US Army Corps of Engineers
HEADQUARTERS

BUILDING STRONG®

USACE Deployment Handbook for USACE Personnel and Family Members

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Corps Team...

Many of you ask me what "great" looks like, as we continue trying to go from "Good to Great." One sign of it is that we will have a distinct, positive impact on our Nation and other nations. We are definitely doing that...in over 33 countries.

I am extremely proud of the selfless service that all of you demonstrate. Whether it's the repeat voluntary deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, or the willingness to step up and serve on a moment's notice in the face of a disaster or emergency - you are truly impacting nations, including our own, in a positive way and helping to improve the quality of life for people everywhere.

We've made some major improvements to the deployment process, and have upgraded this handbook to ensure that it applies to you, no matter where you're serving – at home or abroad. We are continually striving to improve the way we take care of you, and support your patriotism and desire to serve. Your hard work, dedication, and contributions make a huge difference in the lives of people in these areas.

Thanks for everything that you do to take us from 'Good to Great!'

Best, Van

Welcome

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Historical Role & Service to the Nation

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) team plays a unique and important role in our country's defense. Through overseas deployment and disaster response, our team members provide a tremendous service to this country. This dedication helps the Corps step forward and meet the evolving needs of our Nation's military.

Few career paths present the challenges to family life that come with being part of national defense. Challenges such as separation, travel and duty in remote locations under arduous conditions are part of the daily lives of deployed USACE personnel. The readiness of the USACE team is enhanced when employees prepare their families to meet these challenges.

The Corps leadership deeply appreciates the support family members and friends provide to our civilian volunteers. USACE is committed to keeping family members and friends informed of key information and providing a support network during deployments. USACE continues to move ahead with developing family support programs for deployed individuals.

Purpose

Enhancing civilian readiness is directly related to successfully preparing USACE family members. This handbook was developed to cover key deployment readiness topics, both for the deploying civilian (deployee) and their family members.

This handbook can be used for all types of deployment, whether it is in support of the Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) or disaster response in country. The majority of this handbook applies to everyone, but there is a special focus on OCO specific deployments in the last section.

For more information contact your local Family Readiness representative or visit the USACE Family Readiness Website at: http://usace.army.mil/CEHR/Pages/FamilyReadiness.aspx

The Five Stages of Deployment

THE EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT
The following cycle describes changes in family behavior and emotions during deployments:

Pre-deployment	Deployment	Sustainment	Re-deployment	Post-deployment
Anticipation of loss Frustration Detachment Denial Shock Anger Rejection	Despair Irritability Confusion Loneliness Sleeplessness Overwhelmed by Responsibility	Calm Self-assured Self-assured Being alone Detachment Confidence	Joy Excitement Apprehension Expectation Hope	Renegotiation of marriage & family duties Disappointment Ecstasy Change Relief Guilt

Feelings are real - they are not good or bad. Therefore, ways of coping can and will vary with each person. Getting ready for deployment starts long before the deployee walks out the door. Many people tend to deny that deployment will actually happen. They fantasize that the plane will break down before the deployee can get on it, or that something will happen so their spouse does not have to leave. Family members may try to avoid the reality of the departure. Suddenly, a small event, a date, or a commonplace happening will trigger an emotion and/or recognition of the fact that the departure is imminent and real.

Family separations include five stages: Pre-deployment, Deployment, Sustainment, Re-deployment and Post-deployment or Reunion. Each stage carries unique challenges and tasks for family members. Family needs time to adjust to these demands. Learning about deployment will help ease the physical and emotional demands on everyone involved: deployee, family members, parents, grandparents, siblings, friends and co-workers.

Pre-deployment

The period of time from first notification of deployment until the deployee departs for overseas.

Deployment
The stage occurs during the first month after the deployee's departure from home.

Sustainment
The duration of time from the second month of deployment until the month before the deployee is scheduled to return home.

Re-deployment
The month before the deployee is scheduled to return home.

Post-deployment
The period of time beginning with the deployee's return home until family life returns to normal.

It's natural for deployees and family members to feel:

- **A sense of despair.**
- **A feeling that the marriage is out of control, feeling a desire to separate, to run away to reduce the pain.**
- **A lack of energy, feelings of fatigue and depression.**
- **Difficulty in making decisions.**
- **Ambivalence towards one's partner and sex. It is difficult to be physically intimate when trying to separate emotionally. This should be viewed as a reaction to deployment rather than rejection of each other.**

Pre-deployment

Detachment and Withdrawal

Remember these feelings and events are normal. Your marriage is not breaking up or going down the tubes. While you are both together in the same house, you are mentally and emotionally preparing for the separation. This is a real and necessary adjustment. First, the deployee and family experience a level of shock, then denial. For example, "this won't really affect me/us very much" are forms of denial. Anxiety also rises during this period. The initial shock, denial and anxiety reactions usually last about one to two days, but can linger. Sadness follows. Sometimes people use bargaining, such as children saying, "I'll do what you tell me if you don't go." Anger and resentment are common experiences just prior to the deployee's departure. This reaction makes sense, because it is our human way of adjusting to the loss. The most likely targets for anger and resentment are the military, a partner, or children. We use this to protect ourselves from pain, so if your partner becomes irritable at this point, try to listen and understand. Talk about emotions you notice. For instance, if your partner seems angry, say, "You seem angry." This response gives both of you the opportunity to discuss your feelings about the deployment. Remember to talk with your children. They are sensitive to changes in their environment. Remember if they aren't told what is happening, they will use their own fantasies to understand. Children are naturally self-centered, so they blame themselves in their thoughts.

Talking to them gives them relief and gives them the chance to ask questions so they can try to understand. Good planning prior to deployment will help alleviate problems and worries. Discuss and arrange responsibilities and household duties before the deployee leaves. Get your children involved in planning for the changes you expect during the separation. Try to spend quality time with close family members before a deployment. Plan a trip or activity, if time allows. It's helpful to have warm thoughts and lasting memories before the deployee departs.

In the days or weeks before leaving, families may experience:

- **Difficulty accepting the reality of leaving or separating.**
- **Feeling an increase in tension; arguments may happen.**
- **Cramming in of activities/projects - fixing up the house, lawn mower, washing machine, etc.**
- **Feelings of anger, frustration, and emotional distance between family members.**
- **Difficulty with intimacy and sexual relations. It is hard to feel warm and loving when feeling angry at each other: "It's easier just to let him/her go" or an increase in such activities may occur, as clinging, fearing the loss of the lover/support person.**
- **Symptoms of restlessness, irritability, anxiety, feeling an inability to cope, concern about the changes in the home environment that will occur.**
- **Women may cry unexpectedly and men may withdraw. Allow this to happen, to an extent, as it is essential to release the varying emotions.**
- **Some couples deny the forthcoming separation by putting off chores, discussions, not facing the inevitable, and procrastinating.**
- **Feelings of frustrations with changing deployment timelines.**

Deployment

Emotional Disorganization

Once the Deployee is gone, a host of emotions and feelings rise. Loneliness, guilt, frustration, feeling overwhelmed, confusion and fear are most common. Each of these reactions results from the separation, and the deployee and family members may experience some or all of them. Loneliness comes from the isolation and the loss. Guilt comes from several sources such as having acted irritable or angry before departure.

Frustration and feeling overwhelmed come from the realization of what demands the separation places on you. Confusion is common in younger children. Fear is common in all people – such as fear of infidelity, of abandonment and of loss. Remaining active counteracts these reactions, as does talking to friends and making use of your social support networks like neighbors, coworkers, friends and other family members in similar circumstances. Listening to your children and avoiding lecturing helps reduce their fears and confusion. Try to keep your children's routines as stable

as possible. For instance, keep bedtimes and mealtimes the same. Sometimes children act out their emotions, because they don't have the sophistication to express themselves verbally. They may withdraw, become aggressive, lie, steal or have nightmares. Some children regress to prior behaviors, such as bedwetting. Some children may have difficulty concentrating and school performance may suffer. Some may lose interest in things, or become more impulsive. These are their means to express themselves, and if questioned, they probably will not be able to explain their reasons. So, what can you do about the changes in a family member's behavior? Start talking. You can start a conversation with "I've noticed ..." the most important part of talking to your children will be listening to what they say. You could also ask other parents for advice. If problems persist or are severe, seek assistance through your Family Readiness coordinator, family chaplain or other professional. A few weeks after the member leaves, people often experience sleep difficulties, episodes of crying, irritability and tension. Remaining active, finding a hobby, and focusing on tasks may help you get through this period.

Sustainment

The Separation and Stabilization Stage

At about six to eight weeks after the Deployee leaves, family members start adjusting to changes. Family rules, roles and responsibilities are often realigned and structural changes adapt to the loss. Families find a new level of functioning without the previous ups and downs. Families that don't adjust and cope with the separation could experience greater difficulties at this time. Often someone feels depressed. ***If you believe you are suffering from depression or if your family can't***

Partners often experience:

- **Shock when the deployment actually arrives.**
- **An initial sense of relief that the pain of saying goodbye is over may be followed by feelings of guilt and emotional turmoil - "If I love him/her, why am I relieved that she/he's gone?"**
- **Feeling numb, aimless and without purpose as old routines have been disrupted and new ones have not been established.**
- **Depression and the desire to withdraw from the world, family and friends.**
- **Feeling of being overwhelmed by responsibility and trying to be everything and do it all.**
- **Sleep disruption due to loss of security and the support person; tendency to sleep too much (to escape) or too little.**
- **Feeling anger at the deployee for not doing more around the home for safety/security reasons.**
- **Feeling anger at the employer for deployee leaving you.**
- **Feeling guilty for things that didn't (or did) happen before the separation.**
- **Being "stuck" at this stage can create an unwillingness to move on and can be detrimental to your overall wellbeing.**

seem to adjust, seek help. You have many options to help you through deployment. Set goals to accomplish during separation. Establish consistent ways to maintain contact, and include the children. Set one night a week aside for family time. Make sure you give yourself a break each week and allow yourself some privacy. Get involved in activities. If you feel your energy level is low, do something with a friend, your children or relatives. Even after the six- to eight-week adjustment period, mood swings may continue. Recognize the roller coaster as normal. If you feel your fears of infidelity rising, express your trust to your spouse. When you identify a problem, tell your spouse about it and what you're doing about it.

The most important thing to remember is to establish and maintain frequent contact. Separation from loved ones and significant others can be stressful and may lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. Encourage your family to express feelings as early and openly as possible. Especially with children, be sure to offer love and reassurance while discussing future fears or doubts. Keep lines of communication open and use them frequently. Keeping in touch helps your family feel togetherness. Often a service member will really be missed. Don't try to fill their shoes. Just do what you can as a family or individual. Share responsibilities with others and be fair and realistic. There are only 24 hours in a day. When things get to be too much, don't be afraid to ask for help. Friends, neighbors, relatives and your Family Readiness Coordinator would be glad to help.

During the Stabilization Stage Most People Begin To:

- **Realize at some point, usually midway in the deployment that "Hey, I'm doing OK."**
- **Establish new family patterns/interactions that do work for them.**
- **Feel more comfortable with their situation, self, and the reorganization of roles and responsibilities that does occur.**
- **Attempt and successfully accomplish some goals, which add to self-confidence and feelings of being able to cope.**
- **Reach out for support through friends, church, work or spouse groups, etc.**
- **Eat "cruise food" to save time/energy and to appropriately choose priorities - let some things go to have more time.**
- **Have higher long distance telephone bills - but must learn to keep within the budget.**
- **Go through the "my" syndrome: my house, my car, kids, etc.**
- **Appear more mature and independent as "single" spouses since they have developed new activities and accepted more responsibilities to fill the void, while remaining secure in being married.**
- **Experience more sickness (at first), as the increased responsibilities tend to be more stressful until healthy coping skills are practiced.**
- **Feel vulnerable due to isolation from the family member, especially if recently moved to a new area without close friends or family.**
- **Spouses may feel uncertain of their abilities to cope and may experience self-doubt.**
- **Feel asexual - no longer in need of sex or affection; or feel strangled due to suppressed needs and desires.**

Re-deployment

Anticipation of Homecoming

Several weeks or days, prior to the deployee coming home, family members will begin to feel a sense of anticipation- "He/she's coming home and I'm not ready!" You and your family will experience anticipation, concern, increased adrenaline and maybe even a drive for perfection. In anticipation, you may worry about the changes that took place during the separation. For instance, "Will he/she be happy with how I handled things?" You may notice differences in your phone conversations. How did you each adjust to your greater independence? The deployee may wonder if he/she is still needed.

How are you doing emotionally?

Strong feelings are most common before and after separation and reunion, but they can occur any time. To help you maintain your emotional health, consider learning new coping skills such as realization techniques, stress management or parenting skills. Balancing emotions and family relationships during separation is as important as balancing and maintaining control over the household finances. Communicate with your spouse and family about how you're doing and what help you may need for better stability.

CHILDREN HAVE CONCERNS, TOO . . .

"Will my parent be proud of me?"
"Will rules change again?"
"Will my parent leave again?"
"Will I be in trouble for some of the things I did?"

Talking about these concerns helps children cope with them. One way to get children to talk about their concerns is for you to tell your children one of your concerns, and then ask them about their worries.

