

## Military Help that is Available

**Military Protective Orders:** A Domestic Abuse Victim Advocate (DAVA) can help you initiate a Military Protective Order (MPO) to keep an abusive partner/spouse away for at least 72 hours. This gives you time to file a longer protective order with the courts. This time separated can keep you safe and allow you time to decide what you want to do. Contact a DAVA at (910) 322-3418 for help with this process. Implementing a protective order requires that you and/or your partner's commander is notified. If you are worried about commanders, police, or others being notified before you are ready, you can call the hotline at (910) 322-3418 (you do not have to give your name). You will simply talk with a DAVA who can help you explore your options. **Do not wait to get help!**

**Bar to Post:** In some situations where a Soldier is being abused by their Civilian partner, a "bar to post" might be implemented to help keep you safe. Contact a DAVA for advice or help arranging this.

**Mandatory Treatment:** When military authorities are notified about any claim of abuse of a military dependent or Soldier, a mandatory process is started which includes requiring the Soldier to be seen by a Social Worker at Womack Family Advocacy Program Clinical (FAPC). A Military Protective Order will also be implemented for at least 72 hours. A plan is arranged that can include mandatory counseling, such as group therapy with other partners that have abused their spouses. Marriage counseling is usually not a good option for people who are in an abusive relationship. The treatment of choice is for both partners to have their own individual counseling.

**Your input is important!** If you and your spouse had an incident and you think it was reported, there will be a meeting on your case by Womack FAPC within approximately six weeks after the incident happened. The Social Worker needs to hear your side of what happened, but your spouse may try to keep you from speaking up, or may not even tell you about this procedure. To reach the Social Worker for your case you can either:

- ✓ Call FAPC at (910) 907-7869 between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday and ask to speak with the Social Worker assigned to your case. They can find your Social Worker if you provide them your full name.
- ✓ Call the Family Abuse hotline at (910) 322-3418 and tell them you want to make sure FAPC knows your side of the incident. They will help you.

**Securing Dangerous Weapons:** It is very important, if your spouse is abusive, that any weapons he/she owns are secured. Even if you think your spouse would never harm you in that way, you cannot afford to take the chance. Many spouses and Soldiers have died by underestimating the danger of unsecured weapons. The best way to make sure weapons are secured is to have the unit or the police secure them immediately, before your spouse can take them somewhere else. Contact a DAVA for help or advice about arranging this. It is strongly recommended that steps be taken to keep weapons secured after abuse has occurred and if you eventually decide to leave the relationship. The most



dangerous time when weapons may be used, either for additional violence or suicide, is when spouses/partners separate.

**Family Support that is Available if a Soldier/Offender is Discharged from the Army or Jailed Because of Abuse:** A program called Transitional Compensation will provide an offender's spouse and dependent children with monthly payments, medical benefits and access to the PX and Commissary for up to thirty-six years. This benefit is in place for victims who might stay with an abusive spouse out of fear of losing money, healthcare, and housing if the Soldier is kicked out of the Army. Contact a DAVA to ask about this program - there are selection criteria to meet in order to be eligible.

**Foreign Spouse Protection:** There are U.S. laws that can protect an abused spouse, who is not a U.S. citizen, from being threatened by an abuser that he/she will be deported if they report the abuse or try to get help. Contact a DAVA for help or advice about foreign spouse protections. Call FAP at 910-396-5521 for more information.

**Problems with Non-Support During Separation:** Often, when a couple has separated, either due to abuse or because they want to divorce, the Soldier may refuse to provide their spouse with any money. The Army does not allow this.

- ✓ **If you are separated from your spouse and living off post:** In most circumstances, your Soldier/spouse is required to give you an amount equal to his/her Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH), from the time you separate until a divorce is granted, unless a judge orders him/her to pay you additional funds. If you are in this situation, call the Fort Bragg Inspector General (IG) Office at (910) 396-5106/5117. Once you notify them about your situation, they officially notify the Soldier's command and the commander is required to address and resolve the situation within an allotted timeframe.
- ✓ **If you live in post housing:** Your Soldier/spouse may only be required to allow you to remain living in post housing until there is a divorce. If he/she forces you out of post housing, you may be entitled to an amount of your Soldier/spouse's BAH for you and your children. Contact the Fort Bragg Inspector General (IG) Office at (910) 396-5016/5117 for more information or assistance with this issue.