

PART 818—PERSONAL FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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NOTE: This part is derived from Air Force Regulation 35-18.

Part 806 of this chapter states the basic policies and instructions governing the disclosure of records and tells members of the public what they must do to inspect or obtain copies of the material referenced herein.

Part 807 of this chapter states the procedures for issuing publications and forms to the public.

Subpart A—General

§ 818.0 Purpose.

This part establishes Air Force policy governing alleged delinquent financial obligations. It outlines procedures for processing claims of this nature. It implements 32 CFR parts 43, 43a and 81. It applies to all active Air Force instal-

lations and members and US Air Force Reserve (USAFR) units and members. This part does not apply to Air National Guard (ANG) units and members. This part is affected by the Privacy Act of 1974. System of Records Notice F030MPCB—Indebtedness, Non-support, Paternity, applies.

§ 818.1 Air Force policy.

Air Force members are expected to pay their financial obligations in a proper and timely manner. For the purpose of this part, financial obligations are divided into two categories: Personal indebtedness, and dependent support. As a general rule, the Air Force has no legal authority to require its members or their family members to pay personal financial obligations. Enforcement is a matter for civil authorities. However, the Air Force can, under certain conditions, divert part of a member's pay for debts owed to the United States or any of its instrumentalities (see § 818.11) or to satisfy delinquent child support and alimony payments (see §§ 818.15 and 818.16). Administrative or disciplinary action may be taken against Air Force members in cases of continued financial irresponsibility. Such action is taken to improve discipline and maintain the standards of conduct expected of Air Force personnel, but cannot be used to enforce private civil obligations.

§ 818.2 Explanation of terms.

(a) *A proper and timely manner.* A manner which, under the circumstances, does not discredit the Air Force.

(b) *Financial obligation.* A legal obligation acknowledged by the member in which there is no reasonable dispute as to the facts, or one reduced to judgment. The judgment must conform to the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940, as amended (50 U.S.C. app. 501, (1970)), if applicable.

(c) *Claimant or complainant.* Any business or person seeking help in obtaining settlement of an alleged financial obligation or making a claim of delinquency concerning such matters.

(d) *Creditor.* Any person or business that extends or offers credit, or to whom or to which a debt is owed. This term includes lending institutions

(such as centralized charge systems) which, although not a party to the original transaction, seek help in obtaining settlement.

(e) *Debt collector.* Any person or agency whose business is primarily the collection of debts owed to another person or business.

(f) *Dependent.* Spouse and unmarried children—includes stepchildren, adopted children, and illegitimate children dependent on the military member. It may include others duly constituted (see DOD Military Pay and Allowances Entitlements Manual and AFR 30-20, Issue and control of Identification (ID Cards)).

§818.3 Responsibilities.

Specific responsibilities for ensuring Air Force standards are met:

(a) Major commands (MAJCOM), separate operating agencies (SOA), and direct reporting units (DRU) monitor and provide guidance to subordinate units, as required, to ensure compliance with established procedures.

(b) Initial active duty indoctrination sites ensure that a comprehensive block of instruction on personal financial management is included in teaching guides or course curriculums, as appropriate. This instruction should emphasize the Air Force policy regarding personal indebtedness and dependent support (§818.1) and the merits and benefits of the PFMP and the BRP. (See §818.5(b)(2) (i) and (ii)).

(c) Installation commanders:

(1) Develop appropriate guidance to assure compliance with prescribed procedures.

(2) Coordinate on all responses to high-level, executive, and congressional inquiries.

(d) Chiefs, CBPO:

(1) Through the CBPO Special Actions Unit, process all complaints according to this part.

(2) Upon request, provide UIF policy guidance to the unit commander.

(3) Coordinate on all responses to high level, executive, and congressional inquiries.

(e) Unit commanders:

(1) Implement required procedures at the unit level.

(2) Review all the available facts surrounding a complaint of personal in-

debtedness, or of nonsupport or inadequate support of dependents, and initiate appropriate action.

(3) Ensure complainants are provided a prompt reply that explains Air Force policy. At the unit commander's discretion, the first sergeant may respond to initial complaints. Second and subsequent inquiries require a reply by the unit commander.

