

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEERS ENROLLMENT AND ID CARD ISSUANCE

The DoD is committed to protecting the security of our nation and its people by issuing identification (ID) cards to individuals requiring access to government systems and facilities and to eligible individuals authorized to receive Uniformed Service benefits and privileges by law. The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) enrollment and ID card issuance process consists of several steps to ensure the correct ID card is issued and the appropriate benefits and privileges are assigned.

In verifying the authenticity of required documents before issuing a DoD ID card, the VO has an important responsibility to prevent fraud and protect the security of our nation. Some populations, identified in [Section 2](#), require approval from the Sponsor's or former Sponsor's uniformed service for initial enrollment.

SECTION 1. PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLISTS

DEERS ENROLLMENT AND INITIAL ID CARD ISSUANCE

1. Completed DD Form 1172-2

A completed [DD Form 1172-2](#) which has been signed:

- ✓ Electronically by the Sponsor (with CAC or DS Logon) and submitted using [ID Card Office Online](#); OR
- ✓ In person by your sponsor at a RAPIDS Site; OR
- ✓ By your sponsor and notarized. A wet or digital signature is acceptable; OR
- ✓ Using a Power of Attorney. A wet or digital signature is acceptable.

2. Eligibility documentation, if applicable

- ✓ Individuals must provide eligibility documentation to verify eligibility for benefits or proof of relationship to the Sponsor, as described in [Section 2](#).
- ✓ U.S. persons must bring a document that verifies their Federal person identifier (SSN or tax ID number).

NOTE: A Sponsor's DEERS record should be created via an authoritative data feed from a personnel office. While most Sponsors should not need to provide eligibility documentation, in some instances, it may be necessary to provide eligibility documentation, as described in [Section 2](#).

3. Two forms of ID

Sponsors and adult family members, including children over age 18, must bring two forms of ID.

1. A valid (unexpired) State or Federal government-issued picture ID.
2. Any ID from the [List of Acceptable Documents](#).

NOTE: Local badges will NOT be accepted as a valid form of ID during the DoD ID card issuance process.

DEERS UPDATE AND ID CARD RENEWAL/ REISSUANCE

1. Completed DD Form 1172-2

A completed [DD Form 1172-2](#) which has been signed:

- ✓ Electronically by the Sponsor (with CAC or DS Logon) and submitted using [ID Card Office Online](#); OR
- ✓ In person by your sponsor at a RAPIDS Site; OR
- ✓ By your sponsor and notarized. A wet or digital signature is acceptable; OR
- ✓ Using a Power of Attorney. A wet or digital signature is acceptable.

2. Eligibility documentation, if applicable

- ✓ Eligibility documentation may be required to update DEERS for a change in benefits or status.

NOTE: A Sponsor's DEERS record should be updated via an authoritative data feed from a personnel office. While most Sponsors should not need to provide eligibility documentation, in some instances, it may be necessary to provide eligibility documentation, as described in [Section 2](#).

3. Two forms of ID

Sponsors and adult family members, including children over age 18, must bring two forms of ID.

1. Your soon-to-expire DoD ID card. If lost, stolen, or expired, you should provide a valid (unexpired) State or Federal government-issued picture ID.
2. Any ID from the [List of Acceptable Documents](#).

NOTE: Local badges will NOT be accepted as a valid form of ID during the DoD ID card issuance process.

NOTE: Identity and eligibility documents should be original or certified documents (described in [Section 3](#)).

Have a question about your documentation requirements? Visit [CAC.mil Contact Us](#).

Need to find your nearest DoD ID Card Site and schedule an appointment? Visit [ID Card Office Online](#).

