

# Personal and Family Readiness Guide



## **INTRODUCTION**

This guide was created to assist Air National Guard military members and their families in preparing for and coping with separations caused by contingencies, extended TDYs, remote assignments, and natural disasters. Our thanks to the many people who provided inputs for this guide. The POC for this guide is Chaplain, Lt Col Charles E. Woods, Deputy Chief, National Guard Family Program Office, DSN 327-5405, COMM (703) 607-5405.

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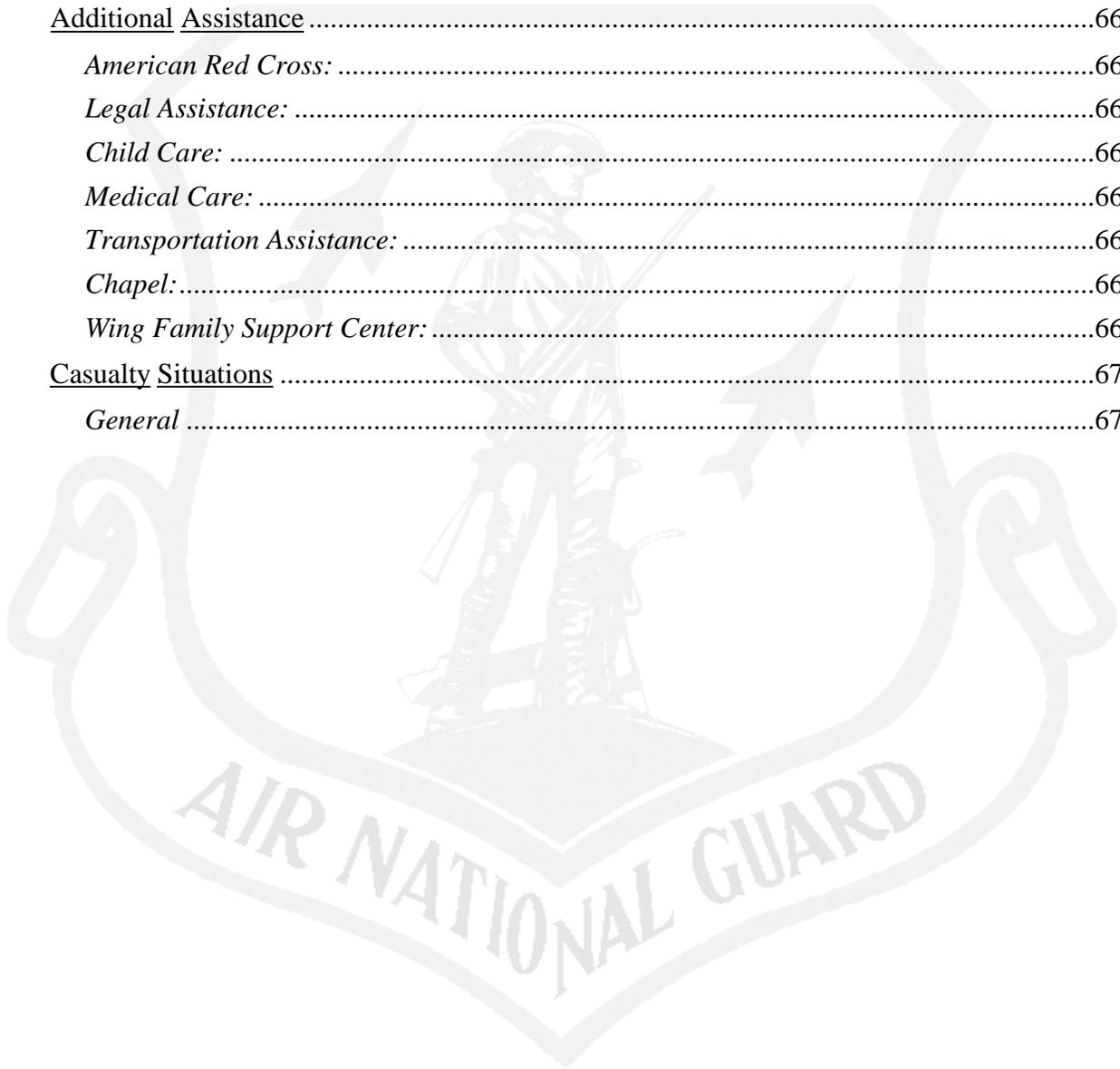
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**SECTION I – PRE-DEPLOYMENT**

