Compassionate Reassignments

What is a compassionate reassignment?

Soldiers stationed overseas or in a distant part of the continental United States may, in certain limited circumstances, be granted reassignment to a location closer to their family. Reassignment prior to scheduled permanent change of station (PCS) requires a showing of substantial family need. Need usually exists in the form of a family emergency or some other extraordinary situation which requires the soldier's presence closer to home. The soldier must provide documentation detailing the nature of the situation along with an explanation as to why the soldier's presence is needed. With that documentation, the local military personnel office is the point-of-contact to apply for compassionate reassignment. The soldier's personnel branch has authority to grant or deny the request.

Emergencies arising during leave:

Personnel in a leave status may, in emergency situations only, apply directly to the closest Army installation for compassionate reassignment. In those situations, the soldier can sign-in at that installation, and have his or her application for reassignment processed through that installation's military personnel office. Absent a truly extraordinary situation, soldiers are expected to request compassionate reassignment through appropriate channels at their home station/installation.

What documentation is required?

The soldier requesting reassignment must prepare an informal statement (in paragraph format) containing the following information:

1. present unit of assignment;
2. if on leave - type of leave, number of days, and date due back at home assignment;
3. pay grade/rank, MOS, and component (active-duty, AGR, etc.)
4. DEROS (if stationed overseas) and current ETS;
5. leave address and telephone number;
6. assignment/location requested;
7. reason for request;
8. relationship, age, and location of immediate family members;
9. whether the soldier wishes to be considered for hardship discharge if compassionate reassignment is disapproved; and
10. whether reassignment has been requested before, and if so, when and what, if any, action was taken on the request.

The application for reassignment must contain the following documentary information in support of the soldier's statement:

1. if the request is based on the health of a member of the soldier's family, a signed statement from the family member's attending physician detailing the person's specific medical condition, the severity of the illness, and whether the soldier's presence closer to home would impact the condition and family situation;

   NOTE: permanent medical conditions do not provide justification for compassionate reassignment. The family member's condition must be one that is temporary in nature. The long-term view is the medical situation will end, and the soldier will return to a normal assignment rotation.

2. if legal problems are involved, a signed statement from an attorney justifying the need for the soldier's presence; or
3. if other problems are involved, supporting statements (notarized) from reliable persons with knowledge of the situation.

Finally, the application for reassignment should contain a statement from the soldier's chaplain, minister, priest, or other member of the clergy (depending on the soldier's religion) detailing the family situation.

For further information and guidance contact your Legal Assistance Office at 753-6245