SECTION 2. ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS

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Sponsors who may need to update their DEERS record with in-person eligibility documents

If the Sponsor is a...		The Sponsor should provide the following additional documents to establish Eligibility...
National Guard or Reserve Member	Ordered to Active Duty	➤ DD Form 220, "Active Duty Report" OR Web-enabled orders from Marine Reserve Order Writing System (USMC ONLY)
Former Member		➤ DD Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty" OR Retired Pay Orders OR Notice of Eligibility
Former Member	At Age 65	Documents Required for Former Member & ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B
Retired Member		➤ DD Form 214 OR Correction of Military Record OR Retirement Orders
Retired Member	At Age 65	Documents Required for Retired Member & ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B
Retired Reserve Member		➤ DD Form 214 OR Retired Pay Orders OR Notice of Eligibility
Retired Reserve Member	Ordered to Active Duty	➤ DD Form 220 OR Military Order OR Commissioning Oath OR Enlistment Contract
Retired Reserve Member	At Age 65	Documents Required for Reserve Retired Member & ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B
100% Disabled American Veteran (DAV)		➤ DD Form 214 ➤ Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Rating Determination Letter, indicating 100% disabled or 100% unemployable AND whether permanent or temporary; if temporary, letter must also state future reexamination date
100% Disabled American Veteran (DAV)	At Age 65	Documents Required for 100% DAV & ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B
Medal of Honor (MOH) Recipient		➤ Confirmation of MOH status by Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA)
Medal of Honor (MOH) Recipient	At Age 65	Documents Required for MOH Recipient & ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B
Transitional Health Care (THC) Member		➤ DD Form 214

Family Members who can be enrolled at any RAPIDS site

If the person being added or requesting ID card issuance is a...		The person should provide the following additional documents to establish Relationship and Eligibility...
Spouse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Marriage Certificate OR SJA statement certifying common law marriage OR Common Law Marriage Certificate certified by the State OR Court Document that establishes a common law marriage
Spouse	At Age 65	Documents Required for Spouse & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B
Legitimate Child		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birth Certificate OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240, "Consular Report of Birth Abroad"
Legitimate Child	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Legitimate Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from School Registrar
Legitimate Child	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Legitimate Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult
Adopted Child		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birth Certificate OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240 ➤ Adoption Decree
Adopted Child	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Adopted Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from School Registrar
Adopted Child	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Adopted Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult
Stepchild		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birth Certificate OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240 ➤ Sponsor's Marriage Certificate
Stepchild	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Stepchild (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from School Registrar
Stepchild	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Stepchild (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult

Family Members who require approval from the Sponsor's Uniformed Service for initial enrollment

If the person being added or requesting ID card issuance is a...		The person should provide the following additional documents to establish Relationship and Eligibility...
Legitimate Child	Incapacitated and Over Age 21	Documents Required for Legitimate Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Adopted Child	Incapacitated and over 21	Documents Required for Adopted Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Stepchild	Incapacitated and over 21	Documents Required for Stepchild (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Financial Dependency Determination

If the person being added or requesting ID card issuance is a...		The person should provide the following additional documents to establish Relationship and Eligibility...
		➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Pre-Adoptive Child		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Placement Agreement that states intent to adopt OR Court Document that states intent to adopt ➤ Birth Certificate, if Placement Agreement/Court Document does not specify date of birth OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240
Pre-Adoptive Child	Incapacitated and over 21	Documents Required for Pre-Adoptive Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Pre-Adoptive Child	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Pre-Adoptive Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from school registrar
Pre-Adoptive Child	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Pre-Adoptive Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult
Illegitimate Child		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birth Certificate OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240 ➤ Court Order that establishes paternity OR Consent Order of Paternity that establishes paternity OR SJA Opinion that establishes paternity OR Voluntary Acknowledgement of Paternity (VAP)
Illegitimate Child	Incapacitated and over 21	Documents Required for Illegitimate Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Illegitimate Child	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Illegitimate Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from School Registrar
Illegitimate Child	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Illegitimate Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult
Foster Child		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birth Certificate OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240 ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Placement Agreement that places the child with the Sponsor OR Court Document that places the child with the Sponsor
Foster Child	Incapacitated and over 21	Documents Required for Foster Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Foster Child	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Foster Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from School Registrar
Foster Child	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Foster Child (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult
Ward		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birth Certificate OR Certificate of Live Birth OR FS-240 ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Placement Agreement that places the child with Sponsor for at least 12 consecutive months