PREPARATION



*(Preparing to deploy)*

As a member of an Air National Guard unit with potential for worldwide deployment on short notice, the following information will aid in making a family separation more manageable.

1. Too often, family members deny the possibility of duty separation, and pretend it is not going to happen. This denial can be emotionally harmful. Once separation occurs, they are likely to find themselves unprepared. It is much healthier for families to face issues directly and become better prepared to positively address the life style changes brought about by separation. Adequate preparation for all family members is the key to minimizing the problems that will inevitably arise during a duty separation. Sometimes families avoid talking about things that bother or worry them. They are afraid that talking about things will make matters worse. In reality, open discussion provides family members the opportunity to clarify potential misunderstandings, get a better idea of what is expected, work out solutions to identified problems, and to better prepare themselves for the coming separation.
2. Having a sense of control over events is a significant moderator of the stress associated with separation. We all desire some sense of control even in the face of uncontrollable situations. Feeling no control over a situation can lead to characteristics of learned helplessness. The perception of even some control can be enough to lessen most negative responses and become a base for building positive coping behaviors. An individual's appraisal of upcoming events as being highly stressful or undesirable but manageable will significantly influence their coping level. That appraisal is related to the degree to which individuals feel that they have adequate knowledge, coping skills, social support, and some control over future events. Preparation for coming events, especially undesirable events, can greatly alter a person's attitude. Therefore, the importance of education and preparation cannot be overstated. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

3. Single parents and dual career military couples face the same reality. They may experience even greater stress and responsibility during preparation of the separation. No other "parent" remains at home and, therefore, separation takes on an increasingly stressful dimension.
4. There is a difference between being ready "to go," and ready "to part." Being ready "to go" means having your duffel bag packed, all shots up to date, and other duty essential preparations completed. Being ready "to part" from your spouse and other family members means being aware of the personal and family issues related to separation, and being prepared to deal as constructively as possible with those issues.
  - a. *Plan ahead.* This is one of the keys to a successful family separation. There are many things you can do before you leave. This will prevent your spouse from feeling they have to handle it all alone and you from worrying about all the things left undone.
    - (1) The best place to start is at an *assignment or predeployment briefing*. Topics discussed are informative ranging from an unclassified intelligence briefing to whom to contact if your allotment or paycheck is late. It will also provide you and your spouse invaluable information about services available through your Family Support Center and other base agencies.
    - (2) Then, *read this guide*. Mark or highlight passages you find particularly interesting or helpful. Some parts you may want to re-read or post on the refrigerator just in case an emergency occurs and you don't have time to find the page you need.
    - (3) Spend an evening with your spouse to discuss the assignment or deployment, how both of you feel, what you worry about, how to handle emergencies, or repair problems, and what you think needs to be done around the house to get things together.
    - (4) *Have a "show and tell" day*. Even if it is the dead of winter, learn how to start and operate the lawn mower. Ask your spouse to show you how to check the oil in the car and where to add brake fluid and transmission fluid. Do you know how much air goes into the tires? How to change a flat tire? Learn these things BEFORE your spouse departs on an assignment or deployment.
    - (5) When the departing spouse is the person who usually does the laundry, cooking, etc., be sure you are comfortable with the appliances within your home. Do a load of laundry. Learning how to sort clothes may save the family from having to wear strange colored underwear. If you are not familiar with commissary shopping and cooking, plan a dinner, make your own shopping list, then prepare a meal for your spouse or family.