(4) Advise members of the requirement to meet their financial and dependent support obligations and inform them that failure to do so damages their reputation and affects the public image of all Air Force personnel. At the unit commander's discretion the first sergeant may provide initial counseling to enlisted members. Second and subsequent inquiries require counseling by the unit commander.

(5) Refer personnel who have evidenced financial irresponsibility to the local PFMP manager for counseling on a mandatory but confidential basis.

(6) Coordinate on all responses to high-level, executive, and congressional inquiries that pertain to personnel assigned to the unit.

(7) Consider administrative or disciplinary action against members in cases of continued financial irresponsibility, fraud, deceit, criminal conduct, or failure to support dependents. Consult the staff judge advocate for guidance.

(f) Air Force members:

(1) Are expected to pay their just financial obligations in a proper and timely manner.

(2) Are expected to provide regular and adequate support to their dependents.

(3) Maintain reasonable contact with their creditors and dependents to minimize Air Force involvement.

(g) PFMP managers:

(1) Establish a consultant function to assist personnel in financial management matters, or other subjects as deemed appropriate to the needs of the local base population.

(2) Advise commanders regarding Air Force policy.

(h) Staff judge advocates:

(1) Advise commanders on the application of Air Force policy on individual cases. Include advice on administrative

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or disciplinary action that may be appropriate in cases involving continued financial irresponsibility, fraud, deceit, criminal conduct, or failure to support dependents, including arrearages.

(2) Provide guidance concerning federal, state, and local laws (e.g., bankruptcy, garnishment, wage earner plans, the Truth in Lending Act (Pub. L. 90-321), Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (Pub. L. 95-109), The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940, as amended, etc.).

(3) Coordinate on all responses to high-level, executive, and congressional inquiries.

(i) Family support centers serve as a source of information, counseling, and referral for family members in need of support and financial management assistance.

§ 818.4 Review of complaints.

Complaints received regarding personal indebtedness or nonsupport of dependents should first be forwarded to the consolidated base personnel office (CBPO) Special Actions Unit to ensure that they pertain to an Air Force member. Also, indebtedness complaints should be reviewed by the staff judge advocate's office to ensure that they meet the general policies and requirements for acceptance (see §§ 818.7 and 818.8).

(a) The CBPO Special Actions Unit forwards processable cases to the unit commander for action, or:

(1) If the member has been reassigned, forwards the case to the current CBPO Special Actions Unit and advises the complainant of referral.

(2) If member has separated with no further military status or has retired, advises the complainant accordingly and indicates they are unable to assist because the individual is no longer under Air Force jurisdiction.

(3) If the member has been released from active duty, forwards the case to Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center, Special Actions Branch (HQ ARPC/DPAS), Denver CO 80280-5000, and advises the complainant of the referral.

(b) Indebtedness complaints that do not meet processing requirements are returned to the complainant with an

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explanation of the reason or reasons for return.

(c) For dependent nonsupport or inadequate support cases forwarded by HQ AFMPC/DPMASC, the commander must furnish the following information in the reply to that office (if negative, so state):

(1) Requirement of court order or decree, if applicable, and degree of compliance by the member.

(2) Date, amount, and method of prior support payments.

(3) Proposed date, amount, and method (for instance, money order, personal check, allotment, and, if by allotment, the effective date of first payroll deduction, and so forth) of future support payments (primary and arrearages, if any).

(4) If drawing basic allowance for quarters (BAQ), the amount received, type (for instance, with dependents or without dependents), and basis for receipt (wife, child or children in custody of ex-wife, and so forth).

(5) Action taken or projected to be taken to comply with § 818.14, where appropriate, regarding the BAQ.

§ 818.5 Processing of complaints.

Any complaint that meets the requirements of this part will be processed. Processed means that the commander shall, within 15 calendar days of receipt of a complaint:

(a) Review all available facts surrounding the transaction or forming the basis for the complaint, including the member's legal rights and counterclaims. Assess the actions of the member as they apply to Air Force policy in these situations by reviewing the requirements of the credit agreement, court order, separation agreement, or other documents and actions taken by the member to resolve the matter, and the financial status of the member.

(b) Advise the member of Air Force policy appropriate to the complaint—that personal debts are expected to be paid in a proper and timely manner or that Air Force members are expected to provide regular and adequate support for their dependents. Also, explain what the member should do to comply with that policy.

