



Things to Think About!



By Brandon Atkin

For more information and to find your correct forms please visit the following website.

For Air Force, Army, and Navy; dependency determinations for that Service are processed by the Dependency Determination Branch at the respective service-specific DFAS site. These are DFAS-Indianapolis for Army and Air Force and DFAS-Cleveland for Navy. For the Marine Corps, dependency determination are made at HQMC Quantico, VA.

All forms can be found on this website:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/ddforms1-499.htm>

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Military Dependent ID Cards: Managing the Paperwork By Linda Jorgensen

We've received a lot of email regarding the amount of paperwork it takes to get a favorable dependency determination. Many express dismay at the amount of documentation they are now required to submit. In our May 2010 newsletter Things to Think About- Dependency Determination, I wrote about the process. It can be found here: http://www.snrproject.com/downloads/newsletter/v6n5-Dependency_Determination.pdf

There is a large amount of paperwork involved and we have to do it, too. My husband and I had to renew our family's military ID cards in April of this year and, due to some changes in the system, ended up not being quite ready. We were required to send more documentation than previously required and I didn't check ahead of time. (Hand to forehead...)

Paperwork is the bane of my existence. I hate it but I have to put up with it. Everything we do for our child, no matter the source, requires boatloads of paperwork. An ID card is generally pretty straight forward until you have to justify a disability and prove you are providing 51% or more of the support for that dependent. To provide proof of disability and support you're going to need some documentation. And that means paperwork.

I have found two strategies that make the process simpler for me. Start early and know what data you'll be requested to provide. That means double checking what I need before I need to start gathering it. Once I know what we need I'll keep the hard copies of the data in a file and enter it on a spread sheet on my hard drive. I keep the actual paperwork in files as I do get asked to provide the actual document(s), as we were last month. A spread sheet with the monthly numbers already entered made it easier to add it all up and input on the DD 137-5.

Don't forget, "**If it isn't on paper, it didn't happen**". Who knows what documents you may need to file? File the bills and statements and make monthly entries on the spread sheet.

Our problem came when I didn't check the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) requirements BEFORE I sent in the packet for review. I just assumed I knew what they needed based on our last go round 3 years ago. This resulted in a short delay while the DFAS case worker contacted us with a shopping list of missing documents which I pulled from my cavernous file and sent in. As a result we had to wait an extra 4 weeks for our determination letter to be issued. That 4 week wait taught me a couple of things.

First Lesson Learned ~ Know What You Need

Do a quick online check to see what information is currently being requested and keep in mind there may be a change in that 12 months leading up to the actual application submission.

Second Lesson ~ Start Early!

Once you know what you need start your record gathering at least 12 months in advance of the expiration date of your dependants ID card. You will be asked to provide 12 months' worth of data.

Third Lesson ~ Keep the Basics on File

There is a long list of general information that we're required to report or submit the document for proof. Four documents must be submitted, regardless, along with the complete, signed and notarized DD137-5. These are:

1. Birth Certificate that shows the military sponsor is the parent (adoption papers for adopted children)
2. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) letter. This is the letter sent out every January showing eligibility for SSI and the amount received by your child for the upcoming year.
3. Letter of Medical Sufficiency no older than 90 days prior to submission. Don't know what that is? Check it out here:
http://www.snrproject.com/downloads/newsletter/v8n8-Medical_Sufficiency_Letters-Revisited.pdf
4. Court orders (Court generated letters of incapacitation, guardianship with the sponsor's name on it, etc.)

The following information is currently required on the DD form itself:

1. **Residence:** Proof of the monthly expenses you pay for your child's housing at home, hospital or institution. Report any residence income they may have, services they receive, who provides them and how much. Be ready to provide the agency name, address and contact information. If the child is in a hospital or institution you will be asked to provide the dollar amount spent each month for room, food, rehabilitation classes or services, specialized equipment, medical care, clothing, laundry/dry cleaning, education, transportation, personal insurance and other expenses you may be required to pay every month.
2. **Household Expenses:** Rent or mortgage including taxes and insurance payments. Food, utilities, furniture and appliances, repairs on the home, other applicable expenses.
3. **Child's Personal Expenses:** Clothing, laundry/dry cleaning, medical (do not include expenses paid for by insurance, welfare or Medicaid), value of a USIP

card (military ID card - verification of card amount is requested), personal insurance, personal taxes, private auto payments, Monthly transportation payments, school expenses, and 'other'. We include activity expenses in 'other'.

4. **Child's Income:** If your child works or has other income you'll be asked to report it. Wages, salaries, tips, interest on investments, bonds, savings, trust funds, etc. Contributions from a person other than the military member. Scholarships or grants, tax refunds, social security payments (disability or regular), supplemental security income (SSI), Veterans Administration payments and state or local welfare aid, including aid to dependent children will all be requested. Be prepared to explain who pays for your child's hospitalization or institutional care. Civilian medical facility? A military facility? State or local agency? **Submit pay stubs or end of year income statements.**
5. **Child's Employment:** If your child is working, or has worked, within the previous 12 months you'll need to report it. Name of employer, type of employment, date started, date ended, monthly salary and reason employment ended. You'll be asked to submit pay stubs with your form.
6. **Child's School Attendance:** Name and address of school(s), type of school, dates attended, major.
7. **Member's Contribution: Show the total amount the member has contributed to the child's support for each of the past 12 months.** Be sure to follow the directions on the instruction page which accompanies each DD form on this one. The formula changed a bit this time.

By following instructions, preparing a complete form and document package for review a determination can be made and a letter issued in a reasonable time frame. Be prepared, start early!

One Last Tip: This information is required for adult children AND dependent parents! Make good use of your filing cabinet and be sure the DD Form 137-5 is signed AND notarized by a notary public before you send it in!