LOVED ONES OFTEN:

- Compile a long list of things still left to do and begin to pick up the pace to get things done — a flurry of activity.
- Experience feelings of joy, excitement in anticipation of the deployee's return & being together again.
- Experience feelings of fear & apprehension. "Does he/she still love me?"
- Clean the house of activities acquired to fill the void to make room for the deployee again. Some resentment maybe felt at having to give up some of these things, and having to change again.
- Experience uncomfortable feelings like, "I want him/her back, but what will I have to give up?"
- Feel tense, nervous and apprehensive — burying fears/concerns in busy work and activities.
- Experience a sense of restlessness again, but this is generally productive. Some family members may feel confused due to conflicting emotions.
- Put off important decisions until the deployee is home again.
- Experience changes in eating and sleeping patterns developed while the deployee was gone.

What to Expect from the Reunion Stage

Reunion is almost a mirror image of the Pre-deployment stage. You may find yourself having the ups and downs starting a few weeks prior to the deployee's return. The adjustment period also lasts about six to eight weeks, possibly longer. Most families find that reunions are more stressful.

Renegotiation of the relationship:
The husband and wife are back together physically, but are not emotionally adjusted to being together. They may feel distant, have trouble sharing decisions, and have difficulty talking to each other.

Couples:

• Need to refocus on the relationship, share experiences, feelings and needs, avoid forcing issues.
• Must stop being a "geographically single" person in a relationship and start being a couple again. Go from independence to interdependence.
• May feel a loss of freedom and independence; may feel disorganized and out of control as "deployment routines" are disrupted.
• Need to renegotiate roles and responsibilities. Family members often feel isolated, unwanted, unneeded and left out during this phase, which can cause arguments and hurt feelings for both partners.
• Need to be aware that too much togetherness can cause friction due to having been apart so many weeks/months.
• Need to make "their" decisions together.
• Need to increase their time to talk to each other and their children. They may want to plan special activities of short duration as a couple and as a family.
• Need to progress slowly with ardently desired sexual relations that may fall short of expectations. This can be frightening, and produce intense emotions. Couples may feel like strangers and be hesitant at first about intimate relations. Talk to each other about expectations.
• Need to allow sufficient time to court each other before true intimacy can occur. Get to know each other again.
• May find questions threatening, interpreting the questions as being judgmental, not just curious.
• Should return to the "our "stage ("our" children, "our" house…)

This stage can renew and refresh a relationship, creating new trust and mutual understanding.

Expect To Have Doubts and Worries. . .
Realize that people change, especially children. Increased independence is a positive result of separations. Maintain realistic expectations about the reunion. You may want the first night to be perfect: new clothes, a wonderful meal and a spotless home. If you strive for perfection, you might end up feeling inadequate, irritated, and tired, because perfection is unrealistic.

• Partners may think the other does not need them anymore. Both may be more confident and independent. They may be afraid of criticism for the way they have handled things.

• Single parents may have similar doubts about fitting into the post-deployment environment, especially if they have children who have lived with relatives during the deployment.
• Anxiety is a natural and normal part of getting back together.
• Recognize that you will have these doubts, but don't take them too seriously.

Deployee's Expectations. . .
Don't expect things to be the same as they were when you left. Some things will change, but much will remain the same. Face it: your family has had to continue in your absence. They have changed. Their day-to-day routines have changed. In many ways, it's a different family. If you expect them to be the same, you're in for a rough landing.

- Homecoming is usually not what you expect.
- Take it easy and let things happen naturally.
- Don't count on sexual fantasies being fulfilled.
- Don't try to take over responsibilities immediately. Ease yourself back in slowly.
- Plan a vacation or time away for you and your family within 90 days of return.
- Take some time to readjust to your home, weather, sleep, television and family.
- Offer to help when possible with chores and take care of children.

REUNION TIPS

Reunions are a time of readjustment after separation, whether long or short, planned or unplanned. Reunions can be both joyful and stressful because they are a big change that affects everyone with intense emotions. Roles and responsibilities may never return to "Pre-deployment" status. Plan to discuss responsibilities until roles are clearly defined again. The deployee needs to understand that the spouse has cared for and managed the household for the entire time of the deployment and that they should not expect to automatically resume the role they had. It would be unrealistic considering the time and effort put into surviving the separation.

Make it Easier for the Children
• Give the children time to adjust. When a parent has been away, it takes a while to remember and accept the parent again. Young children may also be mad at a parent for leaving them. Babies going through the "stranger anxiety" stage may be afraid of a parent they've not recently seen.
• Expect them to test limits and to have a variety of emotions. Plan family time.
• Plan individual time for the child with the returning parent.
• Children should stay involved with school activities and interests and not drop everything because the deployee has returned.

Tips for the Loved Ones who Remained Home
• Expect your deployee to be different. Think how much you have changed. Do not expect things to be perfect.

• Remember they have been subject to daily regimentation and routine during deployment. The returning deployee may rebel against schedules and preplanned events. Leave some room for spontaneity.

• The returning deployee might not have been behind wheel of a car for quite a while. Go ahead and drive for them if they wish.

• Expect them to have difficulty sleeping for a while. The deployee will have become accustomed to a different life style and perhaps a different time zone. They may be used to being “on the go” 24 hours a day. It may take a week or two to adjust to a slower pace.

• Expect your loved one to be surprised or hurt that you've coped so well alone. You can reassure them that they are loved and needed, without giving up your own independence.

• Don't be defensive about the way you've handled the children. Discuss any criticisms calmly.

• Expect to take time to re-establish sexual intimacy.

• Expect to make some adjustments. Though you're looking forward to the deployee’s return, it may be a challenge for him/her to adjust to changes in where they sleep and for how long; what and when to eat; the people you see; and what you do for fun.

Tips for the returning Deployee:

• When you arrive back home, be patient and expect some changes.

• You are entering an environment that you've been absent from for some time. Don't expect to walk in and return to how things were. Give your family and yourself time to readjust. Maintaining stability when you left was important and it's important again during the reunion. Let the adjustments come naturally; If you force changes, your family will resist your efforts. Ask them to tell you what they expect from you and you can express what you expect from them.

• Support positive changes. Show pleasure and interest in how your family has grown.

• Take it easy on the kids, especially where discipline is concerned. It's best for the kids to have a constant routine, so let the current rules stand.

• Don't try to alter the financial affairs immediately. Chances are your spouse has been handling them fine. Remember that prices have probably increased while you were gone. (If something expensive can break, chances are it will happen when you are deployed.)

• Don't ask your partner to pack the kids off to Grandma's so the two of you can have an intimate reunion. It's vital to reaffirm your bond with your children. Later, the two of you can slip away for a "second honeymoon."

• Expect your spouse to be different. Many spouses are more confident and independent. The fact that they can cope without you doesn't mean they want to!

• **ABOVE ALL: TALK WITH YOUR LOVED ONES!** Communication is the basis of healthy and growing relationships.

Post-deployment

The Readjustment Period

Accept and Share Your Feelings…

• Sharing requires a lot of talking and listening.

• Active listening means to really listen, not thinking about how to defend yourself or what you'll say next.

• If you need to clarify what was said, repeat it in your own words. When you understand, respond thoughtfully.

• You may have to renegotiate your relationship.

• You have changed; your partner has changed; and your children have changed. If you expect them to be the same, you're in for a hard time.

• Do not criticize each other for doing things differently.

Try To See Things from the Other's Point of View…

• Once the family member realizes that the deployee no longer feels a part of the family, they will understand why the returning deployee is sensitive about even the smallest changes.

• Once the deployee sees the family member's pride in the way he/she handled everything alone, the deployee will understand why they get upset when the deployee comes barging in to take over. These principles apply when dealing with each other and with children.

• Don't push yourself on your loved one.

• Spend one-on-one time with them.

• Be patient.

• Cut them some slack when they're acting up—they are a little stressed out, too. The returning deployee may want things to go back to how they were before the separation. That normally doesn't happen. People grow and change, so the family structure, while adjusting to the reunion, finds a new level of functioning. The returning deployee may feel like an outcast. For instance, the children may no longer seek the returning parent's advice for help with things. Remember that your family had to change to survive so give them time and space to readjust. Things and changes will be unfamiliar. You'll need time to get reacquainted. Intimacy takes time to develop with family members and friends. Go slow and take time to get to know each other again. Schedule time for a family activity, dates with your partner and individual time with each child.

Take Time Off From Work to Decompress and Reacquaint

If possible, it is important to take some time off between the redeployment and reentering the workforce to readjust the changes that have occurred. Don't try to do it all at the same time. Prepare yourself for returning to civilian work. It could be possible that you may not feel the same sense of satisfaction or purpose as you did when deployed. Be prepared for this and other feelings of misplacement.

If problems persist or your family takes more than eight weeks to readjust, get help.

Some Tips for Homecoming

MAKE IT SPECIAL. Plan a celebration (if your returning deployee agrees to it) but keep your expectations realistic.

STAY FLEXIBLE. He/she may be very tired. Leave room for changes.

STAY CONFIDENT. Even though your loved one may act differently, he/she is still the same person!

NEGOTIATE ACTIVITIES. Make time for everyone's favorite activities. Ask everyone for ideas.

MAKE INDIVIDUAL TIME. It's important for spouses to spend time together without family or friends.

BE PATIENT AND ADJUST GRADUALLY. Don't expect everything to happen at once. Readjustment can take weeks. Start with small changes and make them slowly. Large or rapid changes in roles are often a shock for the whole family.

RE - THINK YOUR BUDGET. Costs will be different with the returning deployee home, and pay will change too. Set realistic goals, stick to your budget, and avoid over-spending.

State of equilibrium

Reintegration and Stabilization

Sometimes within few months after homecoming, partners have stopped referring to "my" car, house, kids and return to using "we" or "our" and returning deployees feel more at home, needed, accepted, and valued.

- New routines have been established and the family has adjusted to them.
- Both partners are feeling more secure, relaxed and comfortable with each other.
- The couple and family are back on track emotionally and can enjoy warmth and closeness to each other.

There can be numerous variations to the cycle. Short deployments can be disruptive when there is not enough time to get used to the returning deployee being gone or home. Trying to say, "Hello" and "Good-bye" at the same time is especially difficult. Unexpected changes can also be very difficult to deal with for all concerned; like, when dates for leaving or coming home are ambiguous or unknown.

A HAPPY HOMECOMING

Preparing For a Happy Homecoming
Talking about your feelings is an important part of preparing for a happy homecoming.

Spouses may wonder: How much has my partner changed? Have I made good decisions about our money? Did I do OK with the kids? Will I have to stop seeing my friends so much? Will we still have things to talk about?

Returning deployees may wonder: Will my family still need me? Will the kids recognize me? How did things go while I was gone? Will they be happy to see me?

Children wonder, too: Will Dad (or Mom) come to meet my teacher? Will I be punished because I wasn't nice sometimes? Will the rules change at home? How long will Mom (or Dad) stay?

The single most important way to help ease the tension is to **maintain communication** throughout the separation. Talk about feelings and expectations, and be honest. Talk about changes and how roles, interests, and friends have changed. The old problems have not gone away. For instance, if you and your partner disagreed about how to squeeze toothpaste from the tube before the separation, chances are you'll continue to disagree about it for the next 40 years. Keep your expectations realistic.

CHILDREN

Children and Deployment

Parenting while away from home is not easy. Some separated parents find it so emotionally difficult they withdraw and become significantly less involved in the lives of their children while they are apart. This, of course, is not good either for the parent or the children, not to mention the difficulty this causes the parent/caregiver who is at home alone. The most important aspect of parenting from a distance is taking those small efforts to stay in touch. The absent parent should do or say something to let the children know they are missed is most important.

Ways to Stay Involved with Your Children During Deployment

Courtesy of the "National Fatherhood Initiative"

Most of us don't want to think about deployment. After all, it means time away from those we love! But the fact is

that families do separate. Deployment can be tough when you don't prepare for it. Here are 10 great tips that can help you and your family make it through deployment. Good luck on a successful deployment! Americans appreciate the sacrifices that you make to defend our freedom and way of life!

Be Creative

USACE offers many ways to stay connected: video and cassette tapes, video teleconferencing, phone calls, postcards, letters, e-mail and Web sites, just to name a few. Use the ones that work best for you. And use them often!

Put a "Message in a Bottle"

Before you leave, write as many short messages to your child as you can and put them in a large jar, can, or box. Tell your child to pull out one message a day while you're gone.

Draw Pictures for Your Children

Your kids will love to receive your drawings. Everyone can draw. Yes, even you! The best part is that your kids will love your artwork, even if you don't. So take a pencil, some paper and five minutes to draw a simple picture of you and your child. Then send it to them. You will make their day.

Record Helpful Phone Numbers

The parent who stays home will need to know who to call in a crisis. Even when it's not a crisis, it's easier to have a phone list handy to avoid fumbling for it while the kids are screaming. Make the list before you're deployed. If you're already deployed, encourage the other parent that stays home to do it.

Get Your House in Order

Take care of financial, medical, and legal needs before you leave. Create a deployment spending plan for the family and decide which parent will pay the monthly bills during deployment. It might make sense to have two checking accounts, one for the parent who stays home and one for the deployed parent. Make sure your family knows how to use its medical insurance and to get legal aid. Create a Family Care Plan, offered by the military. It describes how your family will want financial, medical and legal affairs handled during deployment (www.militaryonesource.com)

Prepare for Changes in Your Children

The biggest complaint many parents have about deployment is the changes that they will miss in their children. They might miss the first steps, or the first words, or the first birthday. One way to accept the changes is to stay connected as much as possible during deployment. That way the changes won't overwhelm you when you return.