If the person being added or requesting ID card issuance is a...		The person should provide the following additional documents to establish Relationship and Eligibility...
		OR Court Document that places the child with Sponsor for at least 12 consecutive months
Ward	Incapacitated and over 21	Documents Required for Ward (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical Sufficiency Statement ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Ward	Student over 21 and not yet 23	Documents Required for Ward (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Letter from School Registrar
Ward	TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)	Documents Required for Ward (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult
Parent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sponsor's birth certificate ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Parent-in-law		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Spouse's birth certificate ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Stepparent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sponsor's or Spouse's birth certificate ➤ Parent's marriage certificate ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Parent-by-Adoption		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sponsor's or Spouse's birth certificate ➤ Adoption Decree ➤ Financial Dependency Determination ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)

DoD Beneficiaries who require approval from the former Sponsor's Uniformed Service for initial enrollment

If the person being added or requesting ID card issuance is a...		The person should provide the following additional documents to establish Relationship and Eligibility...
20/20/20 Unremarried Former Spouse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Marriage Certificate ➤ Divorce Decree ➤ Statement of Service OR DD Form 214 OR Dates of Inclusive Service ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
20/20/20 Unmarried Former Spouse		Documents Required for 20/20/20 Unremarried Former Spouse (listed above) & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Marriage Certificate from subsequent marriage ➤ Divorce decree from subsequent marriage OR Death Certificate of subsequent spouse ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
20/20/15 Unremarried Former Spouse	Divorced before 04/01/85 OR after 09/29/88	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Marriage Certificate ➤ Divorce Decree ➤ Statement of Service OR DD Form 214

If the person being added or requesting ID card issuance is a...		The person should provide the following additional documents to establish Relationship and Eligibility...
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ OR Dates of Inclusive Service ➤ Proof of enrollment in Medicare Part B (if aged 65 or older)
Abused Dependent	Sponsor retirement eligible	Documents Required for each Family Member & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ DD Form 2698, "Application for Transitional Compensation," approved by the responsible Service ➤ Letter from DFAS-CL, Code L
Abused Dependent	Sponsor non-retirement eligible	Documents Required for each Family Member & <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ DD Form 2698, approved by the responsible Service

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purposes of this document.

20/20/20, 20/20/15, or 10/20/10. See definition of "former spouse."

abused dependent. Dependents of active duty uniformed services members:

Entitled to retired pay based on 20 or more years of service who, on or after October 23, 1992, while a member, are eligible to receive retired pay terminated as a result of misconduct involving the abuse of the spouse or dependent child pursuant to section 1408(h) of Reference (i); or

Not entitled to retired pay, who have received a dishonorable or bad-conduct discharge, dismissal from a uniformed service as a result of a court martial conviction for an offense involving physical or emotional abuse of a spouse or child, or were administratively discharged as a result of such an offense, separated on or after November 30, 1993.

adopted child. A child adopted before the age of 21 or, if enrolled in a full-time course of study at an institution of higher learning, before the age of 23. Except for entitlement to medical care, a child with an incapacitating condition that existed before the age of 21 or that occurred while the child was a full-time student before the age of 23, may be adopted at any age provided it is determined that there is a *bona fide* parent-child relationship. Surviving children adopted by a non-military member after the death of the sponsor remain eligible for medical care only.

adoption decree. An order or other appropriate document from a court of competent jurisdiction in the United States (or U.S. territory or possession) that states that the adoptee is the legal child of the adoptive parent(s).

apostille. A certificate from a high-level authority in a foreign country verifying that the signature on a document is genuine and was issued by the office purported to have issued it.

birth certificate. Official birth document issued by a U.S. State, jurisdiction, or territory.

certificate of live birth. A certificate authenticated by an attending physician or other responsible person from a U.S. hospital or an MTF showing the name of at least one parent.

certified document. Identity and eligibility documents should be original or certified documents. Please use the ["Where to Write for Vital Records"](#) website for more information on obtaining certified copies of required documentation. A certified document is a document that is certified as a true original and:

- (1) Conveys the appropriate seal or markings of the issuer;
- (2) Has a means to validate the authenticity of the document by a reference or source number;
- (3) Is a notarized legal document or other document approved by a Judge Advocate, member of any of the armed forces, or other eligible person in accordance with section 1044a of Title 10, United States Code; or

(4) Has the appropriate certificate of authentication by a U.S. Consular Officer in the foreign country of issuance which attests to the authenticity of the signature and seal

child. A legitimate child, illegitimate child, stepchild, or an adopted child of the sponsor who is younger than 21 years of age. If 21 or older, the child may remain eligible if he or she is:

21 or 22 years old and enrolled in a full-time course of higher learning;

21 or older but incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical incapacity that existed before the 21st birthday; or

21 or 22 years old and was enrolled full-time in an accredited institution of higher learning but became incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical condition while a full-time student.

cross-servicing. Agreement amongst all uniformed services to assist Service members, regardless of the Service member's responsible uniformed service, and their dependents, for all ID card or benefits-related matters, when appropriate and not restricted by DoD Manual 1000.13, Volume 1.

