

## Chapter 19 - Legal Readiness Checklist

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Free legal assistance is a valuable benefit provided to all service members and their families. Keeping legal affairs in order is as important to the military mission as being healthy and physically fit. Please answer each of the following questions. If you have checked any shaded box, you may have a matter that you should discuss with a legal assistance attorney. In that event, you should contact the base legal office to schedule an appointment for legal assistance or determine when walk-in hours for legal assistance are available. Consultations with a legal assistance attorney are protected by the attorney-client privilege. Thanks to the ABA for this form.

Download this form at:

<http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/downloads/lamp/legalreadinesschecklist.doc>

<b>Shaded boxes, when checked, signal a need for legal assistance</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
1. Have you attended a legal readiness briefing provided by a representative of the legal office at your base?		
a. If not, please contact your unit deployment manager or the base legal office to determine when the next briefing is offered and how to schedule your attendance.	N/A	N/A
2. Do you have a will?		
a. If not, have you decided not to prepare a will because of information applicable to your personal circumstances that you received in a legal readiness briefing or in a consultation with an Air Force attorney?		
- If you did not make a decision on this basis, you should consult with a legal assistance attorney to discuss this subject further.	N/A	N/A
b. If you have a will, have you reviewed it within the past 24 months?		
- Have you had a recent, significant family event such as marriage, divorce, birth of child, adoption of a child, or death of a family member? If so, you should review your will to ensure it continues to reflect your intent as to the distribution of your property at death.		
c. If you are married, does your spouse have a will?		
3. Have you enrolled in the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program?		
a. If not, you should discuss the merits of this program and your options with a personnel specialist at your base Military Personnel Flight or with a legal assistance attorney.	N/A	N/A
b. If you are enrolled in SGLI, have you reviewed your beneficiary designation in the past 12 months?		
c. Have you designated "By-Law" as your beneficiary designation? If so, you should consult a legal assistance attorney or a personnel specialist at the Military Personnel Flight immediately to discuss the risks this type of designation can cause for the prompt distribution of the insurance proceeds.		
d. Have you had a recent, significant family event such as marriage, divorce, birth of a child, adoption of a child, or death of a family member? If so, you should review your SGLI beneficiary designation as soon as possible to ensure it continues to reflect your intent for the distribution of insurance proceeds at death.		
4. Have you designated by power of attorney a person you trust to handle your affairs while you are deployed?		

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a. If so, have you reviewed the designation(s) within the past 12 months?		
b. If not, have you attended a legal readiness briefing describing your options or discussed your options with a legal assistance attorney?		
c. Do you understand the purposes of and the differences between a general and a special power of attorney?		
d. Have you considered those matters for which you would need to have a trusted person handle during the duration of a deployment? These matters may include maintaining your residence, paying the rent or mortgage if you elect to remain in the residence, maintaining your vehicle(s) and other personal property, paying bills and meeting other regularly occurring obligations.		
5. Do you have a living will?		
a. If so, have you reviewed the living will within the past 24 months to ensure it remains current and accurately states your wishes?		
b. If not, have you decided not to prepare a living will because of information applicable to your personal circumstances that you received in a legal readiness briefing or in a consultation with an Air Force attorney?		
6. Do you have a medical care or health care power of attorney designating a trusted person to consult with physicians and other providers and to make health care decisions on your behalf in the event you are unable to do so yourself?		
a. If so, have you reviewed the power of attorney within the past 12 months to ensure it remains current and accurately states your wishes?		
b. If not, have you decided not to execute such a power of attorney because of information applicable to your personal circumstances that you received in a legal readiness briefing or in a consultation with an Air Force attorney?		
7. Do you have a minor child or minor children?		
a. If yes, will your current or former spouse maintain their care in your absence while deployed?		
b. If the care provider is not the natural parent, have you consulted with an attorney regarding the possible need for a court ruling to ensure your wishes for the care of the child(ren) are met?		
c. For cases when a natural parent will not be the care provider, have you designated by a special power of attorney for child care a person or persons you trust to assume custody and care of your minor children during your deployment?		
- Have you provided the person(s) a special power of attorney authorizing him, her or them to make health care decisions for the child(ren)?		
8. Are you leasing your residence?		
a. If so, do you intend to retain that residence for the duration of your deployment?		
- If so, have you designated by special power of attorney a trusted person to maintain the residence and pay the rent for the duration of your deployment?		
b. If you desire to terminate the lease, have you discussed the proper means of doing so with a legal assistance attorney?		
9. Are you leasing your motor vehicle(s)?		
a. If so, do you want to retain the leased vehicle(s) for the duration of your deployment?		

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- If so, have you designated by special power of attorney a trusted person to maintain the vehicle(s) and ensure the lease payments are made for the duration of your deployment?		
b. If you desire to terminate the lease(s), have you discussed the proper means of doing so with a legal assistance attorney?		
10. For your motor vehicle(s) you are retaining, is each vehicle properly registered and do you have insurance coverage consistent with the requirements of the lender and the state in which each vehicle is registered?		
11. Do you have existing installment loans for personal property items (motor vehicle, TV, washer, furniture, etc) or existing credit card debt?		
a. If so, does the interest rate exceed 6%?		
b. If you are married, will your spouse maintain the payments in your absence?		
c. If you are not married, have you designated by special power of attorney a trusted person to maintain the payments for the duration of your deployment?		
12. Are you involved in any type of civil litigation or lawsuit?		
13. Have you filed your federal and state income tax returns for the most recently ended calendar year?		
a. If not, will the return come due during your deployment?		
b. If so, do you know if you are deploying to a combat zone, qualified hazardous duty area, or designated contingency operation? Extensions of the deadlines to file income tax returns and take other tax actions apply to these types of areas.		
c. If you want to file your federal and state income tax returns during the deployment, have you designated a person you trust by a general or special power of attorney that includes authorization to prepare, sign, and file income tax returns on your behalf?		
14. Do you have questions about which state is your domicile or state of legal residence? This state is one in which you have resided, to which you intend to return when your military service ends, and with which you maintain contacts such as registration to vote, registration of vehicle(s), maintaining your driver's license, maintaining bank accounts, ownership of property, and like matters. If you have such contacts with more than one state, you risk exposure to income tax liability and other obligations with those states. In this case, please consult a legal assistance attorney as soon as possible.		
15. If you are a member of the Reserve or National Guard, are you aware of your rights and obligations under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)?		

**In the event you checked one or more shaded boxes, legal assistance is recommended. Please bring this completed questionnaire with you to the base legal office.**

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>MI</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>SSN</b>
<b>Unit</b>		<b>Duty Phone</b>		