Learn the Basics of Child Development

Even though your children will change while you're away, they will do so in regular and predictable ways. Take the time to learn the basics of child development. If you know what your children will be able to do and not do when you return, you will know what to expect. Suppose you return to a six month-old daughter and expect that she can eat with a spoon. You might be disappointed when she grabs a handful

of mashed carrots with her fist instead. Armed with knowledge about how children develop, you will know that it will take another six months before your princess' table manners improve.

Allow Your Children to Ask Questions and Express Fears

The world can be a scary place. It's your job to keep your kids safe. Kids these days not only have to deal with the boogey man and monsters in the closet, they worry about things they see on the evening news, in the paper, and in real life! War, crime and disease seem to be the main topics these days. Deployment can also scare and worry kids. Before and after you leave, talk with your children calmly and reassure them that everything is okay. Allow them to ask questions and express fears about anything. This will comfort your children.

Get Help If You Need It

If you need help during deployment, it is available. There are all kinds of help for all kinds of problems. You're not alone. Do you have the blues or feel depressed? Do you need a baby-sitter because you're up to your neck in kids? Are you in a deep crisis and need spiritual guidance? Regardless of your need, there are people who can help. Check your local phone book for counselors, parenting classes, spiritual leaders, recreational outlets, swimming pools, suicide hot lines, social organizations, gyms, libraries and more. The military has many activities for families—everything from outdoor events to basketball leagues to private counseling. It's all at your fingertips. If nothing else, call a relative or an old friend. Reach out for help by contacting your Family Readiness representative or accessing www.militaryonesource.com.

Remember Your Sacrifice for Country and Family

It's no surprise: Parents give up a lot for their children. And deployed parents give up more than most. They give up personal time, family time, and stable home lives. Who benefits from your sacrifice? Your family, your neighbors and all Americans! Talk with your kids about the meaning of this sacrifice. It will make it easier for them to handle being away from you.

Preparing the Children

Communication is necessary to help children cope with their parent's absence during deployment.

•Spend time talking with your child about the deployment. At your child's level, explain why dad/mom is going, where, with whom and for how long.
•Sit down with the whole family and talk about feelings. Let each member of the family express how they feel about the separation.
•Discuss the rules of the house. Make them "house rules" rather than Mom's or Dad's rules.
•Encourage the older children to talk with the younger ones about previous deployments – how long it seemed what they did, how they felt while Dad/Mom was away and what it was like when he/she returned.
•Encourage the deployee to spend time individually with each child: play a game, go for a walk, or go out for an ice cream cone – just the two of you.

•Take pictures of each child with you, and display the pictures at your child's eye level.
•Have the deploying parent read stories and talk to the children on a tape player.

Single Parent Deployments

Single parent families preparing to deploy must carefully plan for their children.
•Give the person caring for your child a power of attorney for medical care.
•File an "in loco parentis" for your caregiver.
•Ensure your caregiver has a valid driver's license.
•Make financial arrangements for the entire extra child related expenses, phone numbers, and Family Care Plan.
•Keep in touch with your child's teacher. Work together to evaluate, avoid or redirect behaviors resulting from Dad/Mom's absence.
•It is a good idea for the parent to have a plan in writing in the event of an emergency. List who will care for your children if you become ill or are involved in an accident, and how to reach that person. Post all this information in a place that a designated person can easily find it - near your telephone or on your refrigerator, for example.

Ideas for Keeping in Touch

Some of the following ideas are courtesy of the "Dads at a Distance Activities Handbook"; others are tips from families who have made it through deployments creatively.

Before you leave, compile a "Missing Dad/Mom Emergency Box". When your child is missing you a lot, have him/her choose something from the box. This box might include candy, a favorite video or CD, paper to write you a letter or draw you a picture, phone numbers of where you can be reached and at what times, etc.

Have your child create a "Treasure Box" for the deployee. Your child will enjoy knowing that all the letters he/she sends you will be stored in a safe place—and the deployee will enjoy watching it fill up with "treasure."

Hide a small gift under your child's pillow before you leave. Before you go, hide your child's favorite candy bars all over the house.

Post funny sticky-notes in specially hidden places. When your child goes to get his/her toothbrush, there will be an extra "Thanks for brushing those fangs!" waiting there with the toothpaste.

Using a permanent marker, write fun messages on household items your child will be using while you are away, such as a shampoo bottle, cereal box, carton of milk, tube of toothpaste, etc.

LONG DISTANCE FUN WITH CHILDREN

Ask your child what profession he/she wants to go into and then research that career with your child.

Start a joint family history project. Ask your child which relatives he/she would like to get to know better and have each relative send stories or information about his/her childhood. Have your child organize all the stories and information in a three-ring binder, so you can read it together at a later time.

Join a fan club together.

Learn a foreign language together. Use it in the letters you write to each other and have your child do the same.

Fill out a tournament chart (NCAA, NBA, NHL, NFL, etc.) and have your child do the same. At the end of the tournament see who guessed the most outcomes correctly. Involve a prize for the winner.

Write a letter to your child while sitting in a tree, (a tank, a helicopter, a tower…). Describe to your child the different perspective you have from your cool new place and ask him/her to do the same in the next letter.

Make a treat and give it to someone.

Chart the phases of the moon together.

Write to your child as if you were a polar bear. Describe what your day would be like in your chilly locale.

Write quizzes for your child about current events in the world.

Find unique things to write your letters on. For example: airsick bags, napkins, stickers, tinfoil, coasters, MRE boxes…

Play "Hide and Seek" from a distance. Have the person who is taking care of your child hide the treats you sent in predetermined "hiding spots." Give your child clues on how to find the treats over the phone or in a letter.

Send a bird feeder to your child and have him/her tell you about the birds that visit.

Begin a "Life's Lessons Booklet" with your family. Write to your loved one every day and when the booklet is full, send it to each other.

Buy your child a talking picture frame. Insert a favorite picture with a fun message using your voice.

Ask your child for a list of 5-10 things he/she would like to do together in the next few years. In future letters make detailed plans of when you'll do these things.

Share "Top Ten" lists. (Things you like about summer, cool things about the town you're in, top ten foods you eat on a regular basis…)

SPECIAL GIFTS FOR CHILDREN

Arrange for flowers or pizza to be delivered to your family every other Saturday.

Send a jar with the approximate number of M&Ms as days that are left until you see each other. Instruct your child to eat one a day until you are together again.

Send your child a singing telegram. Start a coin collection. Send your child money from the country/area where you are stationed.

Send a care package that can only be opened when your child is sick. You could include a can of chicken noodle soup, a get well card, a video, a book, a silly poem, etc…

Call at a time when you wouldn't normally call. (Arrange it with the teacher to call during recess!) Then say, "I just called to say I love you."

Make a videotape of you reading your child's favorite bedtime stories.

Laminate a place-mat with your picture on it so your child can have dinner with you anytime.

Set the alarms on your watches to go off at the same time. When both alarms go off, you can know that you're thinking of each other at that same time every day.

Go to **bluemountain.com** and send an e-card to your child every day for a week. Make up special occasions to do this often. (Examples: Backwards Day, Go Crazy day, Honor Day, Good Health Day, All Red Day…)

Have a fun message monogrammed on a towel and send it to your child.

Give your daughter a locket with your two pictures in it for her to wear every day.

Have a calendar made with pictures featuring the two of you.

Have FTD send your child a small potted plant or seeds that he/she can grow with you in mind.

Have a personalized rubber stamp made for him/her.

Make matching bookmarks with a picture of the two of you at the top of each bookmark. Order 1 lb. of his/her favorite candy and send it in a gift wrapped box.

Create your own "book-of-the-month club" with your child. Present them with the certificate of expectation before you leave, then pick out one book for your child to receive from you every month.

Order an autographed photo of your child's sports hero and send it to him/her.

Have a star officially named after your child. Call 1-800-282-3333.

COPING WITH SEPARATION

Deployment periods provide for a time of self-growth. For most families, a deployment isn't the happiest of occasions. Long separations are hard on every member of the family, especially those left at home. As Army families, we learn to cope. Experience has shown that a deployment is much easier on families if they prepare for it and know the tricks of getting along during separation. Take advantage of the military support. Stay informed by following some of these suggestions, deployments might go a little easier for your family.

Hints for the Family Member

• KEEP IN TOUCH! Communicate with the deployee by e-mail, if possible, AND by writing, even if it is only a post card to say, "I love you and miss you".

• Contrary to popular belief, in the case of family separation, "no news can be bad news!"

- *Deployees love mail and need to hear from home frequently.*

• Address information will be issued by the District/Division, or if known, at the pre-deployment briefing.

• Keep in mind that if your partner is far from home…Plan ahead.

- Be aware of the possibility of mail arriving late, not to mention slow arrivals.

- Money or important documents may not arrive in time to meet deadlines.

Handling Stress

• Take care of yourself.

• Make daily schedules of things that need to be done, but be reasonable.

• Get involved in things that make you happy.

• Avoid self-medication and abusing substances like drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and food. Liquor and drugs reduce the perception of stress, and they don't reduce stress itself.

• Be flexible; accept that you can't control everything.

• Plan for stress. Set realistic goals that leave time for breaks and limit work. Take a stress reduction class.

• Keep a sense of humor at all times.

• Start thinking about what you really want out of life and begin to work at those goals.

• Take a mental health day every two or three months.

• Let people know what you want.

• Learn how to express irritation and appreciation to others.

• Pick out somebody you work with and tell them something about yourself that you haven't told anyone else.

DoD Mental Health Self-Assessment Program

If you are concerned that deployment has had a negative impact on your mental health, you can take an anonymous self-assessment online to determine if you need to seek extra help. Visit the following website for more information.

http://www.pdhealth.mil/mhsa.asp

Preparing for Deployment

Family Readiness

In preparation for deployment, deployees and their family members need to consider family obligations, family health issues, children, parents, special family situations, legal and financial matters, length of tour, emergency situations, safety precautions, availability of family support, and a host of other items before deployment.

Each Division/District has an employee that is assigned with the responsibility of working Family Readiness. These individuals are familiar with programs and resources in their local area, and can be contacted if the deployee or their family is in need of assistance. It is recommended to meet or make contact with the Family Readiness representative before deployment to discuss the options available to you.

During deployment, the deployee has the option of having their family contacted by the Family Readiness representative on a monthly basis. This service is not mandatory, but it is a good way to be sure that the deployee's family has support during deployment. To ensure family contact, the deployee must fill out the ENG 107 Form before deployment. Contact the local Family Readiness representative for more information.

Communications

Communication with Family and Friends

Deployees are strongly encouraged to maintain communications with family and friends during deployment. Several options are available for families and friends to keep in touch with deployees.

Telephone

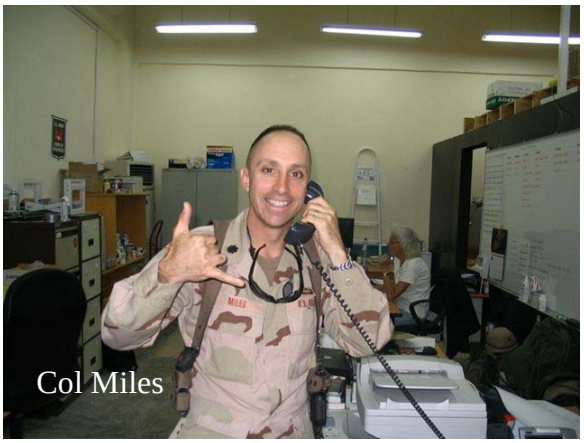
Telephone calls are a popular way to keep lines of communication open with family members. Communication challenges include the cost of long distance or overseas calls, lack of bandwidth, and time zone differences. Afghanistan Engineer District (AED) and Gulf Region District (GRD) USACE satellite telephone connections to the US are long distance calls, not international calls. Deployees are required to use a calling card when placing a long distance call to the states from a USACE phone. Additionally, the Army's Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) offers phone and internet services at various deployment sites.

Email

Most USACE deployees have regular access to email and routinely use this as a quick inexpensive way to keep in touch with family members and friends. The deployee will not be able to access the USACE email account on MWR or United Service Organizations (USO) computer network systems. It is advisable to set up an Army Knowledge On-line (AKO) account for the deployee and family members before deploying at https://www.us.army.mil.

AKO Instant Messenger

Due to restrictions during deployment, deployees might not have access to normal chat systems such as AIM, Yahoo! Messenger, and MSN Messenger. In order to keep in touch, families can use AKO Instant Messenger on the AKO website which is available anywhere. To access this service, the deployee must set up AKO accounts for themselves and their families through www.us.army.mil.



Video Teleconferences

Some divisions and districts offer the opportunity for deployed employees and their families to participate in video-teleconferences free of charge once a month. For more information on this option, contact your district.

Webcam

Deployees can bring webcam tools and a personal laptop to use on MWR lines to keep in touch with family members. Because USACE has limited bandwidth, webcam use cannot be supported on USACE computer systems.

Absentee Voting Information

Due to unpredictable mail delivery times, deployees should request an absentee ballot from their local County Election Office as soon as possible so that voting deadlines can be met. Contact your District's Voting Assistance Officer for assistance. For more information, visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program web site at www.fvap.gov./index.html.