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(1) Legal counseling services are available regarding indebtedness and dependent support agreements.

(2) Financial counseling and assistance services are available through the Personal Financial Management Program (PFMP) or the Budget Restructuring Program (BRP).

(i) PFMP is designed to assist personnel in analyzing personal financial problem areas, developing budgets, formulating debt-liquidation plans, obtaining consumer protection, improving checkbook maintenance, and buying on credit. (See AFR 170-32, Personal Financial Management Program (PFMP))

(ii) BRP is a coordinated approach between the PFMP manager, Headquarters Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) and the installation commander, whereby members who are undergoing financial difficulties may obtain a loan. BRP loans are made to deserving members in selected cases where long-term debt problems are such that budget restructuring is essential if the member is to function effectively in the Air Force environment.

(iii) Counseling services may also be available from the onbase military banking facility or credit union.

(c) Advise the complainant of Air Force policy that applies to the situation. Responses to dependent support complaints will include, when appropriate, a copy of the factsheet describing the legal process procedures that may be taken against the Air Force (§818.20 and 818.21). Form letters are not permitted.

(1) The Air Force does not arbitrate disputed cases, admit or deny validity of the complaint, or confirm the liability of its members.

(2) Under no circumstances will the response indicate whether or not administrative or disciplinary action has been taken against the member as a result of the complaint.

(3) Replies should be courteous and responsive to the complaint. The commander is not an intermediary and that impression should not be given in the reply.

(4) Commanders must actively monitor complaints until they are resolved. The Air Force cannot tolerate financial irresponsibility, neglect, dishonesty, or

evasiveness. Failure to liquidate personal financial obligations promptly and honorably or to provide regular and adequate financial support to dependents could necessitate administrative or disciplinary action. If the commander decides the complaint reflects adversely on the member, the administrative or disciplinary action should be made a part of the unfavorable information file (UIF) according to AFR 35-32 (Unfavorable Information Files, Control Rosters, Administrative Reprimands and Admonitions) or the unit assigned personnel information file (UAPIF) according to AFR 35-44 (Military Personnel Records Systems).

§818.6 High-level inquiries (AFR 11-7, Air Force Relations with Congress).

Replies to high-level, executive, and congressional inquiries should be coordinated through the installation commander, the staff judge advocate, director of personnel, and inspector general. As a minimum, replies should state Air Force policy (§818.1), and a summary of the position taken by the member, if applicable. For inquiries requiring response to HQ AFMPC Congressional Inquiries Section (DPMRPH2), include that information required by §818.4(c), as appropriate, in addition to:

(a) Whether or not the member agrees to release of information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. (See part 806b of this chapter)

(b) Name of unit commander, address, and base telephone number.

Subpart B—Personal Indebtedness

§818.7 General policies.

(a) Members are expected to pay their financial obligations in a proper and timely manner. Claims of indebtedness, including returned checks, if properly supported, are processed as prescribed in §818.5.

(b) Inform claimants, desiring to contact a military member about indebtedness, that they may obtain the member's military address by writing to the HQ AFMPC Research, Locator Fees Section (HQ AFMPC/DPMD003), Northeast Office Place, 9504 IH 35 North, San Antonio TX 78233-6636. Usually, a research fee of \$3.50 is charged for this

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service. For those cases where an address is not releasable, HQ AFMPC/DPMD003 provides mail forwarding service at no additional cost.

(c) The processing of complaints will not be extended to those:

(1) Who have not made a bona fide effort to collect the debt directly from the military member through personal contact, correspondence, or other means.

(2) Whose claims are patently false and misleading, or are in violation of state laws concerning usury and debt collection practices (§818.4).

(3) Whose claims are obviously exorbitant (§818.4).

(d) Some states have enacted laws that prohibit creditors from contacting a debtor's employer with respect to indebtedness or communicating facts concerning indebtedness to any employer unless certain conditions are met. The conditions that must be met to remove this prohibition are generally such things as reduction of a debt to judgment and obtaining written permission of the debtor.

(1) At Air Force installations in states having such laws, the processing of debt complaints will not be extended to those creditors who are not in compliance with the state law. Commanders may advise creditors that this rule has been established because it is the general policy of the Air Force to comply with state law when that law does not infringe upon military interests.