- (6) Use the various *checklists and tools* found in this booklet.
  - (7) Finally, before departing, make sure the remaining spouse is the one with the keys and checkbook.
5. So much will depend on your advance preparation. The more you can learn and accomplish before the family separation, the more confident both of you will be when the parting time comes.

REMEMBER-----PLAN AHEAD

## **DEPLOYMENT AND THE SINGLE SERVICE MEMBER**



While the majority of the information in this guide deals with separation issues involving couples, deployments or extended TDYs can be just as demanding for the single military member. Not only will you experience all the emotions and relationship stresses discussed in this guide; you have the added burden of finding a reliable individual to handle your personal affairs during your absence. The importance of a will and power of attorney is just as critical for single members as it is for their married counterparts. Please take time to go through this guide. You will find it helpful.

### **Questions to consider...**

1. **House or Apartment:**
  - a) Have I made proper arrangements for mortgage/rent?
  - b) Should I continue with my rental lease?
  - c) Who will check on my house while I'm gone?
2. **Car:**
  - a) Where do I store it?
  - b) What about payments?
  - c) What about upkeep?
3. **Pets:**
  - a) What do I do with them?
  - b) Who will care for them while I'm gone?
4. **Invalid or aging parent:**
  - a) Who will be responsible for the care of my parent(s) while I'm gone?
5. **Children:**
  - a) Who will be responsible for the care of my child (children) while I'm gone?
6. **Significant Other:**
  - a) What kind of support with my significant other need in my absence?

**7. Emergency Notification Information:**

- a) Who should serve as my Next of Kin for emergency notification purposes?

**When You Return To Your Home**

Care should be taken when you return home so that your health is not endangered. The water supply may have become contaminated from lack of use or minimal treatment. Until you have been advised that the water is safe, boil any that is to be used for human consumption. It may be necessary to take extra precautions with waste material until the area has re-established the sewer system. Food will probably be carried back in your car. Before eating it, be sure that the food is fresh, particularly raw meat. Wash all fresh vegetables and clean all utensils prior to use.

**A MILITARY SPOUSE'S VIEW POINT**

When the separation finally occurs, for many spouses this is a reality check. Until now there was the possibility of a change in orders or some other eventuality to prevent departure. But the separation is inevitable, and the spouse must cope.

1. When your spouse leaves or deploys, a piece of you goes too, but that's what you want...for part of you to be with your spouse. You find that you, too, keep your spouse present with you. You may sleep with their picture on your nightstand, or you may leave a pair of their shoes by the front door.
2. When your spouse leaves, you go through a whole series of different emotions. About six to eight weeks before your spouse leaves you begin to "psyche up" for the departure, and you both get very busy thinking about details that need to be tended to before departure. You both may feel excited, intimidated, and maybe a little worried about how you will manage. About three to four weeks before your spouse leaves, you begin to put distance between the two of you, build a few walls, maybe withdrawing from each other. You may become irritated with each other and you may even have a fight. This distancing reaches a peak about two to three days before your spouse leaves when you both think they should be gone so that you both can begin counting down to the reunion...which may seem an eternity away! This "distancing" is normal and allows you to permit this person who is so very important to you to go away...for a while.
3. When "THE DAY" arrives you may drive your spouse to the base and be thinking that some way, somehow, something will keep them home. Whatever you say to each other may seem awkward and not quite right, and afterward, when you reflect on not seeing each other for a long time, you may wonder why you couldn't have been more romantic, or have given a "warmer" good-bye.

**YOU ARE NORMAL!**

1. For the first day or so after your spouse leaves, you may feel like a robot, just going through the motions, almost like you are in shock. You might just want to stay home. You may not want anyone around you. You may wonder if it was easy for your spouse to leave you, after all, your spouse seemed to be excited about going on assignment or deployment. You may feel overwhelmed by all the responsibilities you are facing. Then you may get angry with your spouse, with the Air Force, the Air National Guard, your spouses' commander or duty section, perhaps even with the whole world! How could your spouse leave?
2. You will get over that too, and find you can handle the separation. You'll probably find yourself within a few weeks beginning to settle into a pattern. If you don't find some comfortable pattern or routine and continue to feel upset, call your Wing Family Support Center. They can give you information and or assistance to help you over this hurdle.