Financial Matters

Accounts

Checking, savings and credit card accounts should be established well in advance of deployment. Deployees should designate someone to handle financial matters on their behalf in case of emergencies. If accounts are solely in the name of the deployed employee, the spouse or other designated individual may have trouble resolving any problems that may arise. For instance, if a debit card is lost or stolen, the bank may not issue a new card without the signature of the account holder. Consider establishing joint accounts with signatures being required by only one individual and/or those with a power of attorney. For more financial considerations, see Appendix B.

Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)

FEHB helps protect deployees and family members from the expenses of illness and accident. Deployees must register for FEHB during regularly designated open seasons and cannot initiate coverage at other times. FEHB plans consist of Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), Point of Service, Preferred Provider and Fee-for-Service coverage. Family members need to be well informed regarding their FEHB coverage and limitations. Deployees are encouraged to continue medical coverage for their families. Deployees should have statements from licensed doctors or medical officers verifying medical conditions of dependents.

Legal Matters

For advice about wills, powers of attorney, and other legal assistance, contact the local Office of Counsel for the nearest military installation. Legal assistance is free; however, some legal matters may involve civilian court proceedings which are not free. Prior to deployment, legal assistance services will be provided to deployees by their home station or through a civil law services support agreement with a nearby DoD component. USACE attorneys cannot represent deployees or their family members in court, but will provide a list of attorneys or civilian legal service agencies. Additionally, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) may be able to help. Check with the local supporting Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC). Also note that Office of Counsel may provide free notary public services.

Power of Attorney

During deployment, there may be times when legal matters need attention. No one is legally authorized to act on the deployee's behalf without a power of attorney. It is important that a spouse, relative or other trusted friend be named to act on the deployee's behalf. With a

power of attorney, the deployee can specify what decisions an agent can and cannot make and revoke the power of attorney at any designated time. General, Limited and Medical powers of attorney are described as follows:

- ***General Power of Attorney:*** Authorizes a person designated to sign legal instruments and conduct all business on behalf of the person signing the Power of Attorney.
- ***Limited Power of Attorney:*** Authorizes the person designated to conduct only legal and business matters specified in the document on behalf of the person signing the Power of Attorney
- ***Medical Power of Attorney:*** Authorizes a person designated in the Power of Attorney to authorize medical care for dependent family members of the deployee.

Also, we caution deployees and the person(s) named in their power of attorney to read and understand any contract before signing. Never accept verbal promises, which are not written into the contract.

Important Documents

It is important to have certain documents and family records readily available. Should an emergency arise, family members may need some or all of those documents. For a full list of important documents, please complete the checklists and forms on pages 31-49 in preparation of deployment. Keep this handbook and these documents in a safe place for easy retrieval by trusted persons. If the original documents are unavailable, obtain certified copies.

Insurance Policies

Review insurance needs and determine the adequacy of existing policies for life, auto, health, flood, fire, homeowners/renters and personal articles. Take inventory of personal items, pictures of each room, and all valuable assets.

Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries should be designated for life insurance, unpaid compensation, retirement, Thrift Savings Plan, and other survivor benefits. It is extremely important for the deployee to contact the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) to file and/or review and update designation of beneficiary forms, as appropriate.

Mental Health

It is important to be aware of potential mental health problems that could occur during or after deployment. Three of the most common problems will be covered in detail, but if you would like more information or need help locating assistance please contact your Family Readiness representative.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that can occur after going through a traumatic event. During this type of event, you think that your life or others' lives are in danger. You may feel afraid or feel that you have no control

over what is happening. Anyone who has gone through a life-threatening event can develop PTSD. These events can include:

- Combat or military exposure
- Sexual or physical assault
- Serious accidents, such as a car wreck.
- Natural disasters, such as a fire, tornado, hurricane, flood, or earthquake.

After the event, you may feel scared, confused, or angry. If these feelings don't go away or they get worse, you may have PTSD. These symptoms may disrupt your life, making it hard to continue with your daily activities. Symptoms of PTSD may include:

- Reliving the event (also called re-experiencing symptoms)
- Avoiding situations that remind you of the event:
- Feeling numb
- Feeling keyed up (also called hyper arousal)
- Drinking or drug problems
- Feelings of hopelessness, shame, or despair
- Employment problems
- Relationships problems including divorce and violence

If you or your spouse are experiencing any these symptoms it is recommended that you seek help. This information and more can be found on the VA website at www.ptsd.va.gov .

Traumatic Brain Injury

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a serious public health problem in the United States. TBI is caused by a bump or blow to the head, but not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. The severity of a TBI may range from "mild," i.e., a brief change in mental status or consciousness to "severe," i.e., an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury. The majority of TBIs that occur each year are concussions or other forms of mild TBI known as MTBI. Symptoms of MBTI include:

- Persistent headache
- Confusion
- Pain
- Cognitive and/or memory problems
- Fatigue
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Mood changes
- Sensory problems such as changes in vision or hearing (post-concussion syndrome)

It is important to be aware of the symptoms of MTBI and seek medical treatment if symptoms persist. For more information on TBI please visit http://cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/tbi_concussion.html .

Suicide Prevention:
Warning Signs & Risk Factors

Although no one likes to think about the worst, it is important to be aware of what is going on around you. In order to prevent a potentially serious situation, it is important for everyone to be prepared. The following section covers common warning signs and risk factors, that everyone should be familiar with, which may lead to suicide.

Warning Signs:
When a deployee presents with any combination of the following, the buddy or chain of command should be more vigilant. It is advised that help should be secured for the deployee.

- Talk of suicide or killing someone else
- Giving away property or disregard for what happens to one's property
- Withdrawal from friends and activities
- Problems with girlfriend (boyfriend), spouse, or close family member
- Acting bizarre or unusual (based on your knowledge of the person)
- Experiencing financial problems
- Experiencing legal problems (e.g. lawsuits or criminal charges)
- Loss of job including Soldiers who have lost their job at home (reservists)
- Those leaving military or government service (e.g. retirements, ETSs, etc.)

When a deployee presents with any one of these concerns, the deployee should be seen immediately by a helping provider.

- Talking or hinting about suicide
- Formulating a plan to include acquiring the means to kill oneself
- Having a desire to die
- Obsession with death (music, poetry, artwork)
- Themes of death in letters and notes
- Finalizing personal affairs
- Giving away personal possessions

Risk Factors:
Risk factors are those things that increase the probability that difficulties could result in serious adverse behavioral or physical health. The risk factors only raise the risk of an individual being suicidal it does not mean they are suicidal. These risk factors are often associated with suicidal behavior include:

- Relationship problems (loss of girlfriend/boyfriend, divorce, etc.).
- History of previous suicide attempts.
- Substance abuse.
- History of depression or other mental illness.
- Family history of suicide or violence.
- Work related problems.
- Transitions (retirement, PCS, discharge, etc.).
- A serious medical problem.
- Significant loss (death of loved one, loss due to natural disasters, etc.).
- Current/pending disciplinary or legal action.
- Setbacks (academic, career, or personal).
- Severe, prolonged, and/or perceived unmanageable stress.
- A sense of powerlessness, helplessness, and/or hopelessness.

Suicidal Risk Highest When:

- The person sees **no way out** and fears things may get worse.
- The predominant emotions are **hopelessness and helplessness.**
- **Thinking is constricted** with a tendency to perceive his or her situation as all bad.
- Judgment is impaired by use of **alcohol or other substances.**

For more information on suicide prevention, please visit http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Readiness/suicide.aspx

The information on suicide prevention has been adapted for use in USACE from TA-075-0507 published by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative Medicine

CHECKLIST 1: LEGAL/ADMINISTRATIVE

The Office of Counsel advises you and your family about wills and powers of attorney. In addition, notary public services are normally available. All assistance is free. However, some legal matters involve civilian court proceedings. The District's attorneys may not represent you in court, but can refer you to civilian attorneys or to civilian legal service agencies that may be able to represent you.

Never sign a contract without completely reading and understanding it. Never accept verbal promises, which are not written into the contract. Be prudent and cautious in spending money and especially in using a power of attorney.

It is important to have certain documents and family records in your possession. Should an emergency arise, you may need some or all of those documents. Some of the documents listed below may be used often, even when an emergency does not exist. Put this handbook and these documents in a special container or a safe place so you and your spouse, primary next of kin or someone outside of your household knows where they are. If the original documents are unavailable, obtain certified copies. These documents should be located now. You may not have time to find them later.

- **Passports** – It is recommended that family members have a current passport to meet loved ones on R&R or in case of a medical emergency. To apply for a passport, visit the Department of State online at http://travel.state.gov/passport/forms/forms_847.html.
- **Country VISA Requirements** – Some countries require a Country VISA; check with local EOC to verify. If deploying to AED, a VISA is required.

- Do you have an up-to-date will and know where it is kept?
- Does your spouse know where your will is kept?
- Are you or your spouse designated as an executor or trustee and does your spouse know where these documents are kept?
- Do you have a living will? Does your spouse know where it is kept?
- Do you have and know the location of your power of attorney?
- Do you have and know the location of each family member's certified birth certificate? Do you have citizenship records for any family member born outside of the United States?
- Do you have and know the location of your marriage certificate?
- Do you have copies and know the location of any adoption

papers, guardianship papers for children or adult dependents?

- Do you have and know the location of your divorce decree(s)?
- Do you have copies and know the location of court orders awarding custody of children, child support, declaring the biological parent or written admission of paternity, and related documents?
- Do you have statements from licensed doctors or medical officers for dependent children over 21 years of age whom are mentally or physically disabled and know where they are?
- Do you have a enrollment documents giving names and location of places where unmarried children older than 21, but younger than 23 years of age who are enrolled in a full-time course of instruction?
- Do you have death certificates of deceased members of the immediate family and know their location?
- Do you have a recent photograph (full face, light background, about 2X2 inches, showing the person's entire head for each family member 10 years old or older)?
- Do you know the location of Leave and Earnings statements from the last three months?
- Do you have copies of Federal and State tax records for the past six years?
- Where are the insurance policies kept? (Car, life, homeowner, personal property, etc.)
- Do you know where the deeds and other title documents relating to real estate are?
- Where are your certificates of title and registration, warranties, and tax receipts for automobiles, boats, recreational vehicles, and other personal property?
- Do you know the location of business agreements including partnership documents, agency contracts, sales contracts, royalties, residual agreements, and employment contracts?
- Do you have documents relating to bankruptcy proceedings and know where they are kept?
- Are all your important papers safeguarded?
- Do you have and know the social security numbers for each of your family members? If you are unable to locate these, visit the Social Security Administration online at www.ssa.gov.

CHECKLIST 2: FINANCIAL CHECKLIST

- Do you and your spouse have a joint checking account?
- Do you use Direct Deposit?
- Will your bank accept your Power of Attorney? (Not all banks do!)
- Do you know how deposits are made?
- Where are stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, savings and credit union passbooks, notes receivables, and other evidence of income producing properties?
- Do you have all passwords and account numbers for on line accounting?
- Do you know how to order more checks? Do you know what service charges are?
- Will you have money immediately available to you on a continuing basis during your spouse's deployment?
- If you are receiving an allotment, will it provide sufficient money to maintain your entire household?
- Do you know the account numbers, type of account, names and addresses of your banks?
- Do you know if bills or payments are automatically drafted from your account?
- Do you know the location of checking and savings books?
- Do you have a safe deposit box & where the key is kept?
- When are your property taxes due, how often are they paid and how (automatically from escrow account, check, automatically form personal checking account)?
- Are all of your credit cards accounted for? Are the numbers logged and in a safe place? Do you know how to notify the credit card company in case of loss or theft?
- Do you have Leave and Earnings statements from the last three months?
- Are you prepared to assume or have already assumed the control of all checking accounts, know the balance at all times, and never write a check unless you are certain of sufficient funds in the account?
- Do you know that your spouse must make any changes to allotments, including address changes?
- Do you have a copy of any installment contracts or loan papers?
- Do you know whom to contact if your allotment check doesn't arrive? If you rent or lease, do you have a copy of your lease agreement?
- Will your lease run out while your spouse is deployed?
- Do you know what bills must be paid and when they are due?

ACCOUNT NUMBER	PHONE NUMBER	DUE DATE
Mortgage/rent		
Water – sewage		
Electrical		
Natural Gas		
Cable – Satellite		
Phone		
Cellular Phone		
Student Loan		
Student Loan		
Car License Plate		
Car License Plate		
Car State Safety Inspection		
Car Insurance		
Car Insurance		
Homeowner's Insurance		
Renter's Insurance		

CHECKING ACCOUNTS:

Bank or Institution Address	Account Number	Name(s) on Account

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS:

Bank or Institution Address	Account Number	Name(s) on Account

CREDIT CARDS:

Credit Card	Account Number	Expiration Date	Company name and address	Telephone

DEBT INFORMATION

OUTSTANDING DEBTS:

Company Owed	Phone	Total Amount	Payment	Due Date

DEBTS OWED TO THE FAMILY:

Person Owing	Telephone	Total Amount	Payment	Due Date

INSURANCE

AUTOMOBILE, HOUSEHOLD, THEFT, FIRE, FLOOD, LIABILITY, ETC.