(2) This policy will govern even though the creditor is not licensed to do business in the state where the debtor is located.

(e) Under Pub. L. 95-109, contact by a debt collector with third parties for the purpose of aiding debt collection is prohibited without the prior consent of the debtor, given directly to the debt collector, or without a court order. Creditors are generally exempt from Pub. L. 95-109 when they collect on their own behalf.

(f) Denial of privileges:

(1) If a claimant, having been notified of the requirements of this part, refuses or repeatedly fails to comply with its provisions; or a claimant, regardless of the merits of the claim, clearly has shown that an attempt is being made

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to make unreasonable use of the processing privilege, the CBPO Special Actions Unit documents the case, provides comments and recommendations, and submits the documentation through command channels to HQ AFMPC/DPMASC.

(2) Cases involving usurious, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive business practices are reported to the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board according to AFR 125-11 (Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Boards and Off-Installation Military Enforcement Services), as well as HQ AFMPC/DPMASC if it appears that Air Force-wide action is appropriate.

§818.8 General requirements for acceptance of complaints.

Requirements in this section do not apply to claims by Federal, State, or Municipal governments, including foreign, nor to those creditors not otherwise subject to Federal Reserve Board (FRB) Regulation Z (12 CFR part 226, §§226.3, 226.9 (1978)).

(a) *Full disclosure and standards of fairness.* The Truth in Lending Act (Pub. L. 90-321) prescribes the general disclosure requirements that must be met by those offering or extending consumer credit. It also prescribes the specific disclosure requirements for both open-end and installment credit transactions.

(1) In place of government requirements, state regulations apply to credit transactions if the FRB determines that the state regulations impose substantially similar requirements and provide adequate enforcement measures.

(2) Commanders should seek advice from their local staff judge advocate to determine whether federal or state laws and regulations apply.

(b) *Certificates of compliance:* (1) Creditors subject to FRB regulation Z, and assignees claiming thereunder, must provide an executed copy of the Certificate of Compliance with their request for assistance. They must also include a copy of the general and specific disclosures provided the member as required by Pub. L. 90-321.

(2) Creditors not subject to FRB Regulation Z (for example, public utility companies, grocery stores, and so

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forth) must include a certification that their request contains neither interest, finance charges, nor other fees in excess of that permitted by the laws of the state in which the obligation was incurred.

(3) Foreign-owned companies having debt complaints against a member must provide a true copy of the terms of the debt, translated into English, and certification of their subscription to the Standards of Fairness.

(c) *Evidence of prior actions.* Such evidence should include photostatic, file, or other duplicated copies, or documentary proof (for example, chronological account activity listings, notarized personal statements, postal documentation, and so forth) showing that every effort has been made to obtain payment by direct contact with the member.

§ 818.9 Dishonored checks and similar instruments.

Every check, draft, or order for the payment of money drawn on any bank or other depository carries with it the representation of payment in full when presented. If dishonored, checks and similar instruments are considered to be evidence of personal indebtedness until redeemed or the member asserts a valid defense to payment. The procedures in § 818.5 apply, and commanders should counsel members on Air Force policy regarding personal indebtedness. Although redeemed:

(a) Administrative or disciplinary action may be appropriate where criminal conduct is evident. The commander should consult the staff judge advocate to determine whether action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or other administrative action is appropriate.

(b) Repeated cases of dishonored checks may serve as the basis for administrative action, to include letters of reprimand, UIF entries, over-stamping identification cards to reflect the denial of check cashing privileges (AFR 30-20, Issue and Control of Identification (ID) Cards), or administrative separation. The commander should consult the staff judge advocate on the appropriateness of administrative action.

NOTE: These provisions are not appropriate for dishonored checks issued by a military dependent unless the staff judge advocate determines that the member may be held personally liable based on a review of the circumstances.

§ 818.10 Bankruptcy.

Air Force policy is one of strict neutrality. No adverse action may be taken against a member of the Air Force for either filing a petition or because of a discharge in bankruptcy. Underlying facts may involve mismanagement of personal affairs or dishonorable failure to pay just debts and could form a basis for adverse action against a member of the Air Force, but neither filing a petition (for bankruptcy or for payments out of future earnings) nor a discharge in bankruptcy can, of themselves, be considered "mismanagement" or "dishonorable."

