



## Understanding the Family Advocacy Program (FAP) Process for Child Maltreatment Allegations

**Introduction:** We understand that an allegation of child maltreatment can be a very stressful experience. When FAP receives a report of child maltreatment, the staff works to ensure that those who have the ability to help the family stay safe (e.g., commander, law enforcement, the Military Treatment Facility, local child protective agencies), are aware of the reported concerns.

**What Happens After a Report of Child Maltreatment:** Once the report is made, the service member's commander and FAP will immediately focus on ways to keep the family safe while the assessment process begins. That may mean issuing a Military Protective Order (MPO) if the alleged offender is the Service Member. The commander might also order a Service Member alleged offender into government quarters to separate him/her from the child until authorities determine if abuse has occurred. If the alleged offender is a civilian, the commander may choose to bar him/her from the base or offer temporary accommodations on base until assessments and a safety plan can be accomplished.

FAP will assess family safety and needs and recommend treatment. FAP may recommend a Victim Advocate to provide services such as court/medical accompaniment, information and resources, and safety planning (Victim Advocates do not provide direct services to children, but can assist an adult non-offending caregiver). FAP does not make legal decisions or take protective custody of children.

The child may need a medical examination. Other children in the home may need one as well. If needed, a medical provider will examine the child to identify and treat any injuries and to assess for evidence of past injuries.

**What Happens if Military or Civilian Law Enforcement is Involved:** Civilian and/or military law enforcement may investigate the report as well as the local child protective services agency. Both may interview members of the family and others who might have some insight into the home environment. They may also interview potential witnesses to the alleged child maltreatment incident. In severe cases of child maltreatment, and when there is no safe caregiver for the child, local child protective agencies may temporarily remove a child from the home. FAP does not remove children from homes, but may make referrals or recommendations to child protective agencies.

**How Can FAP Help My Family:** Once the child is safe (in or out of the home), FAP professionals focus on helping a family develop healthier relationships and parenting skills, often suggesting resources to help reduce stress in the family.

The DoD requires reports of child maltreatment to be presented at the Central Registry Board (CRB). Members of the CRB include the installation Vice Wing Commander who serves as the Chairperson, FAP, representatives from the Judge Advocate (JA), the Office of Special Investigations (OSI), the Command Chief, Security Forces and unit representatives such as the Commander and/or First Sergeant.

The CRB reviews the information collected confidentially and in a standardized format (information about the family is not discussed if it does not help determine if maltreatment occurred). If the incident does meet standardized maltreatment criteria, the case will be referred to the Clinical Case Staffing (CCS) meeting at the FAP. At the CCS meeting, recommendations are made for clinical treatment, rehabilitation and case management. FAP staff remain available to you throughout the entire process and are best suited to address any issues or concerns that may arise. Your FAP point of contact information is provided below.

**Family Advocacy Program POC:** \_\_\_\_\_