

BEWARE OF COPYING YOUR MILITARY ID

CPT Katherine Sickendick, Legal Assistance Attorney

Copying photo identification cards may seem like a common and acceptable practice, but if it is your military photo ID you should be wary. Generally, you should not allow your military ID to be copied because it is prohibited by law under 18 U.S.C. § 701. However, you can allow a state or federal agency to copy your military ID in some circumstances.

Government agencies may make copies of federal government ID cards for authorized purposes. These agencies are authorized to do so by law and pursuant to their duty to protect information in accordance with government regulation. Examples of authorized purposes for government agencies include verification of TriCare eligibility, official use by police, verification of eligibility for Veteran's Administration benefits or services, or verification of military or dependant status for tax purposes.

However, you should never allow a commercial establishment to make a photocopy of your government ID or duplicate it in any way. You may show a business your military ID, but if asked for a copy you should only allow them to copy your driver's license or another non-federal government ID. If a business still insists on making a copy of your military ID, valid options are asking your chain of command for a letter stating your military service or simply taking your business elsewhere.

Consequences for unauthorized use of federal government ID cards, including making and possessing unauthorized copies of ID cards, are fines and/or imprisonment for not more than six months. Federal government ID cards grant access and contain information that would be valuable to criminal elements and terrorist organizations. Protecting ID cards from counterfeiting is therefore extremely important to the security of the military and of the nation.

If you have questions, please contact the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg Legal Assistance Office at 910-396-0396 or 6113. The office is located on the first floor of the soldier support center in Wing D. The Legal Assistance Office is open Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 0900-1630, on Wednesday from 1300-1630, and on Thursday from 0730-1630. All family law issues, including child custody and support are handled on Thursdays only. For more information please visit our website at <http://www.bragg.army.mil/DIRECTORATES/OSJA/Pages/LegalAssistance.aspx>.