(a) Commanders should consult with the servicing staff judge advocate before considering any administrative or disciplinary action against a member for conduct associated with a bankruptcy petition.

(b) Further, the staff judge advocate should be consulted when providing financial counseling for members considering bankruptcy.

(c) The Air Force recognizes and complies with decrees in bankruptcy cases.

§ 818.11 Involuntary deductions for personal indebtedness.

Federal law (5 U.S.C. 5514 and 37 U.S.C. 1007(c)) authorizes the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center (AFAFC) to satisfy a military member's personal indebtedness to the Air Force and other Department of Defense (DOD) Components, federal agencies, and nonappropriated funds instrumentalities by involuntary salary offset or administrative offset (AFR 170-30, Debt Collecting). In addition, the AFAFC is authorized to garnish the wages of Air Force members to satisfy personal indebtedness for the enforcement of child support and alimony payments under certain conditions (§§ 818.15 and 818.16).

Subpart C—Dependent Support

§ 818.12 General policies.

Members are expected to pay their financial obligations in a proper and timely manner. Dependent support, direct or in-kind, is a primary element of an individual's personal financial obligations. Failure to provide adequate dependent support, including the failure to make up arrears in support, is the proper subject of command consideration for disciplinary or administrative action.

(a) Air Force members are expected to comply with the financial support provisions of a court order or written support agreement. If the validity of either is questioned by the member, the issue must be resolved by the parties or through the civil courts. The Air Force does not arbitrate such disputes. Written agreements include such things as separation agreements, property settlement agreements, and correspondence in which the amount of support has been agreed to by the parties concerned.

(b) Air Force members are expected to provide adequate support for dependents in the absence of a court order or written support agreement. The amount of support is generally based on the dependent's needs (for example, food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and so forth) and the ability of the member to pay. Each Air Force member is expected to provide support in an amount, or kind, bearing a reasonable relation to the needs of the dependents and the ability of the member to meet those needs.

(1) The Air Force has no legal authority to arbitrate the amount of support to be provided or to unilaterally deduct money from a member's pay to ensure dependent support.

(2) Commanders must assess the actions of the member with respect to their ability to pay and compliance with Air Force policy.

(i) For example, an individual who purchases a new car for personal use and then claims an inability to provide dependent support because of financial constraints ordinarily would not be viewed as being in compliance with Air Force policy.

(ii) Further, an individual who acknowledges an existing obligation and initiates an allotment for future support but does not provide for past periods of nonsupport ordinarily would not be viewed as being in compliance with Air Force policy.

(3) Commanders must assess the member's compliance with Air Force policy when a family is separated either by choice or due to an assignment action (for example, member volunteers for a dependent-restricted overseas area, elects to serve an unaccompanied tour, early returns dependents from an overseas area, is absent as a result of lengthy temporary duty, and so forth).

(c) Examples of in-kind support includes such things as making the mortgage or rent payments on a home occupied by the dependents, making the payments on an automobile being used by the dependents, paying medical bills, paying for school tuition, and so forth.

(d) Dependents, including ex-spouses on behalf of a member's dependent child or children, are entitled to military legal counseling services and are encouraged to seek such advice when needed.

(e) The member's obligation to support a child or children is not affected by desertion or other misconduct on the part of the spouse or ex-spouse.

(f) Members are expected to initiate changes of address for support allotments and process appropriate applications for issue or renewal of dependent identification cards in a timely manner when requested to do so by or on behalf of dependents.

§ 818.13 Proof of support.

Generally, proof of dependent support is not required. However, on receipt of a complaint of nonsupport or inadequate support from, or on behalf of, a dependent for whom the member is receiving basic allowance for quarters (BAQ), proof of support is required.

§ 818.14 Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ).

Under the DOD Military Pay and Allowances Entitlements Manual (DODPM), paragraph 30236, BAQ is not payable on behalf of a dependent whom

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a member refuses to support. Failure to support a dependent on whose behalf BAQ is being received requires recoupment for periods of nonsupport. Members should be informed of this provision and be advised that refusal or failure to support dependents requires administrative termination of BAQ entitlement at the with dependents rate.

(a) BAQ termination at the with dependents rate does not relieve a member of responsibility for providing dependent support.

