

# 2012 Joint Base San Antonio Legal Services Guide

## Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) Legal Assistance Insert for Base Newspapers

The legal offices at Ft Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base, and Randolph Air Force Base (together Joint Base San Antonio) are happy to provide high-quality legal services to eligible clients in San Antonio and surrounding areas. This insert will provide you with information regarding office locations and services offered, as well as new programs.

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# Air Force website offers legal assistance

The next time you need a will, power of attorney, or just have a legal question, please visit <https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>. The website was created to increase efficiency and track client satisfaction with the Air Force legal assistance program. The site's features include:

- **Legal Topics:** Short papers on common legal assistance topics such as wills and family law issues. It also contains links to other helpful sites.
- **Legal Worksheets:** Access to online questionnaires for wills, living wills, and powers of attorney. After completing the online worksheet, the website provides each client a unique "ticket number." Data entered by clients is secure and may be accessed only after clients visit their local legal office and provide their ticket numbers to legal office personnel.
- **Online Survey:** Following a visit to the legal

office, clients are encouraged to provide feedback concerning the professionalism and helpfulness of our legal professionals.

## WHY THE WEBSITE?

Often many clients who visit a base legal office to obtain a will or other legal document realize that they need to gather more information and documents from home, or need to speak with family members about an issue. Completing an online worksheet will help minimize multiple visits. By filling out an online worksheet, clients will be able to consider critical issues online prior to visiting the legal office.

## HOW DOES THE WEBSITE HELP?

When a client submits a worksheet through the website, he or she will receive a ticket number. The client may then take the ticket number to a nearby

Air Force base legal office. An attorney or paralegal will then access the client's data using the ticket number. The legal office will have access to the submitted information for a period of 90 days before the ticket number will expire. If the ticket number expires, the client will need to fill out a new worksheet online.

Please note that information on the website is for educational and informational purposes only. The website is not a substitute for competent legal advice, and you should never rely solely on the website when making decisions. Before making a decision or taking any action, it is highly recommended that you meet with a licensed attorney. While the website is designed for client convenience, no one is required to use the website prior to visiting the legal office.

Anyone eligible for legal services may utilize the Air Force Legal Assistance Website when visiting a JBSA base legal office.

# Legal office hours and locations

## Lackland AFB Legal Office:

802 MSG/JA  
1701 Kenly Ave., Suite 134  
Lackland AFB, TX 78236  
(Located in the 37th Training Wing  
Headquarters building)

Legal Assistance: Primarily by appointment, call 671-3362

Walk-in hours (non-will related, urgent legal needs): Tuesday 4-4:30 p.m.

Notary and Power of Attorney hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. -1 p.m.

## Randolph AFB Legal Office:

902 MSG/JA  
1 Washington Circle Suite 6  
Randolph AFB, TX 78148

(Located on the main floor of the Taj)

Legal Assistance: Primarily by appointment, call 652-6781

Walk-in hours: Tuesday 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Walk-in Wills: Thursday 8-10 a.m.

(Please call by Monday with the ticket number from the website)

Notary and Power of Attorney hours: Monday – Friday 8:30-4 p.m.

## Fort Sam Houston Legal Office:

502 MSG/JA  
2271 Reynolds Road (Off of Wilson Road between Brought Fitness Center and  
the Main Post Chapel)  
Ft Sam Houston, TX 78234  
Phone: 808-0169

Legal Assistance: Primarily by appointment, call 808-0169

Walk-in hours: Tuesday 8:30-10:30 a.m.

(all eligible clients), Thursday 8:30-10:30 a.m.

(Active Duty clients only)

Will executions: Thursdays

Notary and Power of Attorney hours: Monday – Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

*Please note that the Fort Sam Houston, Lackland AFB and Randolph AFB legal offices currently provide more expansive legal services. All three offer the following services:*

- *Texas pro se divorce, including uncontested divorce document drafting*
- *Pro se name change services and*
- *Texas pro se probate and real property issues.*