DEERS. The personnel data repository of identity and enrollment and eligibility verification data and associated contact information on members of the DoD Components, members of the uniformed services, and other personnel, as designated by the DoD and their eligible dependents and associated contact information.

dependent. An individual whose relationship to the sponsor leads to entitlement to benefits and privileges.

financial dependency determination. Service-level process used to determine whether the financial dependency of a dependent on a sponsor meets the requirement for benefits eligibility.

former member. An individual who is eligible to receive retired pay, at age 60, for non-regular service pursuant to chapter 1223 of Title 10, United States Code, but who has been discharged and who maintains no military affiliation. These former members, at age 60, and their eligible dependents are entitled to medical care, commissary, exchange, and morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) privileges. Under age 60, they and their eligible dependents are entitled to commissary, exchange, and MWR privileges only.

former spouse. An individual who was married to a uniformed services member for at least 20 years, and the member had at least 20 years of service creditable toward retirement, and the marriage overlapped as follows:

20 years marriage, 20 years creditable service for retirement, and 20 years overlap between the marriage and the service (referred to as 20/20/20). The benefits eligibility begins on the date of divorce;

20 years marriage, 20 years creditable service for retirement, and 15 years overlap between the marriage and the service (referred to as 20/20/15). The benefits eligibility begins on the date of divorce; or

A spouse whose marriage was terminated from a uniformed service member who has their eligibility to receive retired pay terminated as a result of misconduct based on Service-documented abuse of the spouse and has 10 years of marriage, 20 years of creditable service for retirement, 10 years of overlap between the marriage and the service (referred to as 10/20/10).

foster child. A child without parental support and protection, placed with a person or family, usually by local welfare services or by court order. The foster parent(s) does not have custody, nor is there an adoption, but they are expected to treat the foster child as they would their own in regard to food, housing, clothing, and education. This is a non-medically entitled dependent.

full-time student. A child who has not attained the age of 23, who is enrolled in a full-time course of study at an institution of higher learning approved by the administering Secretary and is, or was at the time of the member's or former member's death, dependent on the member or former member for over one-half of his or her support.

incapacitated person. An individual who is impaired by physical disability, mental illness, mental deficiency, or other causes that prevent sufficient understanding or capacity to competently manage his or her own affairs.

institution of higher learning. A college, university, or similar institution, including a technical or business school, offering post-secondary-level academic instruction that leads to an associate or higher degree, if the school is empowered by the appropriate State education authority under State law to grant an associate or higher degree. When there is no State law

to authorize the granting of a degree, the school may be recognized as an institution of higher learning if it is accredited for degree programs by a recognized accrediting agency. The term also includes a hospital offering educational programs at the post-secondary level regardless of whether the hospital grants a post-secondary degree. The term also includes an educational institution that is not located in a State that offers a course leading to a standard college degree or equivalent and is recognized as such by the Secretary of Education (or comparable official) of the country or other jurisdiction in which the institution is located.

letter from a school registrar. A letter certifying enrollment in a full-time in-residence, or online course of study, leading to an associate degree or higher and listing an anticipated graduation date (students attending two institutions less than full-time may not combine courses from both institutions to meet full-time student status). Most colleges and universities contract with third parties, such as the National Student Clearinghouse, to verify student enrollment. These third parties must comply with section 1232g of Title 20, U.S.C. (Reference (n)) and part 99 of Title 34, CFR (Reference (o)) and are considered official agents of the institution for that purpose. Such documentation is considered equivalent to and accepted in lieu of a letter from the registrar's office. For graduate students, a letter of acceptance of enrollment signed by an authorized officer of the college or university is required to serve as the school letter.