3. The new pattern of your life while your spouse is gone may find you a little more subdued, and certainly lonely. Sleep may come a little more easily than in the first few weeks of the separation, but probably not as easily as when your spouse is at home. Food may finally begin to taste less like sawdust. You may find from your spouse's letters that they are not angry with you, just lonely, and missing you.

**If you find a routine that works while your spouse is gone,  
Stay with it! That regularity and ritual is very comforting!**

4. Six to eight weeks before your spouse comes home, you may begin planning for the homecoming. There are decorations to make, and special meals to plan, and nagging worries:

**Will my spouse have changed?  
Will they still love me?  
Will they approve of the changes in me?  
Will we have the same closeness we had before?**

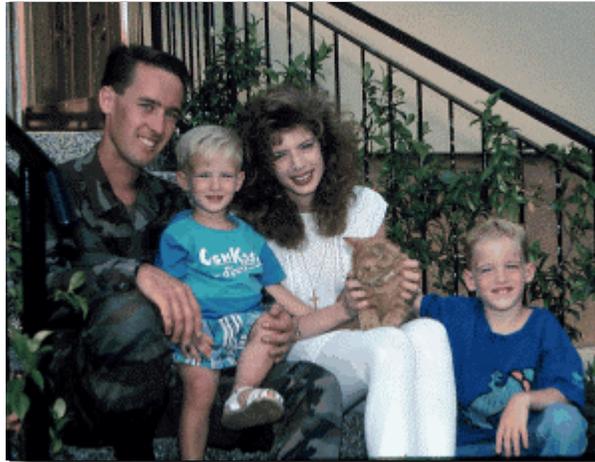
5. As the time grows nearer, you will probably get more and more excited, may sleep less, and launch into a frenzy of house cleaning. In your mind you play over and over again various versions of the homecoming. You imagine...
  - a) ...You see the reunion in slow motion, over and over again, like in the movies, with sunlight and fields of flowers, and you two as the only people in the world.
  - b) ...In the last few days you seem to find yourself feeling many different emotions. Butterflies keep you awake at night. You should be happy that your spouse is returning, and you are, but you are also apprehensive. For the past months you have been the head of the house and you really haven't had to answer to anyone for where and when you go, or what you spend money on. You have had the bedroom all to yourself and you've taken care of the family's finances. Maybe you feel like your hard-earned independence is at stake. You are proud of surviving, and maybe even thriving while your spouse has been gone. You've missed your spouse terribly, but you've learned you can manage quite well while he/she is away.
  - c) ...*The Big Day* arrives and you've probably not slept well at all and you've spent hours trying to look your best. You finally have that reunion. There may be raindrops instead of sunlight, and instead of fields of flowers, there are fields of people at the hanger.
  - d) ...The hugs and kisses are every bit as good as you remember, and your spouse raves about how good you look and you tell your spouse they're a sight for sore eyes.
  - e) ...Your spouse tells you that they are proud of the way you kept the home fires burning, and it doesn't matter that you didn't save more money, and you want to believe your spouse, but there is something in their face, perhaps something in their voice.

6. Understand that your spouse too, is apprehensive about the homecoming, and they also want to be very, very right. They may be a little unsure and may wonder if maybe you have learned to do without them too well...perhaps they're not needed, or wanted anymore. You **KNOW** your spouse is wanted **AND** needed, and you should tell them that again and again!
7. When you are back together again, take some quiet time to sit together, holding hands and talking about what happened. You need to listen to each other and you both need to talk. You have a thousand questions to ask, as does your spouse, and you both need reassurance that everything will be okay. Realize that you both have grown during your time apart and it is important for each of you to allow the other to have some space and time alone.
8. The time to reestablish old patterns and to establish new, better ones, takes several weeks; so don't expect to fall back into "How it was" overnight. Take time to enjoy the intense pleasure of reuniting as a couple.
9. Keep this in mind as you face a family separation:
10. The leaving and returning are never easy, but it does not last forever.
11. Rarely are the separation and the reunion exactly as you would have imagined. Both have their drawbacks, but both also have their rewards.
12. The important thing is that you both survived the separation. Remember the time apart, what you learned, what you liked, and what you did not like, and apply these lessons to similar experiences you may face in the future. It will help to make you a stronger, better prepared husband and wife team.