(b) Commanders must assess the member's compliance with Air Force policy in those situations where the member would not otherwise be authorized the BAQ entitlement. For example, member is residing in government quarters and has no other dependents.

§ 818.15 Garnishment.

Federal law authorizes legal process against the Air Force only for the enforcement of child support and alimony payments according to state law. Service of legal process must be accomplished by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. The Commander, Air Force Accounting and Finance Center, Attention: JA, Denver CO 80279-5000, telephone (303) 370-7524, is the agent designated to accept legal process within the Air Force for active duty, Reserve, and retired military members.

(a) Legal process is defined as any writ, order, summons, or other similar process in the nature of garnishment issued by:

(1) A court of competent jurisdiction within any state, territory, or possession of the United States; or

(2) A court of competent jurisdiction in any foreign country with which the United States has entered into an agreement that requires the United States to honor such process; or

(3) An authorized official pursuant to an order of such court of competent jurisdiction or pursuant to state or local law. (See 42 U.S.C. 659, 662.)

(b) Process directed for garnishment must demonstrate, either on its face or by accompanying documentation, that collection is sought only for child support or alimony or both. The process must also show the member's Social

Security number and whether the member is active duty, Reserve, or retired.

(c) If the validity of a court's order is questioned by the member concerned, the issue must be resolved by the parties or in court by the member or his or her private attorney. The Air Force has no authority to resolve such disputes.

§ 818.16 Statutory allotments.

An active duty member's pay and allowances are subject to a mandatory allotment to satisfy child or child and spousal support obligations where payments are in arrears for at least 2 months.

(a) A statutory allotment, pursuant to federal law, may be accomplished by the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center upon their being furnished a written notice from a court or state agency with responsibility for administering child support programs under title IV-D of the Social Security Act.

(b) The notice and the following documents or information must be served on the Commander, Air Force Accounting and Finance Center, Attention: JA, Denver CO 80279-5000:

(1) A statement that the person signing is an agent or an attorney of the state having a title IV-D plan who has the duty or authority under such plan to seek to recover amounts owed by a member as child or child and spousal support or a notice from a state court or any agent of the court who has authority to issue an order against a member for the support of a child.

(2) The service member's full name and Social Security number.

(3) A recently certified copy of the order awarding support must be included with the notice and a statement that the support payments are in arrears at least 2 months.

(4) A court order showing the amount of the arrears and specifying that payments be made to liquidate such arrears.

(5) The total amount of the allotment (the amount to be paid for current support and the amount to be paid each month towards arrears must be specified), the date or dates that the current support should terminate (for each

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child), and the name and address of the payee.

§ 818.17 Paternity claims.

The Air Force does not judge paternity claims against its personnel. Paternity must be established either by admission, or by judicial order or decree of paternity, or child support duly ordered by a United States or foreign court of competent jurisdiction.

(a) Allegations of paternity against active duty members will be transmitted to the member concerned through his unit commander. The unit commander will:

(1) If paternity is denied, inform the claimant accordingly and advise of Air Force policy regarding paternity claims.

(2) Once paternity is established, advise the member of his moral and legal obligations as well as his legal rights in the matter. The member will be encouraged to render the necessary financial support to the child and take any other action considered proper under the circumstances. Advise the claimant of Air Force policy as it relates to support of dependents and the position taken by the member, if the member elects to take one.

(3) On receipt of a communication from a judge of a civilian court, including a court summons or a judicial order, concerning the member's availability to appear at an adoption hearing where it is alleged that he is the father of an illegitimate child, provide a reply that:

(i) Due to military requirements, the member cannot be granted leave to attend any court hearing until (date), or

(ii) A request by the member for leave to attend an adoption hearing on (date), if made, would be approved, or

(iii) The member has stated in a sworn written statement (forward a copy with response) that he is not the natural parent of the child, and that only a court of competent jurisdiction can judge the matter, or

(iv) Due to the member's unavailability caused by a specific reason, a completely responsive answer cannot be made.

(v) Inform member of the inquiry and the response. Also, member should be urged to obtain legal assistance (in-

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cluding an explanation of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940, if appropriate).

(b) If the member has been released from active duty, the unit commander forwards the inquiry to HQ ARPC/DPAS, Denver CO 80280-5000. Advise complainant of the referral.