*Please visit a legal office for more information.*

*Additionally, Army Soldier Services will assist Soldiers with Army adverse actions and other Army-specific legal assistance matters (FLIPLs, OERs, NCOERs, Written Reprimands, Security Clearance Revocations, AR 15-6 Investigations, IG and other investigations, LODs, Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions, Bars to Re-enlistment, Relief for Cause Reviews, Certain Officer Resignations, Article 138 Actions, Corrections of Army Records, Hardship Discharges, Compassionate Reassignments, Physician Credentialing Actions, Flying Evaluation Boards, Army Family Care Plans, and Mental Health Evaluations).*

*Army Soldier Services is located on Ft Sam Houston, Bldg 158. Call 210-221-2282 for more information.*

# JBSA legal offices offer free services

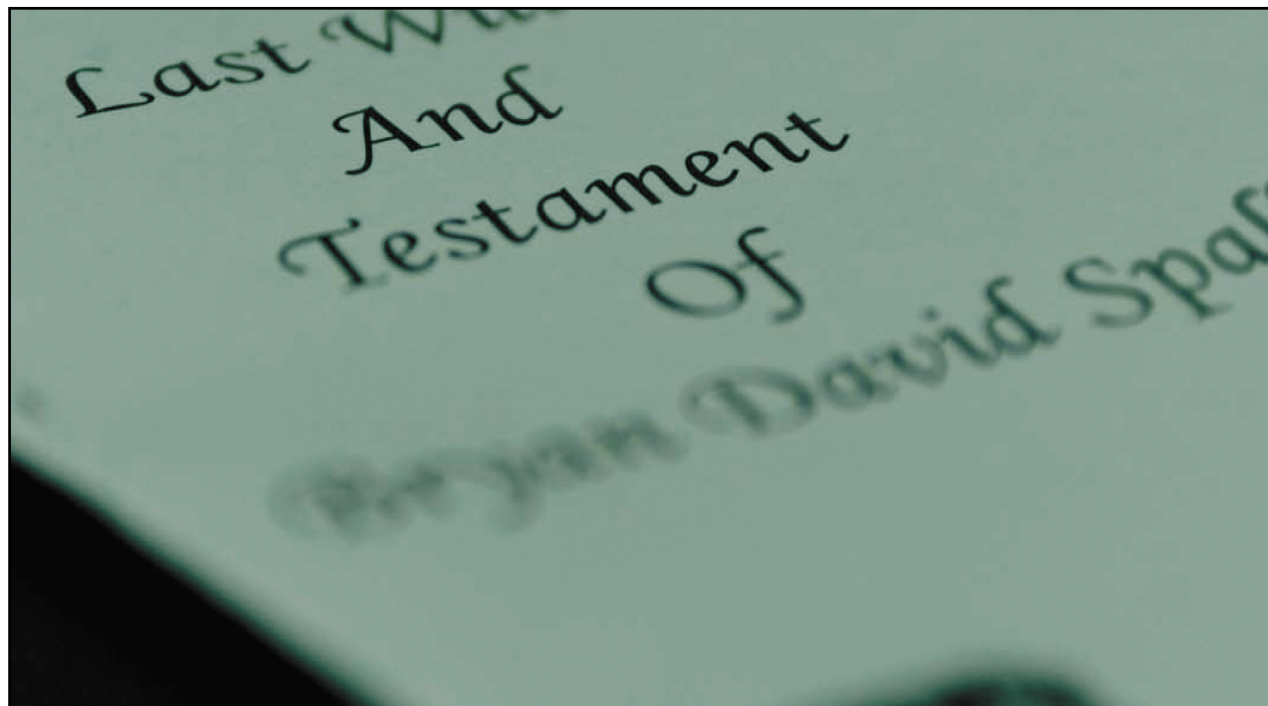
Legal assistance is a free service that allows individuals to meet privately with an attorney to discuss personal civil legal matters they are facing. Attorneys can advise you on a wide range of legal matters, including family law, wills and estates, and consumer and financial issues. If you have a potential legal problem, please schedule an appointment with the closest JBSA base legal office as soon as possible. Often times the longer legal problems are ignored, the worse they become. Please note that legal advice will not be given over the phone. Base legal offices also offer free notary service.

To qualify for legal assistance you must have a valid military identification card and fall into one of the following categories:

- Active Duty military members and their dependents
- Reserve and Guard members who are on active duty and their dependents

Retired military members and their dependents (please note that you must have a military identification card to be eligible)

Other individuals in unique circumstances may be eligible if they have a valid military identification card



The Joint Base San Antonio legal offices help service members with a wide range of legal issues. Attorneys can offer free legal advice on family law, wills, disputes with businesses, etc.

