

**Responsibilities  
of the  
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate  
By  
Rudy Wartella**

Most people know to call the Staff Judge Advocate's Office when they have legal questions, but many still do not know what section to call. In order to save time in having your call re-directed, please take a few minutes to read over what each section does and how to contact them.

The Offices of the Staff Judge Advocate and the Trial Defense Service are located in Building 218 on Torii Station, across the street from the post office.

**Legal Assistance (Room 219):** In addition to doing wills, powers of attorney, and notaries (walk-in service), we provide legal advice on any personal, legal issues, except military criminal offenses and most military administrative separations (Trial Defense). We do not advise commanders or supervisors (Trial Counsel or Administrative Law attorneys). Army regulations forbid us from giving employment law advice, business advice, or advice on claims against the United States Government. For a legal assistance appointment call 644-4332.

**Tax Assistance (Room 221):** During tax season (1 February to 15 June), you can call 644-1040 for a tax appointment at Torii Station. During the off-season you can call the legal assistance office at 644-4332 for assistance.

**Trial Defense (Room 214):** Trial Defense Service is not only separate from Legal Assistance; it is separate from the Staff Judge Advocate's office. Soldiers who have been charged with an offense, read their rights, are receiving an Article 15, or an administrative separation should see a Trial Defense attorney. To make an appointment to talk with a Trial Defense attorney, call 644-5699.

**Military Justice (Room 237):** Commanders or supervisors who need legal advice on what action to take on a military justice matter, or need advice on what legal obligations they have to a Soldier, should contact Military Justice at 644-5195.

**Claims (Room 222)** If you want to file a claim for damage to your private property that resulted from a PCS or other government sponsored move, or was caused by a natural disaster (such as a typhoon), fire, flood, theft, or vandalism, or was due to the fault or negligence of Army activities, you should contact the claims office. Please contact claims office at 644-4742.

**International Law and Off-Duty Employment (Room 238)** If you are involved in a Japanese criminal investigation or traffic incident and need information on

Japanese law and procedures or you need a memorandum to verify you have status under the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement or you need to obtain approval to engage in off-duty employment or private commercial activities, then international law can provide you this information and assistance. Please contact the international law office at 644-4782.

**Labor Law (Room 240)** Commanders or supervisors who want legal advice concerning Army civilian personnel issues can contact the labor counselor at 644-4783. The labor law counselor is restricted to advising management officials and cannot represent or give advice to individual employees concerning their personal employment situation.

**Administrative Law, Ethics, Environmental Law, Contract Law (Room 236):** If you have a question in one of these areas, please call 644-4783.

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