Type	Company	Phone	Policy Number

LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES:

Name of Insured	Policy Number	Company/Agency

HEALTH INSURANCE:

Name of Insured	Policy Number	Company/Agency

BONDS: (SPECIFY TYPE)

In Whose Name	Serial #	Purchase Date	Purchase Price	Maturity Date

CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT:

In Whose Name	Serial #	Purchase Date	Purchase Price	Maturity Date

STOCKS:

In Whose Name	Stock Value	Purchase Date	# of Shares	Price per Share

HOUSEHOLD FINANCES:

Payee	Account #	Phone #	Due Date	Amount Due
Mortgage/Rent				
Electric/Water				
Gas				
Telephone				
Cell Phone/Pager				
Cable				
Auto Insurance				
Student Loan				
Credit Card				
Car Payment				

INCOME:

Source	Amount	Pay Dates

CHECKLIST 3: MEDICAL CHECKLIST

- ❑ Do I know the telephone number of our Family Physician?
- ❑ Do I know the location of the nearest emergency room?
- ❑ Do you have immunization records for each family member?
- ❑ Are immunizations for each family member up to date?
- ❑ Where are the medical records for each family member?
- ❑ What prescriptions or other medications do family members need?
- ❑ How are the prescriptions filled?
- ❑ Are there special medication needs for family members?
- ❑ Does the deployee have medication prescriptions filled or refills for the entire deployment tour?
- ❑ Where are the dental records for each family member?
- ❑ Who has medical power of attorney?
- ❑ Are the pet's vaccinations up to date?
- ❑ Are the pets licensed or registered as required?
- ❑ What is the telephone number of your veterinarian?
- ❑ Where is your veterinarian located?
- ❑ Is there a plan for the death of a pet during your deployment?

COPING STRATEGIES - THE 4 M's

MAINTAIN

• Stay in good physical condition.
• Eat balanced meals.
• Get plenty of sleep.
• Keep in touch with positive people.
• Avoid things that make you feel worse.
• Avoid spending sprees, but treat yourself to a special outing.
• Don't make any life changes during this time.

MANAGE

• Manage your life. Set goals.
• Start a project that you've put off. Begin a self-improvement program or go back to school.
• Set time to be away from the children so you can take care of yourself.
• Continue your spiritual growth.
• Become involved in community activities that interest you.
• Travel – New scenery and a change of pace can do wonders for the spirit.
• Become a volunteer.
• Know your limits.

MONITOR

• Be aware of early signs of stress.
• Laugh: Don't lose your sense of humor.
• You are only human – ask for help if you need it.

MANEUVER

• Relieves stress – try relaxation exercises.
• Use coping strategies that work for you.
• Stop and smell the roses.

CHECKLIST 4: HOUSING CHECKLIST

- ❑ Do I know the location and use of the electrical circuit and main breaker boxes?
- ❑ Do I know the location of the main water control valves and how to turn them off?
- ❑ Do I know the location of each toilet's water control valve and how to turn it off?
- ❑ Do I know the location of each sink's water control valve and how to turn it off?
- ❑ Do I know the location of the washing machine's valve and how to turn it off?
- ❑ Do I know the location of the dishwasher's valve and how to turn it off?
- ❑ Do I know the location of the gas control valve and how to turn it off?
- ❑ Name and telephone number of an electrician?
- ❑ Name and telephone number of a plumber?
- ❑ Name and telephone number of the landlord?
- ❑ Do I have an extra set of house keys? Where are they located?
- ❑ Do the doors and windows have good locks?
- ❑ Do all of the smoke alarms and carbon dioxide alarms have new batteries?
- ❑ Are there enough alarms installed?
- ❑ Am I capable of doing the yard maintenance? If not, have I made arrangements?
- ❑ Do I have a current household inventory, including serial numbers?
- ❑ Do I have current renters or homeowner's personal property insurance?
- ❑ Have I checked for current maintenance problems? Have I resolved them?
- ❑ Are curtains, dishtowels, paper and other items kept away from the stove?
- ❑ Is the stove's exhaust hood and ductwork clean and free of grease?
- ❑ Do I have properly rated extinguishers close at hand and suitable for grease and electrical fires?
- ❑ Is the fireplace screen closed?
- ❑ Is the fireplace damper closed?
- ❑ Is there sufficient space for air circulation around the TV or stereo?
- ❑ Are matches and lighters kept out of reach and the access of children?
- ❑ Are any weapons in the home? Are they secured and inaccessible to children?
- ❑ Are the furnace, heaters, vents and chimney inspected and serviced regularly?

- Is the dryer lint trap and vent clean?
- Is the gasoline for the mower stowed in a safety container away from the house?
- Are all dry leaves under wooden stairs, in windowsills or anywhere else close to the house removed?
- Do you have an intruder plan and fire escape plan, and have you practiced it with all family members?
- Do you have house security alarm? Is it in good working order? Do family members know how to turn it on and off?
- Have you practiced fire emergency procedures?
- Are circuits adequate for heating appliances, such as irons or toasters?
- Is the electrical wiring in your home adequate to handle the load?
- Are there plenty of wall electrical outlets, so "octopus" connections are not necessary?
- Are all oily rags kept in tight metal containers to prevent combustion?
- Always read the product label and follow their safety precautions very carefully!
- Do you avoid the accumulation of paper and combustible materials?
- Are paint thinners, paints, solvents, and other chemicals kept in their original containers for identification purposes? Do you inspect electrical cords on your appliances?
- Do you use extension cords only for temporary convenience, never as permanent wiring?
- Never smoke in bed.
- Never use hair spray or other combustibles near open flames or while smoking.
- Are fuses the proper size for the circuits they protect?
- Does every member of your family know how to dial 911?
- Does every member of your family know their address and phone number?

IMPORTANT: Never leave your children unattended, and make sure you instruct sitters on safety and fire procedures in your house.

_____

_____

_____

_____

CHECKLIST 5: SAFETY AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

These tips are good to follow whether your spouse is home or not. Sudden changes in your conduct or behavior patterns may advertise your spouse's absence

- Be selective in telling people that your spouse is deployed.
- Do not discuss your spouse's absence in public, even with friends, because someone with ill intent may overhear you.
- When someone calls on the telephone and asks for your spouse, NEVER tell the caller that your spouse is not home. Tell the caller that your spouse can't come to the telephone and offer to take a message.
- Keep emergency phone numbers and your address by all the phones in your home.
- Always lock your doors and windows, draw your shades at night and leave a few lights on.
- Leave lights on outside and inside whenever possible
- Turn on your home security alarm when you go to bed or leave the house.
- Install a deadbolt lock before the deployment. It is the most difficult to pick. Make sure your door has a peephole and a safety chain. (A safety chain is NOT adequate protection in the event someone tries to force a door open.)
- Do not hide keys outside. They are too easily found
- Most burglars and intruders enter homes through OPEN doors or windows or doors and windows that are easily jimmied.
- Never open your door even a crack for anyone uninvited or unexpected. Use a peephole. If they claim it is an emergency, make the phone call for them.
- Do not allow sales, repair, or delivery people, or other strangers into your home when you are alone. If you are expecting a service call, have another person with you and call the company when the employee arrives.
- Use caution. Remember neighbors and acquaintances do not come with credentials
- Change the locks on the doors if you are not sure who has other keys to your house. (Previous tenants and their friends, or neighbors with extra keys).
- Discontinue paper delivery if you will be away. Ask the Post Office to hold your mail until you return
- Do not leave a child alone in a car or home. It is illegal in most states, although the minimum age may vary, and a safety and security issue.
- Instruct children, family and babysitters not to give out

information about who is home, who is out, or for how long.

- Always keep your doors locked whether or not you are at home. Always lock your car while driving and when your car is unoccupied.
- If you notice strangers loitering in your neighborhood, notify the police; include a time, place, and a description.
- To discourage burglars, engrave your name on televisions, stereos, cameras and other items of value. Check with your local police for more information and current recommendations about engraving.
- If you suspect your home has been broken into DO NOT go in. Call the police from a neighbor's home.
- When going to your car have your keys in your hand.
- Look under the car as you approach it and look inside the car before unlocking the doors.
- Once inside the car, lock all of the doors.
- If your car breaks down, put up the hood, turn on the emergency flashers and stay in the car with the windows up and the doors locked.
- If someone stops to help, give him/her the phone number to call.
- If you travel, consider owning a cellular phone.
- When approaching a stop, look all around, and leave enough room to be able to pull around the car in front of you in an emergency.
- If someone hits your car from the rear, do not get out of the car if you are in an isolated or unsafe place. Instead, if the car is drivable, go to a well-lit populated area. If you have a cellular phone, use it to call the police.
- While walking keep your head up and be aware of your surroundings -- it is your best defense.
- Change your routes to stay out of unsafe areas.
- If you think you are being followed while walking, cross to the other side of the street and change your route to a well-lit populated area, or if you are driving, go to the police station.
- When walking, stay well away from bushes, parked cars, and alleyways.
- When you go anywhere, ask yourself, what would I do if I were attacked in this situation? Be Prepared.
- Be aware of people identifying themselves as members of the Corps of Engineers. Ask to see identification.
- Plan ahead for emergencies and natural disasters. Identify where the family will relocate in terms of emergency or natural disasters.

CHECKLIST 6: TRANSPORTATION

- Do you have a current driver's license?
- Do you have an extra set of car keys?
- Do you know when the car is due for maintenance?
- Do you know where to take the car for maintenance?
- Do you know how to attend to minor car maintenance?
- Do you know what to do if your car breaks down?
- Is the registration for the car kept in the car?
- Is a proof of insurance kept in the car at all times?
- Check with insurance company for a reduced rate on auto insurance during deployment.
- Do you have the title for the car?
- Does the certificate of title and registration expire during deployment?
- Warranties and tax receipts for all vehicles, boats, recreational vehicles and other personal property—where are the titles of these items maintained?
- Are the car tags current?
- If the tags need to be renewed while your spouse is away, do you have the proper paper work to get new tags?
- When will the safety inspection expire? (Not applicable in all states).
- If your family members do not drive or have a valid driver's license, are they familiar with local public transportation?
- What is the name and address of the company holding the lien?
- Are you insured to drive the car(s)?
- Do family members know what to do when the car breaks down?
- When will the state inspection or emissions expire?
- What are your coverage limits on each?
- What is your deductible?
- When is each due for renewal?
- What is the payment schedule for premiums (check, automatic, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual) and how are they paid (check, automatic checking account withdrawal)?
- Who do you contact in case of a claim?

CHECKLIST 7: FAMILY PRE-DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Does your family know your access codes to www.cpol.army.mil or any other online accounts that they may need to access during your deployment?
- Work out any differences you may have with each other now. Time does not heal old wounds and absence does not necessarily make the heart grow fonder.
- Write important dates on a calendar. Include birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, vacation dates, vehicle safety inspection renewal dates, vehicle tag renewal dates, state and federal tax deadlines, auto insurance expiration dates, charge cards, insurance, mortgage, car, and mortgage payment due dates and amounts. Make a copy for each of you.
- Discuss how you plan to keep in contact during the deployment. (You may consider pre-addressing envelopes and purchasing stamps ahead of time)
- Flowers or gifts can be ordered in advance to arrive on special dates, or make arrangements with a friend to deliver gifts on special occasions or holidays.
- If you have a full time job and children, make arrangements for primary and alternate childcare during your work hours. Make sure your child's caregiver has a current power of attorney to assure necessary medical care.
- Let at least three of your trusted neighbors know that your spouse is deployed. You may need their help during an emergency. They can also be a wonderful source of day-to-day support.
- Set goals for yourself.
- Stay busy during the separation: church, school, sports, volunteering and FRIENDS.
- Take up a new hobby, or return to the one you gave up for lack of time.
- Travel! New scenery and a change of pace, even if only for a day does wonders for the spirit. Take a friend! Don't wait for the phone to ring, take the lead!
- Create and stick to your budget.
- Get up earlier to allow yourself more time before starting the day.
- Set priorities, select the best time to complete tasks, and pace yourself. Be realistic and kind to yourself.
- If you are under great stress, plan with your limitations in mind.
- Talk to other deployee spouses; time passes much faster with a friend.
- Set up a childcare co-op with other deployee spouses. This will let you have a few hours to yourself.

- Do not try to please everyone. Learn to say “no.”
- Exercise regularly. Get plenty of sleep. It is okay to go to bed early!
- Admit when you have made a mistake, correct what you can, and move on. It is easier than covering up or feeling guilty.
- Treat yourself like you treat your closest friend. Learn about your acceptable/comfortable stress level.
- Some stress is normal and necessary. (It gets you out of bed in the morning.)
- Give yourself permission to be less than perfect, or to take a break.
- Plan special treats for you each week. Always have something to look forward to. Keep learning -- take a class, work on a puzzle, try something new!
- Anticipate stress & prepare for it.
- Simplify
- Avoid power struggles.
- Provide consistent discipline and feedback to your children.
- Be honest.