# Tax centers provide tax preparation help

Tax season is upon us and the base legal offices in Joint Base San Antonio will be providing free tax preparation and e-filing of both federal and state income tax returns for active duty, Reserve, National Guard, retired military, and their dependents.

Please note that in addition to the Tax Centers, Lackland and Randolph Air Force Bases will have unit and organization IRS-trained unit tax advisors (UTAs) ready to assist with income tax returns. UTAs will work out of their squadron and will have completed a comprehensive training course and examination to become certified tax advisors. Additionally, UTAs have reference materials and forms



for processing returns. Active duty members are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from their UTA before coming to a Tax Center.

Those who prefer to self-prepare and file their taxes electronically from the comfort of their own home may do so online through <http://www.militaryonesource.com>. This service is free to active

duty military members and their families and also offers tax consultation by phone. Those preferring to self-prepare and file their taxes on paper may order forms from the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov>. Forms will also be available at the Tax Centers.

For those deploying, it may be helpful to designate someone to represent you on a federal tax matter. To do this, fill out and sign IRS Form 2848, Power of Attorney and Declaration of Representative, and provide it to the person you want to file your taxes. This IRS form does not require a notary. Forms can be downloaded at <http://www.irs.gov> or can be picked up at the Tax Centers.

## JBSA Tax Centers

**Lackland AFB: By appointment only\***

Opens: 23 January 2012  
Hours: Monday – Thursday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Point of Contact: Capt. Aaron Noble  
Phone: 671-1001

Location: Building 2484, Room 041 (Basement of 37 TRW HQ on Kenly Ave, across from Gateway Club and next to parade field)

*\*Active duty members are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from their UTA before coming to the Tax Center. The Lackland AFB UTA list for tax year 2011 will be published in the 802 FSS bulletin.*

**Randolph AFB: By appointment only**

Opens: 30 January 2012  
Hours: Monday – Thursday 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Friday 8 a.m.-2 p.m.  
Evening Hours: Thursday 4-8 p.m.  
Point of Contact: LaMarr Queen  
Phone: 652-1040

Location: Building 202 (The old dry cleaners;  
the same location as last year)

**\* Fort Sam Houston (Main Location):**

**By appointment only**  
Opens: 24 January 2012  
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Point of Contact: Kristen Hollering  
Phone: 295-1040

Location: 502 MSG/JA, 2271 Reynolds Road (Off of Wilson Road between Brought Fitness Center and the Main Post Chapel)

\*Tax preparation for training units on Saturdays by request

**Fort Sam Houston (BAMC Location): By appointment only**

Opens: 30 January 2012  
Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Point of Contact: Kristen Hollering  
Phone: 916-1040

Location: Brooke Army Medical Center, Room L44-6 CONF



# Legal readiness important before deployments

Legal questions and concerns often arise before a servicemember deploys. Joint Base San Antonio legal offices are available to provide assistance with powers of attorney and wills and are flexible when dealing with other legal issues in the time crunch of deployment.

If you have a unit that is deploying and is in need of pre-deployment will preparation and legal assistance, please contact the Chief of Legal Assistance at your installation to arrange for services customized to meet the needs of your unit.

## POWERS OF ATTORNEY

A power of attorney is a legal document in which you, the grantor, give another person (attorney-in-fact) the authority to act as your agent. Powers of attorney are not substitutes for wills, as they terminate upon your death.

**What kind of Power of Attorney do I need?**

### General POA

A general POA gives your agent the right to conduct financial and legal affairs on your behalf, including the right to obligate you in a variety of transactions. There are two important factors you should consider before you get a general power of attorney:

1. There is no legal requirement that anyone recognize a power of attorney.
2. If the power of attorney is accepted, your agent may use it in a way you never intended.

### Special POA

A special POA gives your agent the authority to do one or more specified acts. You specify on the POA

document what acts the agent may perform on your behalf (i.e., sell or register your car, ship or receive household goods, cash paychecks, etc.). This is a more limited and less powerful POA since the agent's authority to act is limited to only those specific acts which you have authorized.