**SECTION II – DEPLOYMENT**

▽  
COPING WITH SEPARATION



*(Family separation periods provide for a time of self-growth. Not many civilian spouses have the built-in opportunity for a time to take a good look at themselves)*

▽  
**How Is Your Attitude?**

What is your attitude? It is the state of mind with which you approach a situation. Why is your attitude so important? Because it affects how you look, what you say, and what you do. It affects how you feel, both physically and mentally, and it largely affects how successful you are in achieving your purpose in life. What could be more important?

1. Negative attitudes make life difficult for everyone. Positive attitudes help everyone get the most out of life. While talent is important and knowledge is essential, the most important key to success is your state of mind!
2. When the spouse goes away, you have to make a choice. You can apply a positive attitude, and make the best of the time you have to be apart, or, you can apply negative attitude, draw the drapes, withdraw and complain until they come home. Given the two choices, the first one is healthier and much to your advantage.
3. Time passes quickly when you are busy. It also makes for better, longer and more interesting letters to your spouse. Find something you enjoy doing. Something that says YOU! Set goals for tomorrow, next week, next month. The completion of a project will give you a sense of satisfaction. Have you thought about:
  - a. Going back to school?
  - b. Taking up a new hobby?

- c. Pursuing an aerobic or weight program?
- d. Seeking part-time or full-time employment?
- e. Participating in Wing Family Support Center or other base programs?
- f. Volunteering?

### **Handling Stress**

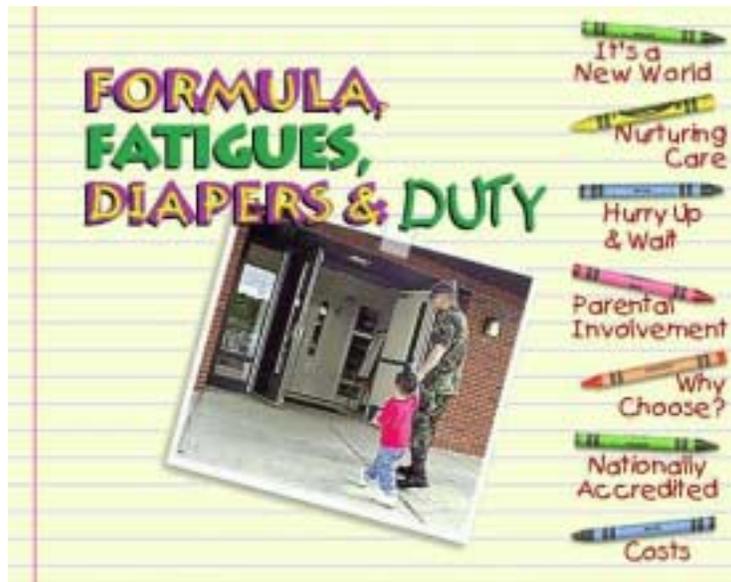
1. Take care of yourself. Don't try to fix family and friends.
2. Get involved in things that make you happy.
3. Avoid self-medication and abusing substances like drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, and food. Liquor and drugs reduce the perception of stress, but don't reduce stress.
4. Be flexible; accept that you can't control everything.
5. Plan for stress. Set realistic goals that leave time for breaks and limit work. Take a stress reduction class.
6. Learn how to praise yourself and accept praise. Turn off the "constant censure" voice that always says "you should."
7. Keep a sense of humor with you at all times.
8. Start thinking about what you really want out of life and begin to work towards those goals.
9. Take a mental health day every two or three months.
10. Avoid sulking. Let people know what you want.
11. Learn how to express irritation and appreciation to others.
12. Pick out somebody you work with and tell them something about yourself that you haven't told anyone else.