CHECKLIST 8: EMERGENCY INFORMATION

EMERGENCY NUMBERS (make copies and place by each phone in your home)

Ambulance _____ **Minister**_____

Legal Assistance _____ **Nurse Advice Line** _____

Crisis Hotline _____ **Poison Control** _____

Drugs/Alcohol _____ **Police/City** _____

Emergency Room _____ **Police/Military** _____

Family Advocacy _____ **Red Cross** 1-888-737-4306

Fire Department _____ **Clinic**_____

School _____ **Hospital** _____

USACE POC _____ **Deployee** _____

Emergencies During Deployment:

The commanding officer is authorized to grant emergency leave. Emergency leave can be granted only when your spouse's presence will significantly contribute to assisting with the emergency or when a death has occurred. Please keep in mind that each team member is valuable and performs a vital and important job. A denial to grant leave does not mean that the request was not carefully considered. **Emergencies Requiring Your Spouse's Presence:** The Army considers the following situations emergencies during which a commander could deem it necessary to allow your spouse to return home:

> **The death, critical illness or injury to an immediate family member (i.e., spouse, child, brother, sister, parent or guardian who raised them in place of their parents).**

While illnesses such as the flu, injuries such as a broken arm, or the birth of a baby are not minor events, they are not considered as emergencies. In these and similar situations your friends, neighbors, relatives, FAC, pastors, and community agencies can help you! If you have an emergency that requires contacting your spouse, follow these directions for the fastest results:

1. Notify the RED CROSS for emergency reporting and verification services such as, death or serious illness in the immediate family. Contact Armed Forces Emergency Center, 1-877-272-7337, 24 hours a day, or the Red Cross emergency number: 1-888-737-4306.
The Red Cross will ask for:

Spouse's full name: _____

Social security number: _____ - _____ - _____

Branch of service: _____

Military Unit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Rank/Grade: _____

The Red Cross will ask for the name of the person having the emergency.

_____

The Red Cross will ask for the nature of the emergency.

_____

The Red Cross may ask for the name and location of the hospital.

_____

The Red Cross may ask for the name of the attending doctor.

_____

2. Contact Information.

Family Assistance Coordinator: _____

Office number_____

Home number:_____

If An Immediate Family Member Has an Emergency
If an immediate family member living in another part of the country has an emergency and your spouse's presence is needed, the Red Cross from that area can verify the emergency and call the Armed Forces Emergency Services Center 1- 877- 272- 7337.

If Your Deployed Spouse Has an Emergency

If your spouse develops a serious problem such as an illness or injury, the military chain of command, the Red Cross, or a military chaplain will contact you.

CHECKLIST 9: IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Your Spouse's Full Name and Rank/Grade

_____

Your Spouse's Social Security Number

_____

Your Spouse's District/Division Telephone Number

_____

Your Family Readiness POC's (District/Division) Telephone Number

_____

Your Spouse's Commander's Telephone Number

_____

You're Church/House of Worship Telephone Number

Close Friends' Telephone Numbers

_____

_____

Neighbors' Telephone Numbers_____

_____

Deployment in Support of the Overseas Contingency Operation (Iraq and Afghanistan)

Recruitment

Supporting the Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) mission is the number one priority of USACE. Given the continual rotation of personnel deploying to and returning from AED and GRD, we have a constant need to recruit applicants. Various tools are used to solicit volunteers for deployment: vacancy announcements, direct recruiting, specific taskers, and request for interest from the Chief of Engineers. The primary source is through vacancy announcements posted on www.USAjobs.com or cpol.army.mil. Additionally, USACE job opportunities may also be open to non-Department of Defense personnel. The secondary source is direct recruiting or volunteering. Periodically, a critical-fill position may exist and requests are sent out via email for interested volunteers to submit resumes. If an employee qualifies for a position, a name tasker (specific job assignment) may be issued for the selected employee. When volunteers are not keeping up with demand, the Chief of Engineers may send a message calling for volunteers and asking that resumes be sent via email to: sendme@usace.army.mil. In this way, a greater number of resumes are collected and subsequently forwarded to the appropriate personnel office for consideration.

Pay and Benefits

Civilian Compensation and benefits for deployees are outlined at this website: http://usace.army.mil/cehr/pages/usaceoverseascontingencyoperation.aspx. Depending on the type of assignment, length, and location, volunteers may be eligible for a relocation bonus, danger pay, post differential pay, and Separate Maintenance Allowance (SMA). Where authorized, deployees may also receive overtime, night differential and holiday pay. There are earning limits that apply, referred to as pay caps. See the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) in Appendix K for more information. Employment benefits vary based on employment status. For more information, check with your local Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC).

Relocation Incentive Program

The relocation incentive program follows these basic guidelines:

- 12-month deployment = 25% relocation incentive (calculated using base salary)
- 6-month deployment = 12.5% relocation incentive (calculated using base salary)
- Payment will be incremental payments by pay period (there will be *no* lump sum payments)

Leave

***Renewed R&R Benefits**: The authority to authorize funding of three R&R trips during a 12 month tour in Iraq and Afghanistan or a single R&R trip for a six month tour is in Public Law 109-234, effective thru FY11.*

Rest and Recuperation (R&R)

Employees whose tour of duty is six months or longer are eligible for (R&R) trips based on the length of the deployment. Employees must serve a minimum of 60 days in country before taking R&R and this leave must be taken no later than 60 days before the end of a tour. Accrued annual leave, restored leave, or home leave hours are charged for R&R taken.

Home Leave

Under authority granted in P.L. 109-234, DoD employees officially assigned to Iraq or Afghanistan for a tour of at least 12 months by means of Temporary Duty (TDY), or Temporary Change of Station are entitled to earn home leave at the rate of 15 days per 12 months. Under this new authority, DoD employees are not required to complete the basic one-time service requirement of 24 months *continued* service abroad specified in title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 5 CFR 630.606 in order to earn the home leave, nor are they required to be eligible to accumulate a maximum of 45 days of annual leave under 5 U.S.C. 6304 in order to earn the home leave. Earned home leave can be used *only* after completion of the 12 month service period, and only if the employee is expected to return to service abroad to Iraq or Afghanistan, or to another **overseas** location **upon completion of the home leave period**. Simply put, in order to charge to home leave, the deployee must be in the middle of a tour overseas (GRD/AED) and expected to return to the overseas location (GRD/AED) upon completion of the home leave taken.

4-Day Pass

One 4-day pass is authorized for every six months served during deployment. You may be required to use Annual Leave depending when the 4 day pass is scheduled. There are regular military flights to accommodate the 4 day pass to Qatar and military transportation will be coordinated at your deployment location.

Annual Leave Carryover

During deployment, deployees are allowed to carry over 360 hours of annual leave. Leave in excess of maximum carryover at the end of the leave calendar date will be automatically restored (should show up on February leave and earnings statement (LES). Restored leave is valid up to two years and will be reflected as restored leave on the LES.

Deployment Selection

Once selected for a GRD or AED position, the selectee will receive an email with details about the position, the type of assignment, pre-deployment instructions and requirements, links to pertinent websites, and a point of contact. The process may vary depending on the type of position.

Pre-Deployment Processing

The USACE Deployment Center (UDC) processes all deployees and serves as the transition point as personnel deploy to AED and GRD. The UDC is located in Winchester, Virginia, at the Transatlantic Programs Center (TAC). Required training, passport application process, medical examinations, lab work, mandatory shots, and general administrative deployment process requires an early start to a lengthy process. Paperwork and medical requirements and timelines must be followed, so volunteers should begin the process early. Visit the TAC UDC website www.tac.usace.army.mil/ deployment center or contact the local district's deployment coordinator for more information.

Living Conditions and Work Hours

Living conditions vary depending upon tour location. Billeting may be in a barracks- type building, construction-type trailer, military tent, or steel cargo container converted to living quarters. . Single accommodations that include bathrooms are limited. However, trailers may be available with a bathroom shared by two people who live on either side of it. Amenities vary. Rooms may have twin, or full beds depending on the location. Some billeting may have a TV, DVD player, internet hookup, and AFN television stations. Additionally, rooms may come equipped with a refrigerator, desk, and chair. If you are deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil/ or www.aed.usace.army.mil/ for more information.

Clothing and Weather

Requirements for dress vary based on location of duty. In some locations and during certain official events, wearing the uniform is required. Civilians are authorized to wear civilian attire at their place of duty. The recommendation for civilian attire normally falls between casual to business casual. The type of clothing and weather conditions will vary depending on the location and the time of the year.

If steel toed boots are a job safety requirement, plan on getting a pair prior to deployment. The Central Issue Facility (CIF) in some overseas locations will provide steel toed boots in Exchange for the boots issued at the UFC; however, boot sizes are limited. For more information, visit

www.tac.usace.army.mil/deploymentcenter/equip.asp .

USACE Photo by MSG Mark Rodgers

Regular U.S. Postal Service (USPS)

Regular U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Mail Deployees have access to the US Postal Service in AED and GRD where both locations have experienced improved delivery service. However, delivery will depend on location and Army campaign requirements.

Mailing Packages

Packages to AED and GRD require a customs form to be filled out. Packages less than 4 pounds require the smaller green customs form. Forms are Available at all U.S. post offices and most post offices allow deployees and family members to stock up on these forms. Check with the post office for weight and size restrictions.

Package Inspection

Every package is inspected and placed through scanners, so be sure to send only allowable items to avoid delays. Note that no liquids, flammables, perishables and illegal items are allowed to be shipped. As a special note, mailing chocolate or other potentially soft goodies should be timed according to season—do not mail chocolate or any other item susceptible to melting from April thru September due to high temperatures in GRD. Additionally, any items that may leak should be sealed in a clear plastic bag before shipping. Mail is stored in metal ISO containers that reach upwards of 130 degrees or more in some areas. Also, when preparing to send mail to the U.S., deployees are not allowed to seal any packages or bulky envelopes. Customs agents will verify contents and seal (tape) the package personally. For more information, visit: www.usps.com.

Mailing Personal Items

USACE will not reimburse or pay for personal effects to be shipped to/from deployee's residence (personnel deployed to AED are authorized reimbursement per stated amount identified on their travel orders).

Legal Matters

Government Life Insurance and Death Benefits

Deploying to a combat zone does not cancel Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) coverage. Civilian employees deploying in support capacity keep their FEGLI coverage, including Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) coverage. Deploying to a combat zone does not affect the amount of FEGLI coverage, provided the deployee is not engaged in combat. (Combat is not defined as self-defense.)

- If a federal employee working in a war zone is killed, regular death benefits are payable to the employee's designated beneficiaries. In addition, accidental death benefits are also payable under basic insurance (and Option A, if the employee had that coverage), unless the employee was in actual combat or nuclear weapons were used at the time of death.

- The Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance decides whether to pay Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) benefits only after thoroughly studying the facts and documentation surrounding an employee's death; and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) makes such determinations on a case-by-case basis. While we cannot say that in 100 percent of civilian deaths AD&D benefits will be payable, it is highly unlikely for a civilian to be in actual combat.

*If an employee is **not** covered under FEGLI, and will be deploying overseas, there is an opportunity to enroll for basic FEGLI under a 60-day personal "open season" because that employee is an emergency essential employee by virtue of deployment to such a position.*

Federal Employee's Compensation Act (FECA) or Workman's Compensation

Deployees who sustain injury or death while deployed may receive benefits provided under the FECA. A DoD deployee who sustains traumatic injury during the performance of duty must notify the onsite supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days from the date of injury. If the deployee becomes incapacitated, someone acting on their behalf may inform the supervisor. For more information on medical treatment during deployment or FECA please see Appendix 1 and 2.

- o DoD civilian employees who require treatment for a disease or injury sustained during the deployment will be provided care at no cost to the employee under the DoD Military Health Service system. The care provided will be equivalent to that received by active duty military personnel.

In the event of the death of an employee, the Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) will work closely with CPAC regarding all entitlements under the federal retirement system, health, life insurance, and thrift savings plans. Advice and assistance may be provided in completion of such tasks through personal visits.

Financial Matters

Army Benefits Center

The Army Benefits Center (ABC) provides services for the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB), Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), and Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA). Employees receive automated benefits support through the Employee Benefit Information System (EBIS), the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), and trained counselors. Both systems are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week; benefits

counselors are available Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central Time. (Please note that open season restrictions for making changes to benefits still apply.)

EBIS

The EBIS is a web application that allows employees access to general and personal benefit information and to conduct electronic transactions using a computer. The system contains comprehensive information and personalized benefits statements which will help deploying employees assess their current benefits and decide what changes need to be made to prepare for the upcoming deployment. Access EBIS via the web at www.abc.army.mil. (User ID and password required.)

IVRS

The IVRS is an automated, self-service system that employees can access from a touch-tone telephone. Unlike the web, the IVRS allows employees to speak with a benefits counselor for additional assistance. To access the IVRS, call the toll-free number (877) ARMY-CTR [(877) 276-9287]. For hearing-impaired access, call (877) ARMY-TDD [(877) 276-9833]. (Information from leave and earnings statement required)

EagleCash Card

EagleCash cards are a type of payment card referred to as Stored Value Cards (SVC) and can interface with automated kiosk devices located at convenient locations on the camp/base, which allow enrolled cardholders self-service access to funds in their U.S.-based checking or savings accounts.

The EagleCash Card is now mandatory for civilians while they are deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait. The card will replace using cash while deployed. Deployees are expected complete the DD Form 2887 to obtain the card, and will be briefed at the UDC on the use of the card. To get more information on the EagleCash card, visit http://www.fms.treas.gov/eaglecash/index.html .

