

Pahrump Valley Times

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Nevada Military Legal Assistance program aids 900 in its first year



A public-private partnership to help active duty military personnel, reservists, National Guard soldiers and veterans in Nevada access legal services helped more than 900 individuals in its first year, the state Attorney General's Office reported Nov. 17.

The state Office of Military Legal Assistance's @EASE program is the first of its kind in the nation led by a state attorney general with public and private participation to provide free legal services for qualified service members, veterans and their families.

Nevada Attorney General Adam Laxalt last week received the 2016 Champion of Justice Award by the Las Vegas office of Nevada Legal Services for his work establishing the program.

When the program launched in November 2015, Laxalt said many soldiers don't qualify for traditional legal aid programs because they live just above the poverty line.

A Judge Advocate General Corps officer can make calls and send letters on a service member's behalf, but they can't take the matter to a civilian court. That means even a seemingly minor legal squabble, such as a landlord dispute, can be a big deal.

Veterans who have an honorable or general discharge from service can receive help through the program with wills and powers of attorney.

The report released Thursday by Laxalt's office included these facts about the state's military population:

* Nevada is home to an estimated 11,400 active duty military members, 7,620 reserve members, and over 228,000 veterans.

* The state's active-duty service members represent all five branches of the military, but more than 90 percent are serving in the Air Force.

* Many work in one of the four active military bases in Nevada (Nellis and Creech Air Force bases in the south and the Hawthorne Army Depot Base and Naval Air Station Fallon Navy Base in the north).

* Approximately 2,400 veterans live in the Pahrump area.

For more information about the program, visit nvagomla.nv.gov.

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