

# Clearinghouse REVIEW

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## LEGAL NEEDS OF MILITARY VETERANS, SERVICEMEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

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## Let Us Meet the Legal Needs of Military Veterans, Servicemembers, and Their Families

I am pleased to introduce this CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW special issue devoted to legal topics affecting current and former members of the U.S. armed forces and their families. The mission of the American Bar Association Standing Committee on Legal Assistance for Military Personnel, of which I am the chairman, is to promote the growth and delivery of legal assistance to military members and their families by enhancing the scope and quality of free or affordable legal services to eligible military legal assistance clients. One way to accomplish this is to reach out to members of the civilian bar to secure pro bono legal services for those servicemembers who cannot afford full-fee legal representation. For those civilian attorneys motivated to help servicemembers and veterans but lacking experience with the unique legal issues that may arise when representing military-related clients, this special issue of the REVIEW has in-depth articles written by military and civilian attorney experts on an array of legal issues affecting military members.

The need for help from our colleagues in the civilian bar has never been greater. Extended overseas deployments of active-duty forces, reservists, and National Guard units has added tremendous pressure on already-limited military legal assistance resources, while military legal assistance attorneys themselves are constrained in the scope of legal services they can provide to their clients, resulting in many civil legal problems often not receiving the full range of representation that the military client requires. And, as today's military persons are discharged, they join an already sizeable veteran population often needing competent, knowledgeable pro bono counsel. In this special issue of the REVIEW you will find ways to support and collaborate with military legal assistance in the delivery of much-needed legal help to current and former servicemembers.

You will find that the legal issues handled by military legal assistance attorneys and those working in veterans advocacy are very similar to the issues that those of you involved in pro bono and legal aid advocacy handle every day. I hope that understanding these similarities will increase your comfort level when you have a case involving a military-related party and will inspire you to take on servicemember and veterans cases when you can. A great deal has been sacrificed by the men and women of the armed forces and by their families. Please join me in giving back by working to provide access to justice for those who have given so much for us.

### Rear Adm. (Ret.) Donald J. Guter

*Chairman, American Bar Association Standing Committee  
on Legal Assistance for Military Personnel*

*Rear Admiral Guter served as the thirty-seventh judge advocate general of the U.S. Navy from 2000 to 2002. He is president and dean of South Texas College of Law in Houston, Texas.*



Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW encourages the submission of articles from legal aid field staff and others. Send articles to Ilze Sprudz Hirsh, editor and vice president of communication programs, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, 50 E. Washington St. Suite 500, Chicago, IL 60602; ilzehirsh@povertylaw.org.

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