Deployment

Government Travel Credit Card

Deployees on official travel are expected to use the government contractor-issued travel charge card to cover travel expenses to include hotel and meals while staying at the UDC. Expenses between $600 and $800 can be expected. If conditions preclude the use of the official government travel charge card, the traveler is authorized an advance not to exceed 80 percent of the estimated cash expenses. This exception to the advance limitation is not available to cardholders whose government issued charge card has been suspended or cancelled because of their payment history. To prevent any credit rating problems, cardholders are required to pay unpaid balances regardless of receiving travel reimbursement. To apply for a government travel card, contact the Travel Card Agency Program Coordinator at 540-665-4014/3609. Allow approximately two weeks for processing time. Deployees are required to enroll in the direct deposit/electronic funds transfer (EFT) program for travel payment purposes.

Passport/VISA

Deployees in support of military operations are required to carry a passport at all times when traveling. All deployees must have a U.S. Government (official) or U.S. Civilian (tourist) passport for deployment. The passport expiration date must be at least 180 days past the projected tour end date. Due to the time involved, the process for obtaining a passport should be started within 48 hours after assignment notification. *Please note: deployees will need a VISA stamped in their passport for AED.*

Travel

Deployees should make travel arrangements immediately after assignment notification. Travel arrangements can be made in advance of travel orders. Contact the TAC Carlson Wagonlit Travel agent at 540-665-3798. Ticket and travel orders will be released after completion of the pre-deployment process. After confirming the arrival time at Dulles Airport, call 888-436-5466 or 800-622-6990 to arrange ground transportation from the airport to the hotel in Winchester.

Common Access Card (CAC)

To process an overseas CAC card, the Security Office will need official travel orders and two forms of picture identification. The front of the overseas CAC card will show your grade, and the back must have your Social Security Number. Check to make sure the CAC card does not expire until 30 days after the tour return date. If the deployee does not receive an overseas CAC before leaving their home duty station, one will be issued at the UDC. The current policy dictates that all civilian personnel going TDY in support of GWOT have Geneva Convention certificates placed on their CAC. This should be accomplished locally prior to departure for TAC.

Medical Prescriptions

If the deployee has any special medication needs, it is strongly recommended that arrangements are made to bring a supply of prescriptions with them or arrange to have prescriptions mailed to them while deployed. GWOT pharmacies will fill prescriptions, however, they may not carry a particular prescription or dosage needed. Also note, that the deployee should plan ahead for any expiring prescriptions and discuss a "refill" strategy with their doctor.

Physicals

Each deployee is required to have a physical prior to deployment. Upon arrival at the UDC, a doctor will verify a physical has been completed, height and weight, general health, and medical history. If the potential deployee's body mass index (BMI) is above 40, the deployee may be ineligible to deploy. Additionally, any pre-conditions and doctor visits within the last two years must be declared and results provided to the UDC doctor. Check the TAC website for a list of medical disqualifying factors at www.tac.usace.army.mil/deploymentcenter

Local Transportation Options

Arriving at Washington Dulles International

All USACE personnel are required to process through the USACE Deployment Center (UDC) and will

arrive and depart via the Washington (Dulles) International Airport and/or ground transportation arranged by Carlson Wagonlit. Upon arrival at Dulles, a limo driver will be waiting in the baggage claim area holding a red USACE castle sign and will take deployees to the hotel. The limo service costs between $75 and $100 per person and accepts government credit cards, personal credit cards, or cash. DoD employees must use their government travel card to pay for the limo service or taxi. However, *non*-DoD deployees are authorized to pay with a *personal* credit card or cash. Also, should flight arrangements change or delays occur, notify the limo service. If the deployee misses the limo service at Dulles, taxis are available from the airport to the hotel in Winchester. The taxi driver will accept credit cards or cash, but not personal checks. Note: Rental cars are *not* authorized for deploying personnel and those who rent a car will be liable for incurred charges. However, those deploying to fill GS-15/O-5 positions and above are authorized to rent a car. Expect difficulty gaining access to the UDC grounds with a rented vehicle.

Accommodations in Winchester

As part of the pre-deployment processing, the UDC will make hotel reservations; however, it is the deployee's responsibility to pay for the hotel. The deployee will file a travel voucher upon arriving at their final destination. Restaurants are located within walking distance of all hotels.

USACE Deployment Center Training

The UDC process is a four day process beginning each Monday (Tuesday if Monday is a Federal holiday). On Monday morning at approximately 0730, a UDC van will be parked outside the hotel lobby waiting to transport deployees to the UDC. The UDC vehicle door is clearly marked with a USACE sign. All deploying personnel will be transported to the UDC in the UDC van. However, in certain cases with prior UDC coordination, local personnel will be allowed to travel to the UDC using their private vehicles. Transportation will be provided for official business while in Winchester. UDC does not provide transportation once deployees are dropped off at their hotel in the evening; however, deployees may elect to either rent a vehicle or use local taxi service for transportation at their own expense.

Transportation from UDC to AED/GRD

Commercial flights will depart Dulles Airport and arrive in Kuwait or Kabul International Airports, and from there, military transportation will be used to transport deployees to final destination. Occasionally, military contracted flights out of Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) will be utilized. UDC drivers will transport all deployees and their gear to the airport. AED deployees fly directly into Kabul International Airport, via United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flights. Travelers are limited to 66 pounds of baggage on these flights which includes any carry-on baggage. This weight restriction is non-negotiable. The UNHAS flight will not allow any excess baggage due to overall aircraft weight restrictions and the number of personnel flying. Also, the UDC will issue approximately 60 pounds of gear to each individual going to AED. Personnel can be reimbursed

for mailed official government items to AED up to the amount specified on deployee's travel orders. Prior to departing the home station, limit personal items and civilian clothes to what is required for five days of training at the UDC.

Roles and Responsibilities

USACE Divisions, Districts, and Centers USACE Divisions/Centers are responsible for preparing employees for deployment. Division, District, and Center Emergency Operation Centers (EOC) manage the deployment process and ensure deploying personnel meet deployment standards as per the UDC website: http://www.tac.usace.army.mil/deploymentcenter/. Home station EOC responsibilities include:

- Notify selected personnel.
- Obtain supervisory approval.
- Ensure all documentation is forwarded to the APPO prior to the arrival of the deployee at the UDC.
- Ensure personnel information for employees nominated for deployment is updated in ENGLink.
- Ensure deployee complete all activities as outlined on the UDC website prior to arrival at the UDC. UDC certification is valid for 30 days upon completion of processing.
- Post deployment processing. Deployed USACE personnel will complete post deployment processing through the UDC. There are no exceptions.
- Travel. UDC/APPO coordinates forward travel to theater and provides AED/GRD/RSOI relevant travel information.
- UDC Cycle. The UDC process is a four day process beginning each Monday (Tuesday if Monday is a Federal holiday).

APPENDIX A: WORKERS COMPENSATION GUIDE FOR DEPLOYING CIVILIANS

CIVILIAN DEPLOYMENT GUIDE: INJURY/ILLNESS COMPENSATION

What If...

The overwhelming majority of soldiers and civilians who deploy to a combat zone return safely without ever experiencing a workplace injury or illness. However, it is important that you understand your responsibilities and entitlements.

You are hurt or become ill while deployed:

Entitlement: You are entitled to medical care for illnesses and injuries at no charge to you while in the combat zone, even when physician-approved treatment requires transfer to a larger facility. Upon return to CONUS, you may be eligible to receive care at no cost if you have an approved Workers Compensation claim.

You want to file a Workers' Compensation Claim:

Responsibility: Pursuant to the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA), claimants must promptly and accurately report all job-related injuries or illnesses to their supervisor, unless prevented from doing so by the severity of the injury (then anyone—family, friend, coworker—can report the injury for you). For a claim to be accepted, a licensed physician must provide written diagnosis and prognosis/treatment plan of the condition and recovery (NOTE: Nurses, Physician Assistants, and medic/corpsmen do not qualify). The physician who provides this does not have to be the original treating physician in theater.

Entitlement: After evaluating medical evidence and other factors, the Dept. of Labor Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) will adjudicate your claim and administer any medical or wage loss compensation and/or scheduled awards for permanent impairment. Adjudication of illness claims may take as long as 12 months. **DO NOT CANCEL YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE!**

Time Limits

FECA enables DOL OWCP to place time limits on when a claim can be filed, so it is important that your supervisor is notified and a claim is filed as promptly as possible.

- Claimants have 30 days from the date of injury to receive Continuation of Pay (COP) for a disabling traumatic injury. Medical evidence must be submitted within 10 workdays. For other benefits, the claim must be filed no later than three years after the date of injury.
- If illness is claimed, claimants have no later than three years from the date they became aware, last exposure, or when the employer had knowledge of the disease/illness.

Definitions:

- A *traumatic injury* is a wound or other condition of the body caused by external force, including stress or strain occurring during one work shift.
- An *occupational disease* is a condition produced in the work environment over a period longer than one workday or shift. It may result from systemic infection, repeated stress or strain, exposure to toxins, poisons, or fumes, or other continuing conditions of the work environment.

Note: FECA does not allow payment of expenses associated with simple exposure to an infectious disease (e.g. tuberculosis, hepatitis, HIV) without the occurrence of a resulting work-related illness. Additionally, injuries/illnesses occurring out of purely natural causes are generally not compensable.

You want to file a Claim—Who do you Contact?

You should first contact your immediate supervisor when a workplace injury or illness occurs, even if you do not immediately intend to file a claim. If you desire to file a workers' compensation claim, you and your supervisor should jointly complete an electronic claim form by visiting www.cpms.osd.mil/icuc and selecting "Filing Claims Electronically."

If you were injured on the job, you must file a Department of Labor Office of Workers' Compensation (DOL OWCP) **Form CA-1, "Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation."** If disease/illness was caused or aggravated by your employment, you must file **Form CA-2, "Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation."**

Once your claim is filed, your activity's designated *Injury Compensation Program Administrator* (ICPA) will ensure the correct paperwork has been submitted and claim adjudicated by the DOL Office of Workers' Compensation. The ICPA will also work with your supervisor to identify any light/modified duty assignments available to expedite your return to work.

The ICPA designated to handle a claim may vary by employing activity, geographic location, and/or pursuant to your command's policy. If your supervisor does not know who to contact, the nearest Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) may be able to advise who to contact.

Part 1 of 2: For the Employee

Employee Instructions: *Fill out this form completely and provide to your immediate supervisor(s) upon arrival. If desired, you may also send a copy to a friend or family member.*

Request for Workers' Compensation Claim

If, in the course of performing my duties, I should become incapacitated by an injury or illness, my supervisor should immediately file a Workers Compensation claim on my behalf at www.cpms.osd.mil/icuc. After selecting "Filing Claims Electronically" s/he should use Form CA-1 for a traumatic injury or CA-2 for an illness. My supervisor should also contact my servicing Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) and provide any medical diagnosis available.

My ICPA is: _____ E-mail: _____

Additionally, please notify my emergency contact:

Name: _____ Association: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Other comments or special instructions: _____

_____

_____ _____

Employee Name (Print) Employee Signature Date

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

Supervisor Instructions: The Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) may entitle your civilian employees to certain monetary compensation and/or medical benefits if they experience an injury or illness during the performance of their duties. It is very important that you are notified immediately and ensure prompt submission of their claim and medical information to the servicing Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA). The Department of Labor Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) will adjudicate a final decision which the agency cannot appeal. Therefore, if you believe a claimed injury/illness did not result from the performance of official duty, you should submit evidence and write a paragraph to "controvert" or challenge the claim and send immediately to the ICPA. Regardless, when an employee becomes injured or ill, it important they receive the appropriate medical attention and the facts are correctly documented.

It is the Army's position that employees should return to work as soon as soon as possible following a workplace injury/illness. When temporary or permanent disability has occurred, you, as supervisor, must make a diligent effort to ensure a modified/light-duty assignment and reasonable accommodations are extended when recommended by the attending physician and/or OWCP.

Part 2 of 2: For in-theater Supervisor

APPENDIX B: DEPLOYMENT MEDICAL COVERAGE

Medical Coverage for Deployed Civilians

- Civilians requiring treatment while deployed are eligible for medical evacuation and healthcare treatment and services in Military Treatment Facilities (MTF). Such treatment will be at the same level and scope as provided to Military members and will be at no cost to the employee.

Medical Coverage After Return from Theater of Operations

- Civilians and Soldiers Have Different Medical Programs
- Civilians may be entitled to medical and disability benefits under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA).
- If not covered by the FECA, civilian medical coverage is subject to provisions of health insurance provider.
- In order to be covered by the FECA:
  - The employee (or someone acting on behalf of the employee) must file a written claim to obtain FECA benefits.
  - The Department of Labor, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), decides FECA coverage:
    - The injury or illness/disease must have been caused by factors of employment to be covered by the FECA.
    - The employee is responsible for the submission of evidence to OWCP to justify entitlement to FECA benefits.

Medical Coverage After Return from Theater of Operations

- Soldiers are covered for everything they do 24/7
- Civilians are not covered by the FECA for everything:
  - Traumatic injuries (broken bones, wounds, concussions, stings) are normally covered because it is usually clear-cut that the cause of the medical condition was work-related.
  - Illnesses/diseases (heart attack, stroke, cancer, skin disease, psychiatric illness) require persuasive medical rationale that the claimed medical condition was caused by employment factors. Simply being at work or in a theater of operations when a medical condition arises, does not constitute a factor of employment. (e.g. Having a heart attack while sitting at a computer in an air conditioned office building in would not be covered by the FECA - unless some factor of employment that precipitated the heart attack occurred.)

