

The 5 Questions an IG Will ask of you

The IG will ask you 5 questions when you request assistance:

1. What **exactly** do you want/need the IG to do for you?
2. Do you have any supporting documentation?
3. Have you requested assistance from any other source or agency?
4. Have you given your chain of command an opportunity to address the problem?
5. What is your status (M-Day, AGR, ADOS, Mil Tech, Civilian, Family Member)?

Congressional Complaints

Service members, family members, or private citizens are always permitted to request assistance from their elected officials (a Member of Congress-MoC) regarding an issue, problem, or complaint. However, congressional correspondence or inquiries are handled in a variety of ways, depending upon how the correspondence was originated. Most congressional's end up in "command channels," and therefore, must be handled by the chain of command and are not typically handled by the IG. Once a congressional is initiated, the complainant will be advised that their "official response" will come from the office of the MoC. Therefore, if the complainant also has an IG assistance case pending, the IG must defer any further action on the specific case until the complainant has received their official response from the MoC. **Our advice to any service member or family member considering submitting a congressional is to allow the chain of command or IG to work the issue before requesting assistance from a Member of Congress.**

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What does an Inspector General do?

The State Inspector General (IG) functions as an extension of The Adjutant General's (TAG) eyes, ears, voice, and conscience. They serve as a personal staff officer, and confidential representative of TAG. State IGs also advise TAG on matters concerning the well-being and readiness of service members, civilians, military technicians, and family members. The Air National Guard Wing IGs perform the same functions as the State IG, except they report directly to their respective wing commanders.

Who can contact the Inspector General?

Anyone can request assistance from the IG (See Restriction & Reprisal). However, the IG should not be the first agency to contact with an issue involving a service member, civilian, or family member.

For **Service Members and Civilians**, the chain of command should be the first stop (See Next Page).

For **Family Members**, the IG recommends contacting the nearest WVNG Family Assistance Center first. A Family Assistance Specialist will guide the family member to the appropriate agency for assistance. If the service member is not deployed, a family member may still contact the WVNG Family Assistance Center. Family Assistance Specialists are mandated by the National Guard Bureau to take care of issues in a timely manner. If not taken care of in a timely manner, then family member should contact the Family Assistance Coordinator who oversees all Family Assistance Specialists within the state at **(866) 986-4326** or **(304) 201-3830**. If the issue is still not resolved, then consider contacting the IG.

Before a Soldier or Airman contacts the Inspector General

- ✓ Be sure you have a problem, not just a peeve.
- ✓ You should give your chain of command a chance to solve the problem (many problems must be addressed to the chain of command for resolution anyways).
- ✓ If IG assistance is needed, contact your local IG first (IGs at higher or outside commands will normally refer the case back down to the local IG for action).
- ✓ Be honest and don't provide misleading information. IGs will discover the truth and facts quickly. There are penalties for knowingly providing false statements.
- ✓ Keep in mind that IGs are NOT policy makers (If a policy is flawed, you can submit proposed changes on a DA Form 2028 or AF Form 847).
- ✓ Keep in mind that IGs can only RECOMMEND a solution, NOT order a resolution (only Commanders can order; the role of the IG is to advise the Commander).
- ✓ Remember the IGs can only resolve a case on the basis of fact (your claim that a supervisor has violated the rules doesn't make it a fact, a claim must be supported by evidence).
- ✓ Don't expect instant action or satisfaction on your request for assistance...be patient (investigations and fact-finding take time).
- ✓ Be prepared to take "NO" for the answer (in any case...Yes or No, the IG will explain why and the facts).

Restriction & Reprisal

10 USC 1034: "No person may **restrict** a member of the armed forces in communicating with a Member of Congress or an Inspector General." (Any lawful communication by a military member to a member of congress or IG is a **protected communication**).

Reprisal: "Taking, or threatening to take an Unfavorable Personnel Action, or withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action, on a military member for making or preparing a protected communication."

For Mobilized & Deployed Soldiers & Airmen

IG "coverage" is typically based on geographical location or unit affiliation, therefore:

If you are at **Home Station** contact the local IG.

If you are at the **Mobilization Station** (e.g. Fort Bliss), contact the local installation (fort/base) IG.

If you are deployed to a theater outside the US (e.g. Iraq and Afghanistan), contact the higher headquarters or local IG (usually at division-level).

If you are deployed to an area of operation inside the US (e.g. Arizona and Louisiana) contact the nearest installation/division or state IG's Office.

When in doubt as to whether or not the WVNG IG will have "jurisdiction" over your case, don't hesitate to contact us and we will advise you on what action you should take.

What cases are NOT appropriate for an IG?

Most of the time, these types of cases will be referred to the appropriate agency by an IG, and only monitored by the IG until final resolution:

- Equal Opportunity (EO) & sexual harassment
- Hazardous duty (safety) conditions
- Criminal allegations (law or regulation violation)
- Child support & alimony support
- Redress available through other channels
- Professional allegations (vs. a JAG, CID, other IG)