**When The Blues Get Bluer**

1. Loneliness. Most people find the dinner hour and Sunday afternoon the times when they miss their spouses the most. Additionally, everybody has an occasional blue Monday.
2. If your blue days are increasing in frequency, pay attention to what is going on around and in you. Are you:
  - a. Letting things go?
  - b. Gaining weight?
  - c. Yelling at the kids?
  - d. Constantly watching TV?
  - e. Sleeping in late?
  - f. Withdrawing from people?
  - g. Dropping out of organizations?
  - h. Spending a lot of time with your thoughts?
  - i. Drinking more than usual or drinking alone?
3. No one takes a giant leap into depression. It is more of a cumulative process. Your favorite words are "I can't."
4. Some use alcohol and drugs as a remedy. But that doesn't work. Drinking does nothing to answer life's problem. In fact, drinking just helps you to relax and forget--but the problems are still there.
5. The cure for depression is the same as the prevention. Take positive action. Behavior is changed by thoughts and feelings.
6. If you can, talk to a friend. If you are alone, and problems seem overwhelming, call the Wing Family Support Center, Chapel, or Mental Health Clinic. They have people who can help.
7. When your spouse is away, you need to get the sense that you are moving up and forward. Frustration comes when spouses see others accomplishing things while they are immobile waiting for their spouse to return.

**YOU CAN DO IT!!!!!!**

CHILDREN'S ISSUES



*(Parents can help children understand and accept the separation and their feelings about it by planning ahead. Anticipate the problems and discuss them with the entire family)*

**Pre-Family Separation**

1. The pre-family separation period is stressful for parents and children. Confronted with an extended absence of a parent, family members sense a loss of continuity and security. Children may not fully understand why one of their parents must leave. Very often young children may become confused and fearful that Mommy or Daddy will desert them.
2. Children are not very good at expressing fears and feelings in words. Anger and a desire for revenge, as well as guilt for feeling that way, is often demonstrated in the child's behavior. Change is puzzling to children. They want everything to remain the same. When changes occur, children usually have no other way to release anxieties, and no where to go for help. At a time when the separated spouse's responsibility to the Air Force and the Air National Guard becomes more demanding of their time and energy, the remaining spouse may feel overwhelmed, as they prepare to solely support the children, home and car.
3. What can be done about relieving the stress of the pre-family separation period? Think about the following ideas which have been helpful to others in similar situations:

4. Talk to your children about the assignment or deployment before it happens. Communicate your thoughts and feelings about the separation. Be open and honest. Some parents worry that advanced warning will only give the child more time to fret. However, children can sense when something is about to happen and worry more when they are left in the dark. Knowing about the assignment or deployment in advance helps in adjusting to the idea.

### **Building An Emotional Bond**

1. The departing parent needs to spend some QUALITY time with each child before they leave. Younger children (under 8) will be willing to accept a half-hour of face-to-face communication. Don't be afraid to hug your child. A display of affection is powerful communication. Older children (8 and over) appreciate being consulted when deciding how long and where this "special" time together can occur.
2. Use this time to share pride in your work, squadron, the Air National Guard, and the purpose for your assignment or deployment. Children of school age are beginning to understand that some events must happen for the good of everyone. It is a little easier to let go if Mom or Dad's job is seen as essential to the mission of the Air Force.
3. Often when asked if something is bothering them, a child will say "no." But there are ways to get through. Make some casual reference to your own worries or ambivalent feelings about the impending assignment or deployment. Something that enables parent and child to share similar feelings. It also helps a child to realize their parent is a real person who can cry as well as laugh, and it models an appropriate way to release feelings--talk about them.

