

## INFORMATION PAPER

IMWR-F  
12 February 2015

**SUBJECT:** Victim Advocacy Program Services Available to Support Soldiers and Family Members Affected by Domestic Abuse.

1. **PURPOSE:** To provide an overview of the Army's Victim Advocacy Program.

2. **FACTS:**

a. In 2003, the Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence recommended that Military Service branches establish a comprehensive Victim Advocacy (VA) Program.

b. On 12 September 2004, the Army institutionalized the VA Program under the Family Advocacy Program (FAP) and established a central contract that provided victim advocates. In 2015, there are a total of 158 FAP victim advocates assigned at 56 installations throughout the Army (72 centrally contracted and 86 government service (GS) victim advocates). FAP Managers or designees provide advocacy services at 16 installations where the Soldier population is less than 5,000.

c. Domestic Abuse Victim Advocates (DAVAs) must possess a bachelor's degree in Social Work, Psychology or in a related field, and have at least two years experience working with victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Educational and experience requirements are critical because advocates have to continually assess risk for victims that elect to stay in an established relationship with their offender.

d. In addition to having a professional degree, GS DAVAs receive 80 hours of FAP Staff Training (FAST) through the Army Medical Center and School. All DAVAs receive continuing education training on the role of the victim advocate, FAP Policy, Non clinical Lethality Assessment, Restricted Reporting Policy, and Transitional Compensation for Abuse Dependents.

e. The DAVA's primary function is to provide non-clinical advocacy services and support to victims. Duties include 24/7 crisis intervention, assistance with filing restricted and unrestricted reports, safety planning, emotional support, information, referral, and assistance in accessing medical, legal, mental health, and chaplaincy services. DAVAs may provide services to victims of sexual assault when requested by either the victim or the command and may also provide support to children when directed by the FAP or a judge.

f. Assistant Chief of Staff for Information Management (ACSIM) serves as the policy proponent for this program.

Prepared By: Ernestine Wright/719-526-4682  
Approved By: COL Anthony Cox/210-466-1145