

Military OneSource Video — What Happens When an Unrestricted Report of Domestic Abuse is Made With the Family Advocacy Program?

Video transcript

Narrator:

What happens when an unrestricted report of domestic abuse is made with the Family Advocacy Program?

Making an unrestricted report of abuse can be a difficult decision, but remember, everyone deserves to be safe and live a life free from abuse. And it can help to know about the process, as well as the resources and support available.

Here's what happens. An unrestricted report can be made by anyone experiencing abuse, those who are concerned about their own harmful behavior or a person who's concerned about the safety of someone else.

And if law enforcement or command are aware of an incident of domestic abuse, they're required to notify the Family Advocacy Program.

Once the Family Advocacy Program is informed of an incident, an advocate will reach out to the person experiencing abuse and can answer questions, provide support and work with the person to ensure safety measures are in place at the start of the process.

Once immediate needs are addressed, the advocate will give information about rights and treatment, how each step of the process works, what services are immediately available and what other supportive resources can be used down the line.

In most cases, a Family Advocacy Program clinician will also be involved.

A clinician is a licensed professional trained in therapeutic techniques and counseling, who can provide additional support to those who may benefit from it.

They'll meet separately with those involved in the situation about the concerns brought forward, and work to create a treatment plan.

Both advocates and clinicians will use evidence-based tools to assess the risk for abuse, and work to support emotional wellness throughout the process.

They can also provide information about services, including protection orders and additional counseling services, so that everyone can make the best decisions for their safety and relationship down the line.

It's important to know that if an unrestricted report is made by someone who has experienced abuse, the Family Advocacy Program must notify command and law enforcement, and does not have authority over the investigation of the incident or the outcome.

Law enforcement and command will decide what actions should be taken with the alleged abuser. Safety is always the number one priority.

Remember, everyone's situation is different, and the Family Advocacy Program is here to listen and help service members and their partners make the best choices for themselves.

Start online with the Family Advocacy Program at militaryonesource.mil/dava to find the help nearest you.