### **Visit Your Child's Teacher**

Frequently children react to the assignment or deployment by misbehaving in class or performing poorly in their studies. A teacher who is aware of the situation is in a better position to be sensitive and encouraging.

### **Children Need To See The Parent's Workplace**

Very young children need to see where Mom or Dad eats, sleeps, and spends some of their day when away from home. You can do this through pictures or TV videos. This provides them with a concrete image of where the parent is when they can't come home. Older children can learn a great deal from the parent about the function of his or her job, the sophisticated technology, interdependence of each division of the military with the other, and of course, career direction. (Statistics indicate that about 30% of our present day military personnel were raised in a military family.)

### **Plan For Communicating**

Expect children to stay in touch with the departed spouse. A lively discussion needs to take place before departure. Encourage your children to brainstorm the many ways communication can occur in addition to letter writing. Some suggestions are: cassette tape exchanges, photographs with their parents, encoded messages, "puzzle messages" (a written letter cut into puzzle parts that must be assembled in order to read), unusual papers for stationery, and pictures drawn by preschoolers.

### **Help Children To Plan For The Departure**

1. While the spouse is packing their bags, allow your children to assist you in some way. Suggest a "swap" of some token, something of your child's that can be packed in a duffel bag in return for something that belongs to the departing spouse.
2. Discuss the household chores and let your children choose (as much as possible) the ones they would rather do. Mother and Father need to agree with each other that division of household chores is reasonable. The role of disciplinarian needs to be supported by the departing member.

### **Being A Long-Distance Parent**

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 it causes the parent/caregiver who is at home alone. The most important aspect of parenting from a distance is making those small efforts to stay in touch. Doing something to say the parent is thinking about and missing the child is what is most important. Here are some practical suggestions to help keep the absentee parent involved with their children:

- a. Letters and cards from mom or dad are important. The length and contents are not nearly as important as the presence of something in the mail from the absent parent. When sending picture post cards, make little notes about the place or write that you stood right here "x" in the picture. Any small thing that makes the card personal will have tremendous meaning to children at home.
- b. Cut out and send things from the local paper or magazines. This is a tangible way to help them feel connected and give them an idea of what life is like there.
- c. For older children, a subscription to a favorite magazine is a gift that keeps on giving.
- d. When using a tape recorder, remember to be creative: sing "Happy Birthday," tell a story, read scripture, take it with you on your job or when visiting with other

members of your unit. Don't try to fill a tape completely in one sitting. Make sure you describe the surroundings, the time of day, and what you are doing, etc.

- e. Try not to forget birthdays and special holidays that would be important to a child, particularly Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Halloween, or Valentine's Day.
- f. Try to schedule phone calls when children are likely to be at home. Keep a mental list of things you want to talk about with each child, such as their friends, school, ball games, etc. Ask each child to send you something from the activities they are involved in at school, home or outside activities like dance lessons, youth groups or scouts.
- g. If your child has a pet, make sure to ask about it.
- h. Send an age appropriate gift for each child. It should be something special just for them. Some interesting and creative gifts include a special notebook for school, a book for coloring or reading, or something unique from where you are stationed.

Become familiar with some of the excellent children's books that deal in a sensitive manner with a variety of family-change situations:

*"A Special Family Friend and a New Adventure" by Hoffman and Sitrer*

*"Will Dad Ever Move Back Home" by Paula Hogan*

*"All Kinds of Families" by Norma Simon*

*"If You Listen" by Charlotte Zolotow*

*"The Goodbye Painting" by Linda Berman*

*"The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein*

Reading them with your child can help clarify facts and identify feelings.

**Turn on your sensors and tune in to your child's worries about the assignment or deployment**

Just because a child doesn't tell you about their concerns doesn't mean that they are not troubled. Children don't usually recognize the cause nor will they tell you they are concerned. The spouse that is departing should communicate with each child individually. There is no substitute for a letter with your own name on the envelope. Send postcards, snapshots, and tape recordings of the sounds around you where you are deployed. Use unusual stamps, felt-tip pens, colored pencils, and different styles of alphabets and lettering.

