

==AIRBORNE EXPRESS==

The Special Victims Counsel Program and how it can help your Soldier

Special Victims Counsel (SVC) are Judge Advocates who are trained to legally advise victims of sexual assault through the full spectrum of the military justice process as well as advise on civilian criminal proceedings. The services they offer are optional for victims who are ID card holders issued by the Army and where the offender is a U.S. Army member (exceptions apply).

The Special Victims Counsel Program (SVCP) in the U.S. Army was created on 1 November 2013. This was a direct result of a memorandum drafted by the Secretary of Defense requiring each branch of the armed forces to create such a program for victims of sexual assault. The Special Victims Counsel (SVC) is a Judge Advocate who is specifically trained and certified through the SVCP to legally represent a victim of sexual assault. If you have a service member that was a victim of sexual assault, inform them of the SVC program.

SVCs foster victims' understanding of the military justice process by providing effective and timely legal advice throughout the full spectrum of military justice practice; to include the initial investigation through convening authority action. SVCs, through proper advocacy, assure the afforded victims' rights are fully realized and they are treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Persons eligible to receive SVC services are normally those individuals eligible for U.S. Army Legal Assistance and when the offender is an Army member. These persons usually include, active duty, reserve, and guard members when in an active status or mobilization, dependents and former members who have ID cards, civilian employees who are stationed overseas, foreign military assigned to the U.S. under official orders, and other unique situations. Minor dependents of service members are eligible for SVC services. Exceptions to these requirements may be made by the SVCP Manager.

A victim of a sexual assault must make either an unrestricted or restricted report of sexual assault under the UCMJ for SVC representation. SVCs are allowed to advise clients on reporting options and it will remain confidential at all times. Reporting a sexual assault to a SVC will not make the report unrestricted unless the victim chooses. SVC representation is optional and only the victim can voluntarily choose to be represented by a SVC. – By CPT James Banti.

To reach an SVC for more information or to refer a case, please contact: CPT James Banti @ 270-798-4474 or CPT David Ford @ 270-798-0931.



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