marriage certificate. State-certified record of marriage.

medical sufficiency statement. A statement from a physician from an MTF or approved TRICARE provider used in conjunction with eligibility and dependency determinations. The statement includes a recent medical or psychiatric evaluation and diagnosis, a statement of illness (including the date, child's age, and onset of incapacity), the current treatment being rendered, the prognosis for recovery, and the ability to become self-supporting.

member. An individual who is affiliated with a Service, either active duty, Reserve, active duty retired, or Retired Reserve. Retired members are not former members. Also referred to as the sponsor.

placement agency (recognized by the Secretary of Defense). An authorized placement agency in the United States or U.S. territories or possessions that must be licensed for adoption by the State, territory, or possession in which the adoption procedures will be completed. In all other locations, a request for recognition must be approved by the appropriate Assistant Secretary of the Military Department concerned or an appropriate official to whom he or she has delegated approval authority.

placement agreement. An agreement between the State and the parent(s) placing the child in the legal custody of the parent(s). To establish the child as a pre-adoptive child, the placement agreement must include the intent to adopt.

pre-adoptive child. With respect to determinations of dependency made on or after October 5, 1994, an unmarried person who is placed in the home of the member or former member by a placement agency (recognized by the Secretary of Defense) or by any other source authorized by State or local law to provide adoption placement, in anticipation of the legal adoption of the child by the member or former member; and:

(1) Has not attained the age of 21; or

(2) Has not attained the age of 23, is enrolled in a full-time course of study at an institution of higher learning approved by the administering Secretary and is, or was at the time of the member's or former member's death, in fact dependent on the member or former member for over one-half of the child's support; or

(3) Is incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical incapacity that occurs while a dependent of a member or former member and is, or was at the time of the member's or former member's death, in fact dependent on the member or former member for over one-half of the child's support.

privileges. Benefits or advantages allowed based on position, authority, relationship, or status and which may be removed by proper authority. Privileges are not necessarily "rights" specifically granted by law.

sponsor. The prime beneficiary who derives his or her eligibility based on individual status rather than dependence upon another person. This beneficiary receives benefits based on his or her direct affiliation to the DoD.

spouse. A person legally married to a current, former, or retired uniformed service member, eligible civilian employee, or other eligible individual in accordance with Volume 2 of this manual, regardless of gender or State of residence.

stepchild. A natural or adopted child of a spouse of a sponsor who qualifies as a child.

surviving dependent. The dependent of a member who died while on active duty under orders that specified a period of more than 30 days, or a member who died while in a retired with-pay status.

United States. The 50 United States and the District of Columbia.

unmarried. A widow or widower who remarried and whose remarriage ended by death or divorce, or a former spouse of a sponsor whose subsequent remarriage ended by death or divorce.

unremarried. A widow or widower who has never remarried, or a former spouse whose only remarriage was to the same military sponsor (periods of marriage in this case may be combined to document eligibility for former spouse benefits).

U.S. territories and possessions. Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U. S. Virgin Islands.

VA rating determination letter. A letter from the appropriate VA authorities that establishes that the uniformed service member has been rated as 100 percent disabled or 100 percent unemployable by the VA, and whether the rating is permanent or temporary. If temporary, the letter must also state the future reexamination date.

VAP. A document recognized by relevant and applicable State law as establishing legal paternity. Such documents must be certified as a "true copy" by the appropriate state office.

ward. An unmarried person is placed in the legal custody of the member or former member as a result of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction in the United States (or a U.S. territory or possession) for a period of at least 12 consecutive months; is dependent on the member or former member for over one-half of the person's support; resides with the member or former member unless separated by the necessity of military service or to receive institutional care as a result of disability or incapacitation or under such other circumstances as the administering Secretary may by regulation prescribe; is not a dependent of a member or a former member under any other subparagraph; and either:

(1) Has not attained the age of 21;

(2) Has not attained the age of 23 and is enrolled in a full-time course of study at an institution of higher learning approved by the administering Secretary; or

(3) Is incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical incapacity that occurred while the person was considered a dependent of the member or former member.

widow. The eligible surviving female spouse of a deceased sponsor.

widower. The eligible surviving male spouse of a deceased sponsor.