dependent?

To seek dependent status for a minor child for whom you have legal custody or guardianship, you must submit the child's birth certificate, DD Form 137-7 (Dependency Statement – Ward of a Court), DD Form 1172-2, and the original or certified copies of the guardianship or other relevant court documents to DFAS.

How can I make my adult incapacitated or full-time student child a dependent?

To seek dependent status of an incapacitated child over the age of 21, the Servicemember must submit a qualifying medical sufficiency statement, DD Form 137-5 (Dependency Statement – Incapacitated Child over Age 21) and DD Form 1172-2. To seek dependent status for a full time student aged 21 or 22, the Servicemember must submit DD Forms 137-6 (Dependency Statement – Full Time Student 21-22 Years of Age) and DD Form 1172-2.

How can I make my parent a dependent?

To seek dependent status for an adult family member, such as a father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, stepparent, or someone in loco parentis, DFAS will apply a financial test to determine whether the family member receives over half of his/her income from the Servicemember. You must submit the Servicemember's or spouse's birth certificate and proof of the relationship, DD Form 137-3 (Dependency Statement – Parent) and DD Form 1172-2 to show financial dependency, and proof of the family member's identity to DFAS. For someone loco parentis, this will include affidavits that that person stood in a parental capacity for at least five years prior to the Servicemember (or spouse's) 21st birthday.

If I have other questions, what should I do?

For additional information and points of contact, you may visit the DFAS website at <https://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/SecondaryDependency/SDC.html>. Also, the Wiesbaden DEERS office can assist with any clarifying questions regarding dependency. The Wiesbaden DEERS office is located in building 1023E and can be reached at DSN 548-1621 or commercial 0611-143-548-1621.

If you have further questions, please make an appointment with the Wiesbaden Legal Assistance Office by emailing us at: USARMY.WIESBADEN.USAREUR.MBX.OJA-WLC-LEGAL-ASSISTANCE-CALENDAR@MAIL.MIL.