

SoloSez Popular Threads, June 2012

Military Suicide, ABA & Solos — A Challenge for You

Military suicide has increased to the point where, on average, there is one every single day. It is just heartbreaking to think that each morning we wake up another member of our military has killed him or herself. The drumbeat of those deaths is haunting to me.

The ABA has a Military Pro Bono Center — <http://www.militaryprobono.org/> — and also a website that offers legal resources to members of the military and their loved ones — http://www.americanbar.org/portals/public_resources/aba_home_front.html

I know the Solosez community to be most generous when there's a need - whether it was one of us who is faced foreclosure of the home where he, his pregnant wife, and their children lived, the need for a sample pleading for an emergency matter, or getting some bit of technology working again. Most every day brings us an example of the good hearts and ready support here.

It is from this good and strong base, that I issue you a challenge to join me. I just signed up with the Military Pro Bono Center. I invite you to join me. There are 4,000 +/- of us here. If just one of us helped a military person or family member each day, we would have the next almost 11 years covered. Will military suicides be greatly reduced? Regrettably, the answer is probably not. But it won't be because we failed to post to help one of our military members in need.

To sign up, go to <http://www.militaryprobono.org/>

Deb

Deborah G. Matthews, Virginia

I join Deb in urging all of you to register at the ABA pro bono center. (I am not certain whether you have to be a ABA member to do so. If you aren't, don't let that stop you; try it and see what happens. I suspect the center will welcome help from everyone, ABA member or not.)

There are two ways to serve our troops through this center. (1) You can register to be contacted if a pro bono case arises in your geographic area AND in the substantive area of practice that you chose. (You may choose more than one.) If an appropriate case arises,

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the center will provide information about the case to you for you to review to determine whether you want to take it, but you will not be obligated to take on the representation. (2) Don't want to get involved in a case but still want to help? Well, you can register for the "stand-by" program. As with the pro bono program, provide your geographic area and one or more substantive areas. This list will be provided to military lawyers, and you will be a potential resource for the lawyer to call to get an explanation of the law that pertains to the service member's case. As with the pro bono program, you are not obligated to respond.

As one who served in the Navy more than forty years ago, and who worked for a while in a Naval legal office during that time, I know how valuable our assistance can be to our service members and their families. They are doing a whale of a lot for us, and we need to do our part to support them. I've responded to Deb's challenge by registering for both programs. You may register for either one or both. Please consider meeting her challenge.

Thanks.

Roger A. Bartlett, Texas

I registered on Saturday when Deb sent out the original email. The process is really simple and their site right now lists about 50 cases all over the US of service members looking for pro bono assistance.

One of them (posted June 4) happens to be in San Jose, about 10 minutes away from me. It involves a child custody fight where Mom is in the military.

I know nothing about family law, though. It seems like at least 50% (my estimate) of the need is for family law lawyers.

Andy Chen, California
