

Legal Info

Legal Assistance

OFFICE HOURS AND SERVICES:

- Monday thru Thursday: 0730-1045 and 1300-1600
- Fridays: 0730-1045
- Legal Clerks: (703) 784-3126/3127

Powers of Attorney

A Power of Attorney (POA) is a legal document that gives a person the authority to act as the agent of the person giving the POA in legal and financial matters.

There are two types of POAs:

1. Special POAs grant the agent only those powers specified in the document for one or a specified series of transactions.
2. General POAs grant the agent very broad powers.

A POA should only be given to a mature, trustworthy, and reliable person (preferably a close family member) and only for a limited duration with a specified date of expiration. Although an individual has been granted a General POA, there may be instances where a Special POA is necessary to conduct specific transactions (i.e., to sell, purchase, or rent realty). Individuals should consult their financial institutions to see what type of POA is necessary to for their agent to conduct transactions on their behalf.

Anyone who desires a POA should contact their local Legal Assistance Office. The person to whom POA is given must retain the original to transactions to be valid. Legal Assistance Offices can be contacted at:

Legal Clerks (703) 784-3126/3127

<http://www.quantico.usmc.mil/activities/display.aspx?PID=1034&Section=Legal>

Each base or station has a Legal Assistance Office that is available to assist Marines, Sailors, and their families with a wide range of legal concerns. This assistance is free and confidential and can cover both civil and minor criminal matters.

- At the current time, the Legal Assistance Office is staffed with only two full-time attorneys. Accordingly, the number of available appointments is limited.

- Attorney services by appointment only.

- Procedures regarding scheduled office appointments: Clients need to make child care arrangements for the date/time of their appointment. Children will not be permitted to attend the appointment with the attorney. Child care is not provided by this office. If the client arrives for their appointment with children, their appointment will be canceled and rescheduled to enable the client to make child care arrangements.

- Attorneys will NOT provide legal advice over the telephone.

- Walk-in Services: At this time walk-in services are NO longer available (actual emergency appointments will be made on a case-by-case basis).

- Separation/Divorce counseling. The provision of full separation/divorce services will be limited to Marines and Sailors (or their spouses) E-5's and below. Separation/Divorce services are NOT available to Officers, Warrant Officers, and E-6's and above, or their eligible family members, at this time.

- Retiree services: Services for retirees and their eligible family members will be limited to estate planning matters, and these will be provided by a weekend appointment with a Reserve Judge Advocate.

- Initial appointments are scheduled in person at the Legal Assistance Office on Monday mornings at 0730 for the current week.

- Follow-up appointments and appointments to execute estate planning documents are available by calling 703-784-3126/27.

- Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment.

- All scheduled appointments are one-half hour and follow-up appointments will be scheduled accordingly.

- If you cannot make your scheduled appointment, please call to cancel as far in advance as possible.

- To be eligible for services, you must present a valid Armed Forces Military Identification card.

Notary services and preparation of powers of attorney are available for all eligible personnel during our regular office hours listed above.

What is Legal Assistance?

Marine Corps Legal Assistance programs provide free professional legal help to active duty and retired military members and their dependents. Legal assistance also helps certain survivors of deceased Armed Forces members. A legal assistance officer is a licensed attorney, though not always in the state where stationed. Legal Assistance attorneys give advice and help prepare legal documents and correspondence.

All the information the client discusses with a Legal Assistance Attorney is confidential and protected by the attorney-client privilege. The entire Legal Assistance staff zealously protects client confidentiality.

Before making a Legal Assistance appointment, you should do the following:

First, take logical steps to help yourself. If you find yourself in a legal dispute, try to talk to the other party before consulting an attorney. You can then give the attorney both sides of the story. You may find that the other party is reasonable and willing to resolve the matter. In your approach, be tactful and courteous. Many legal problems arise simply because the parties are discourteous and lose their tempers.

When you see your attorney, bring along all available documents, records, and correspondence about your question or problem. The nature of the information you provide will directly affect the quality of advice you receive.

If you need a document notarized, or a power of attorney, come in anytime during our normal work hours. Most banks will provide notary service for their customers free of charge. Additionally, many stationary stores will provide notary service for a nominal fee. According to Virginia law, a notary may charge no more than \$5.00 for a notary public service.

Remember, the most help you can give yourself is to use sound judgment and seek legal advice before acting on any legal or business matter.

Wills

A will governs the distribution of a person's property upon his or her death. A will is one of the most important documents a person can have because it specifically designates what happens to their property, and most importantly, dependent children, in the event of their death.

If someone dies without a valid will, their property is distributed and child custody is determined according to state law, and perhaps not in the manner most desired or favorable to interested parties, including the deceased.

For unmarried persons or those without dependent children, property is usually distributed to the designated next of kin even without the benefit of a will.

Anyone who desires a will should contact their local Legal Assistance Office.

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