### Health care POA

The Health Care Power of Attorney is more flexible than a directive to physicians. It appoints a specific person to act as your agent to make medical decisions for you, if you become incapacitated and cannot make those decisions.

It applies to all medical situations, unless you include limitations, which you can discuss with a lawyer.

## WILLS

Not everyone needs a will. Unmarried

military members with no children generally do not need a will if they intend their property to be distributed to their closest relatives, usually their mother and father, and siblings if the parents are deceased. This is usually how state law will control distribution if you pass away without a will.

However, if some other distribution is desired, then a will is advisable.

Military members and their dependents can have a will prepared, free of charge, at any JBSA legal office.

### Directive to physicians (living will)

A directive to physicians is a written statement of your wishes regarding the use of life-sustaining procedures, if you are not able at the time to make this decision.

There are requirements that have to be met for this document to take effect, which you can discuss with a lawyer.

## INSURANCE

Servicemembers should ensure SGLI beneficiary designation is up-to-date. Whoever is named as the beneficiary on the SGLI form will be the one who receives the proceeds even if you named someone else as the beneficiary in your will.



Courtesy photo

An important step in maintaining deployment readiness is to create a will with a Joint Base San Antonio legal office.

## Military members benefit from SCRA improvements

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), 50 U.S.C. App 501 et seq, is a federal law designed to protect military members (and in many circumstances their dependents) from certain legal obligations when their military service interferes with such legal obligations. Under the SCRA, a military member may postpone certain civil (not criminal) actions during their absence, reduce interest rates to 6% on their pre-service loans, have protection against foreclosures and repossessions without court order, and request prospective relief of the court for certain financial obligations they cannot meet because of their military service. The protections begin on the date of entering active duty and generally terminate within 30 to 90 days after the date of discharge from active duty.

In October 2010 the President signed the law with several improvements to the SCRA. One change is an improvement of the ability for military members to terminate cell phone contracts. Previously, the military member could only request termination or suspension under some limited circumstances, and arguably the

carrier did not have to grant the request. Under the new law, the military member has a right to terminate the contract, and the circumstances are broader. Basically, anytime the military member receives orders to go somewhere where he or she cannot get cell phone service for more than 90 days, the military member has the right to terminate the contract. In addition, if the military member is on a family plan and moves or deploys, the service can be terminated by mom or dad, or whoever is paying for the plan.

The new law also makes important improvements to the ability of military members to enforce their SCRA rights in court. Congress clarified that there is both a government and a private right of action to sue those who violate the SCRA. The SCRA will now also allow the award of attorney fees for private actions. These changes will really improve the ability of a military member to seek redress for wrongs. If you would like to learn more about your rights under SCRA, please visit the Air Force Legal Assistance Website at <https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil>.

## New legal programs available

### HEROES Program (Texas Office of the Attorney General)

The Texas Attorney General's Office will be hosting Parenting Order Legal Clinics to assist servicemembers with custody and child support issues in the upcoming months. Call the Legal Office for information about when the Legal Clinic will be hosted at your installation. For questions about child custody, visitation, paternity and child support issues, call the Access & Visitation Hotline at 866-292-4636. To obtain legal forms, visitation letters and logs, and other tools for resolving custody or visitation concerns, visit [www.txaccess.org](http://www.txaccess.org).

### Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court

The Bexar County Veterans Treatment Court (County Court-at-Law Number 6) was launched on 3 September 2010. The mission of the court is to assist eligible participants and their families to become integral and productive members of the community through a collaborative effort. The court has jurisdiction over misdemeanor cases involving veterans and Active Duty servicemembers, including members of the Reserves, National Guard or State Guard, who suffer from a brain injury, mental illness, or mental disorder that materially affected the defendant's criminal conduct at issue in the case. Veterans and Active Duty servicemembers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) resulting from their military service in a combat zone or other similar hazardous duty area may also qualify. The basic approach of the court is direct and intensive monitoring by a cohesive unit of the member's peers, with therapeutic intervention services by a professional mental health provider.

If you are facing a misdemeanor criminal charge and fit the criteria, please consider applying to the court. Referrals may be made by pre-trial services, other courts, Probation Office (Community Supervision and Corrections Department), defense attorneys, prosecutors, and mental health providers.