Civilian Medical Treatment After Return to Home or Medical Evacuation

- Upon return from theater, DoD civilian employees who were treated in theater continue to be eligible for treatment in an MTF or a civilian medical facility if their claim for FECA benefits has been accepted by OWCP.
- DoD civilian employees are also eligible for treatment in an MTF or a civilian medical facility if a medical condition (caused by employment factors while

deployed) surfaces after they return from deployment. Medical costs are paid by OWCP if the claim for FECA benefits is approved by OWCP.

- DoD civilian employees whose claims are covered by the FECA, may elect treatment from a MTF or a private sector medical provider.

How are absences for Medical Treatment charged?

- For Traumatic Injuries (if accepted for FECA coverage)
    - First 45 calendar days: At employee's request, pay may be continued based on management approval w/o charge to personal leave.
    - After first 45 days: Wage loss compensation (75% with dependents or 66 2/3% without dependents) will be paid by OWCP for periods of continuing disability. Employees must make separate application for this benefit. Pay will be continued w/o charge to personal leave
- For Traumatic Injuries (if not accepted for FECA coverage)
    - Employee must request accrued leave (sick, annual or donated leave) or leave without pay to account for absences from work.
- For Illnesses and Diseases (if accepted for FECA coverage)
    - Wage loss compensation (75% or 66 2/3% will be paid by OWCP for periods of disability (employees must make separate application for this benefit). There is no 45 day pay continuation provision as in traumatic injury cases.
- OWCP closely reviews illness and disease claims. A decision to accept or deny may not be made for 3-12 months.
    - While a decision is pending, employee will have to use accrued leave or request leave without pay
    - If accrued leave is used and OWCP later accepts the claim, the employee may arrange with OWCP to "buy back" the leave that was used.

Claims for FECA Benefits Have Statutory Timeliness Filing Requirements

- Traumatic Injury or Death Claims:
    - Must be filed within three years of the date of injury or death.
    - The 45 day pay continuation benefit (for traumatic injury claims) cannot be granted if a claim is filed later than 30 days following the date of injury
- For Illness and Disease Claims:
    - Must be filed within three years from the date the employee or survivor first became aware that a causal relationship existed between the medical condition and factors of employment.

APPENDIX C: USACE FAMILY SUPPORT CONTACTS AND USEFUL WEBSITES

USACE CONTACT NUMBER

Human Resource (HR) elements should ensure local Personnel Accountability procedures are in place for pre-disaster Human Resource support to account for employees on temporary duty TO and FROM the district, and employees are aware of 1-877-HI-USACE and 877-HI-USACE@usace.army.mil and when to use them. HR will ensure supervisors will be capable of 100% accountability in the event of a disaster.

The Army Corps of Engineers Chaplain Telephone Number: (W) 202-761-0772 or DSN 763-0772

The USACE Chaplain is in room 3E09 at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters, GAO Building, and 441 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20314-1000.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

Afghanistan Engineering District:
www.aed.usace.army.mil/

America's Promise Alliance:
www.americaspromise.org

American Legion Support Network:
www.legion.org

American Red Cross:
www.redcross.org

Army Career and Alumni Program:
www.acap.army.mil

Army Emergency Relief:
www.aerhq.org/

Army Family Team Building:
www.armyonesource.com

Army Homepage:
www.army.mil

Army Knowledge On-Line (AKO):
www.us.army.mil

Army OneSource:
www.armyonesource.com

Army Reserve:
www.usar.army.mil

Association of the US Army (AUSA) Family Programs:
www.ausa.org/family

Boys & Girls Clubs of America:
www.bgca.org

Children with Disabilities:
www.nichcy.org

Civilian Personnel Office:
www.cpol.army.mil

Disaster Technical Assistance Center:
www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)
www.dfas.mil

Department of Defense (DoD):
www.dod.mil

DoD News:
www.defenselink.mil

DoD Transition Assistance Program:
www.turbotap.org

Defense Switched Network Directory:
www.disa.mil/dsn/dsn_directory.html

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):
www.va.gov

E Cards**:**
www.bluemountain.com

Federal Voting Assistance Program:
www.fvap.gov/index.html.

Family Readiness Information:
www.armyonesource.com

Free Calling cards from the VFW:
www.operationuplink.org/

Gulf Region Division:
www.grd.usace.army.mil/index.asp

Internal Revenue Service (IRS):
www.irs.gov

Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) :
https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx

Lifelines:
www.lifelines.com

Military Child Education Coalition:
www.militarychild.org

Military OneSource:
www.militaryonesource.com

Army Morale Welfare & Recreation (MWR):
www.armymwr.com

National Geographic
www.nationalgeographic.com.
http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/

National Military Family Association:
www.nmfa.org

Operation Military Kids:
www.operationmilitarykids.org

Passport Forms**:**
http://travel.state.gov/passport/forms/forms_847.html

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder:
www.ptsd.va.gov

Sesame Workshop:
www.sesameworkshop.org

Social Security Administration:
www.ssa.gov

Suicide Prevention:
http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Readiness/suicide.aspx

Tragedy Assistance (TAPS):
www.taps.org

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):
http://cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/tbi_concussion.html

USACE Deployment Center:
http://www.tam.usace.army.mil/udc/index.asp

USA Jobs:
www.usajobs.gov

Appendix D: Deployment Addresses

Iraq

Gulf Region District

Headquarters- Regular Mail
(Name)
MNC-I-7 Unit 42029
USACE-GRD
APO, AE 09342-2029

Afghanistan

Afghanistan Engineer District- North

Kabul – AEN
(Name)
USACE/AED
Attn: Qalaa House
APO, AE 09356

Afghanistan Engineer District- South

Kandahar- AES
(Name)
USACE AED-S
APO, AE 0935

USOs

USO Kuwait

Ali Al Salem
E-mail: jabreu@uso.org
Computers available: Set up an AKO email account prior to deployment to be able to send and receive email during military flight delays.

USO Afghanistan

Pat Tillman Memorial USO
Bagram Air Base USO
Center E-mail Address: usoafghanistan@uso.org

Hours of Operation: Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
Locations: Bagram Air Base
Services:

USO Qatar

Camp As Sayliyah
Phone: 011/-971-50-919-7502
Center E-mail Address: uso@qatar.army.mil

Hours of Operation: Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
Locations: Camp As Sayliyah
Services:

APPENDIX E: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

TRAVEL

Q. While at the UDC, can I get a rental car?
Transportation to and from the hotel will be provided by the UDC. Rental cars are *not* reimbursable; however, you may obtain one at your own expense. Rental cars are not to be used for transportation to and from the UDC.

Q. If we don't have a rental car, how do we get around after duty hours?
A: There are several food establishments and some shopping within walking distance of your hotel. The hotels are also close to other restaurants, movie theaters, and shopping centers and malls in Winchester. To get around to these places after duty hours, use of the rental car is not authorized. Taxis are available at your own expense.

Q: Are passports required for my family if I am working in a GWOT position?
A: It is not a requirement for your family to have a passport, but having passports would allow your family to meet you overseas for your Rest and Recuperation leave, or join you quickly if you might become ill or injured.

Q. If I need to expedite a passport for deployment to GRD/AED, will USACE pay for the expedited fee?
A. Generally, yes, but check with your EOC office for your particular situation.

OCO EMPLOYMENT

Q: Who is a point of contact for me to ask questions concerning application to Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) positions?
A: Most Corps of Engineers Districts have deployment application information available through the Emergency Operations Center. You also may use several web links for application information such as, www.usajobs.gov, https://englink.usace.army.mil, http://www.hq/usace.army.mil or sendme@usace.army.mil.

Q: Why are we involved with the OCO mission?
A: The US Army, Corps of Engineers is supporting the Army's war fighting mission of providing security for our deployed employees and the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, promoting human rights, rebuilding economies, and rebuilding infrastructures.

Q: Who may apply for an OCO position?
A: All US civilians may apply for OCO positions.

Q: What are we doing there?
A: The Corps of Engineers is building schools, hospitals, health clinics, police stations, military facilities…roads, railroads, airports, electricity, and water supply treatment. The work being done is assisting the people of these countries to attain a better standard of living.

FINANCIAL

Q: What pay and benefits apply during deployment in an OCO position?
A: OCO deployed employees are eligible for relocation bonus, danger pay, post differential, temporary promotions, separation pay, holiday pay, night shift differential, leave accrual, Rest and Recuperation leave and overtime, depending upon deployment location and type of tour.

Q: Are earning limits or pay caps applied to my OCO salary?
A: Yes, there are annual pay caps on OCO salaries. The annual pay limitation applies to the amount of base pay, locality and premium pay. Premium pay includes the dollar value of compensatory time, overtime, Sunday, holiday and night differential. An employee who performs work while in an overseas location that is in the area of responsibility of the commander of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), in direct support of or directly related to a military operation, may receive premium pay. The yearly pay calendar amount cannot be waived; it is a statutory limitation. Although the deployed civilian can earn up to the annual pay cap in the above categories of pay, the pay is still held to the aggregate limit and must wait until the following year or years until all payment can be made. For calendar year 2009, the annual CENTCOM aggregate pay cap is $227,300.

Q: Are there ATMs at the deployment sites?
A: There are no available ATMs in Iraq or Afghanistan; however, the Post Exchange will allow use of an ATM card, credit cards or personal checks. The local military finance office allows you to write a personal check for US currency up to a stated amount per month.

LEAVE

Q: Are deployed employees eligible for Rest and Recuperation (R&R) Leave?
A: Yes, deployed employees are eligible for R&R. Employees deployed for a 6 month tour are eligible for one 15 day R&R and one 4 day pass; if you are deployed for 12 months, you are eligible for three 15 days R&R's, and two 4 day passes. Employees must serve a minimum of 60 days in Iraq or Afghanistan in order to be eligible for the first R&R trip. Employees must be in an approved leave status during R&R breaks.

Q: Do I use my annual leave for R & R?
A: Yes, you must use your personal annual leave for R&R (or advance leave or Leave without pay), but you do not start using it until you have reached your R&R destination.

When you begin your return trip to your GWOT location, and you again are in a TDY status.

Q: How do I use my accumulated home leave during deployment?
A: While still on deployment status, you can use the home leave benefit after one year of accumulated home leave. You may use home leave for the time you are in CONUS. In other words you are at an overseas location and going on R&R to the states and return back to deployment location once your R&R is finished. You cannot use home leave once you are redeployed to a CONUS position (CONUS District/Division/HQs).

BENEFITS

Q: Will my government life insurance, Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), still cover me if I deploy to a combat zone?
A: Being sent to a combat zone does not cancel Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) coverage. Civilian employees sent to a war zone or combat zone in a support capacity keep their FEGLI coverage, including Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) coverage. Being sent to a combat zone does not affect the amount of FEGLI coverage provided the employee is not engaged in combat. (Combat is defined as including self-defense.) If an employee is not covered under FEGLI, and will be deploying overseas, there is an opportunity to enroll for basic FEGLI under a 60-day personal "open season" because that employee is an emergency essential employee by virtue of deployment to such a position. Check with your insurance agency for questions regarding coverage other than FEGLI.

Q: I am a civilian working for the federal government, what happens to my federal benefits, such as Thrift Saving Plan, health, and life insurance while I am deployed?
A: Federal benefits continue while you are deployed in a GWOT position.

MEDICAL

Q: As a civilian employee, what happens if I am injured as a result of hostile action?
A: You will be treated by Military Medical Facilities and given the same priority as injured military members. You will receive treatment based on the seriousness of your injuries, not on the basis of being civilian or military or your pay grade or rank.

Q: Is it true that all treatment from a Military Treatment Facility is free of cost to civilian employees?
A: Generally, the answer is yes, but there are important requirements that the injured or sick civilian employees must understand and satisfy. First, Federal civilian employees are covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) for

injuries, illnesses, diseases and death that are caused by work factors. The FECA will pay for medical expenses, lost wages, rehabilitation and death benefits if it is determined that the medical condition is covered by the FECA. Expenses that are not covered by the FECA must be paid by the employee or the employee's health insurance provider. Also, employees must file a claim with the U.S. Department of Labor in order to apply for FECA benefits. While injuries resulting from the roll-over of a vehicle traveling to a project site or from shrapnel wounds are usually clear-cut and accepted by Department of Labor, illnesses and diseases contracted in a war-zone are not clearly caused by job factors. For example, a heart attack, pneumonia, or appendicitis occurring while deployed must be supported by medical information explaining why the medical condition was caused by work factors did not happen coincidentally during a period of deployment.

Q: May I elect to be treated for my medical condition by Military Treatment Facility after I return to my home?
A: Civilian employees of DOD are authorized to receive medical care from a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) whether their FECA claim is accepted or denied by the Department of Labor. The only difference is in how the medical bills are paid (by health insurance or by the Department of Labor). Civilian employees of non-DOD Federal agencies whose claims are accepted for FECA coverage by the Department of Labor are authorized continued treatment by a MTF. When DOL does not approve FECA coverage for civilian employees of other Federal agencies, the employee must submit a request for continued MTF treatment that will be decided by the Under Secretary of Defense (for Personnel and Readiness).

Q: It has been over a year since I've been deployed, but I want to deploy again, do I need another physical?
A: Yes. Since it has been over one year since your last physical, you will be required to have another physical (and pass) prior to deployment.

Q. I am overweight, will that disqualify me from deploying.
A: Most likely. If your body mass index (BMI) is above 40, it is a medical disqualifier. The UFC doctor will evaluate the risks based on your entire medical status.