(1) HQ ARPC/DPAS, on receipt of an allegation of paternity, provides an appropriate response to the claimant as set forth for members on active duty under paragraphs (a) (1) and (2) of this section.

(2) Communications from a judge of a civilian court including a court summons or judicial order, concerning the availability of personnel to appear at an adoption hearing where it is alleged that the member not on active duty is the father of an illegitimate child, shall receive a reply that such person is not on active duty. A copy of the communication and the reply is forwarded to the named individual.

(3) When requested by a judge of a civilian court, the member's address may be furnished if the request is supported by a:

(i) Certified copy of either a judicial order or decree of paternity or support duly rendered against the member by a United States or foreign court of competent jurisdiction; or

(ii) Document that establishes that the member has made an official admission or statement acknowledging paternity or responsibility for support of a child before a court of competent jurisdiction, administrative or executive agency, or official authorized to receive it; or

(iii) Court summons, judicial order, or similar document of a court within the United States in a case concerning the adoption of an illegitimate child wherein the member is alleged to be the father.

(4) The address may also be furnished if the claimant, with the corroboration of a physician's affidavit, alleges and explains an unusual medical situation that makes it essential to obtain information from the alleged father to protect the physical health of either the prospective mother or the unborn child.

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(c) If the member has been separated with no further military status or retired, the unit commander advises the claimant:

(1) Of the date of discharge. Indicate that you are unable to assist because the individual is no longer under Air Force jurisdiction. Also, advise that the Air Force assumes no responsibility for the whereabouts of individuals no longer under its jurisdiction.

(2) In addition, the last known address of the former member may be furnished the requester under the same conditions as set forth for members not on active duty under paragraph (b) of this section.

§ 818.18 Certificate of compliance.

See 32 CFR part 43a.10.

§ 818.19 Standards of fairness.

See 32 CFR part 43a.9.

§ 818.20 Garnishment of pay of Air Force members and employees only for child support or alimony obligations.

(a) This section is for general guidance. For more specific information, refer to the United States Code (42 U.S.C. 659, 661, 662; 15 U.S.C. 1673), the Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR part 581), and applicable State law.

(b) Federal law authorizes legal process against the United States Air Force only for the enforcement of child support and alimony obligations of members and employees in accordance with State law. This includes active duty, Reserve, Air National Guard (ANG), and retired military members, and civilian employees of the United States Air Force. See 42 U.S.C. 659.

(c) Legal process is defined as any writ, order, summons, or other similar process in the nature of garnishment directed to the US Air Force which is issued by:

(1) A court of competent jurisdiction within any State, territory, or possession of the United States;

(2) A court of competent jurisdiction in any foreign country with which the United States has entered into an agreement that requires the United States to honor such process; or

(3) An authorized official pursuant to an order of such court of competent ju-

risdiction or pursuant to State or local law. See 42 U.S.C. 659, 662.

(d) Child support is the legal obligation of an individual to provide periodic payments of funds for the support and maintenance of a child, subject to, and in accordance with, State law.

(e) Alimony is defined as the obligation of an individual to provide periodic payments for the support and maintenance of the spouse (or former spouse) including separate maintenance, alimony pendente lite, maintenance, and spousal support. The definition of alimony expressly excludes payments or transfers of property made in compliance with any community property settlement, equitable distribution of property, or other division of property between spouses. See 42 U.S.C. 662 (b) and (c).

(f) Attorney's fees, interest, and court costs are within the definition of child support and alimony when, and to the extent, they are recoverable pursuant to a decree, order, or judgment issued in accordance with applicable State law by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(g) State law is to be followed when processing garnishment requests (as to jurisdiction and competency of courts, procedures, exemptions, and the operation of garnishment or similar process). However, State law as it applies to service of process and exemptions from garnishment and similar process may be affected by Federal law. See 42 U.S.C. 659(b) and 15 U.S.C. 1673(b).

(h) Unless an otherwise lesser amount is specified by State law, Federal law provides a limit of 50 percent on the amount that is subject to garnishment for a person supporting a second family (a spouse or dependent child), and 60 percent for a person who is not. The percentages are increased by an additional 5 percent in each situation if there are outstanding arrearages more than 12 weeks old.

