



COUNSELING STATEMENT FACT SHEET



Army leaders counsel their subordinates. Counseling is a process used by leaders to review with a subordinate the subordinate's performance and/or potential. Counseling Soldiers teaches and assists the counseled Soldier to improve their performance. It is important for leaders to help Soldiers to become more capable, and prepared for current and future responsibilities.

There are different reasons to counsel Soldiers, such as promotion, performance, and event-oriented issues. The counseling is captured on the Department of Army (DA) Form 4856. The Soldier can add comments on the second page of DA Form 4856.

The Soldier cannot be forced to sign or comment on DA Form 4856. However, if you disagree with the counseling, you should sign and add your comments. If you refuse to sign, the counseling statement can still be used. The leader will annotate that you have received the DA Form 4856 and refused to sign.

If the block does not provide enough space for your comments, you may write the statement on a separate paper and attach it to the counseling form. If you are not ready to write a statement, indicate on the form that you request 24 -48 hours to draft your comments. You should disagree with any substantial facts that are incorrect on the counseling statement, such as the content, plan of action, leader responsibilities, key points of discussion, or any mistakes that may be contained in the administrative portion.

Counseling statements may be used as the basis for administrative separation, per Army Regulation (AR) 635-200, if your leader has included the 'magic language' notifying you of that fact.



Office of the Staff Judge Advocate
Legal Assistance Office
6930 Morrison Avenue
Bldg 130
Fort Benning, GA 31905
706-545-3281