(i) A Federal employee's pay subject to garnishment includes wages, salary bonuses, incentive pay, retired pay, or disability retirement pay. (The United States will exclude debts owed to the United States; Federal, State and local income tax withholding; Social Security withholdings (FICA); deductions for health insurance premiums; normal

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retirement contributions; normal government life insurance premiums; fines and forfeitures ordered by court-martial; Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan; and Survivor Benefit Plan.) See 42 U.S.C. 662(g) and 5 CFR 581.105.

(j) Process directed to the Commander, AFAFC/JA, must demonstrate, either on its face or by accompanying documentation, that collection is sought only for child support or alimony or both. The process must also show the social security number and whether the member is retired, Reserve, ANG, active duty, or civilian employee. (If the employee is a civilian, the name of the base where the civilian is employed should also be provided.)

(k) In order to process the request efficiently, these documents should be provided:

(1) If the process does not reflect that it has been brought to enforce an obligation of support, a certified copy of the order, judgment, or decree that originally established the obligation to support (5 CFR 581.202(c));

(2) A copy of any pleading requesting reduction of delinquent amounts to a judgment amount, and a copy of any order resulting therefrom;

(3) Any pleading, affidavit, or application requesting garnishment process; and

(4) The supporting execution, if any. Documentation will vary depending on State law.

(l) The law directs the Federal government to answer garnishment or similar process within 30 days (or within such longer period as may be prescribed by applicable State law) after date of service. See 42 U.S.C. 659(d).

(m) Service of legal process must be accomplished by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. Any documents served in any other manner will be returned without action. The following agents have been designated to accept legal process within the Air Force:

(1) Active duty, reserve, Air National Guard (ANG), and retired military members, and civilian employees of appropriated fund activities: Commander, Air Force Accounting and Finance Cen-

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ter, Attention: JA, Denver CO 80279-5000; (303) 370-7524.

(2) Nonappropriated fund civilian employees of base exchanges: Army and Air Force Exchange Service, Attention: GC-G, Dallas TX 75222-3956; (214) 320-2641.

(3) Civilian employees of all other Air Force nonappropriated fund activities: AFMPC/JA, Attention: NAF Law Division, Randolph AFB TX 78150-6001; (512) 652-6691.

(n) See 5 CFR part 581, appendix A.

§818.21 Statutory allotments.

(a) On 3 September 1982, the President signed into law section 172(a) of Pub. L. 97-248 (codified at 42 U.S.C. 665, effective 1 October 1982) which allows mandatory allotments from an active duty member's pay and allowances to satisfy child or child and spousal support obligations. (Alimony or spousal support alone does not qualify under this law).

(b) A spouse or former spouse may obtain an allotment for child support or child and spousal support in cases where payments are in arrears for at least 2 months.

(c) This act provides that no more than 50 percent of a member's pay and allowances are subject to be allotted from a member who is supporting a second family and no more than 60 percent from a member who is not. The percentages are increased by 5 percent in each situation where there are outstanding arrearages which are 12 or more weeks past due. Pay and allowances and exclusions are defined in the DOD regulations.

(d) After the Air Force member is notified and given an opportunity to be counseled, the allotment will be established in the next available month following 30 days after notice is made on the Air Force member. The payments will be made at the end of the month in which the allotment was established.

(e) An allotment, pursuant to this statute, may be accomplished by furnishing the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center a written notice from a court or state agency administering child support programs under title IV-D of the Social Security Act. This notice must be signed and must contain the following information:

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(1) A statement that the person signing is an agent or an attorney of the State having a IV-D plan who has the duty or authority under such plan to seek to recover amounts owed by a service member as child or child and spousal support or a notice from a state court or any agent of the court which has authority to issue an order against a service member for the support of a child.

(2) The service member's full name and social security number.

(3) A recently certified copy of the order awarding support must be included with the notice.

(4) A statement that the support payments are in arrears at least two months.

(5) A court order showing the amount of the arrears and specifying that payments be made to liquidate such arrears.

(6) The total amount of the allotment. (Specify the amount to be paid for current support and the amount to be paid each month toward arrears.)

(7) The dates that the current support should terminate (for each child).

(8) Name and address of payee.

(f) The notice and documents must be served on the following: Commander, AFAFC, Attn: JA, Denver CO 80279-5000.