### **Tips For The Spouse Left Behind**

1. It is very possible you will admit feelings of sadness, self-doubt, fear, or loneliness to your spouse and children. Most parents will agree that these are acceptable risks, and the feelings revealed are much easier to deal with when they can be expressed within the comfort and security of the family.
2. Be honest about your feelings. Do not attempt to hide feelings--your own or the children's. Many times we try to spare our children from knowledge of our own concerns, self-doubts, and fears.
3. Give children a method of measuring the passage of time. Families use such techniques as a ceremonial crossing-off of each day on a calendar as it passes, or of tearing a link off a paper chain consisting of the number of days or weeks the departed spouse will be away.
4. Make sure the departed spouse stays well informed. Do not make the mistake of depriving your spouse of knowledge of what is happening at home, or the way things are being handled, out of fear of "distracting" or "worrying" him or her on the job. (*One parent was "spared" the knowledge that his or her son had to be hospitalized for emergency surgery.*)
5. Be responsible for all disciplining. Do not fall into the trap of using "Just wait until your Father or Mother gets home" as the ultimate threat. How can a child be expected to greet with joy and affections a parent that has been held over their head for months as the ultimate punisher.

COMMUNICATION



(TV Phone Video)

*(Learn to be tactfully honest without being brutally frank. If you want to know what is going on with another person, listen to what that person is saying)*

**Keeping In Touch**

1. Communicating. It is an important part of keeping any marriage alive. But when so many miles separate you for so long, communication becomes a vital necessity. As much as you need air and water, you NEED to hear from your spouse and they from you. You both have several communication options available to you during a family separation, several of which will be discussed in this chapter.
2. Now is the time to open the communication lines between you. Honestly discuss with each other your feelings about the assignment or deployment. What are your fears and expectations? Have you both considered and discussed what kind of changes can be expected by the time the separation is over? The spouse at home will be more independent than either of you can imagine. Your financial situation may change by the separation's end. The spouse at home may begin or end a job. Personalities will definitely change, especially those of the children. By the time the service member returns, goals may have changed for either or both of you. Instead of wanting to learn to change a tire, for example, you may be ready to rebuild an engine.

**Letters**

1. Letters are your lifelines to sanity (wait till you have not received one in a week and see if you don't think so). But it takes a special skill, one you can easily develop, to write a letter during a family separation. You must walk a fine line between "Everything's falling apart and I can not handle it without you," and "Everything's falling apart but I do not need you anymore to fix it."

2. Some spouses send letters about how great everything is, and how angelic the children are. Come on! They know things do not run that smoothly even when they are home. The more "everything is great" letter they get, the more they worry. In time, they begin to believe that you do not need them around anymore (that is one of the worst, most common fears the spouse will have while separated).
3. Other spouses go entirely the other way--every little problem or irritation goes into a letter. It is full of complaints about how they must come home immediately to change a flat tire or discipline a child for a minor infraction. This kind of letter writer can make a family separation a living nightmare for the service member.
4. Handle your letter writing with the same tact and understanding you want your spouse to have for you. You want to know everything that goes on around them, good or bad. You want to know about their friends and how they spend their off-duty time. You want to know they still love and need you. They want to hear those things from you also. **PATIENCE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT WORD IN FAMILY SEPARATION COMMUNICATIONS.**
5. Remember that mail is irregular at best. Letters and packages seldom arrive two days in a row--sometimes as much as two to three weeks pass between the time you place in the mail and the time they received it.

### **A Letter Writer's Guide**

Here are a few ways to enhance talking back and forth to each other by letter:

1. Answer all questions. Write with your spouse's letter and picture in front of you, as though talking directly to them.
2. Ask advice when needed.
3. Explain problems clearly. If vague and unresolved, your spouse will worry.
4. Express an appreciation for letters, tapes, etc., mentioning one or two points of special interest.
5. Tell of daily activities in amusing and interesting ways.
6. Remember, it is important to frequently express your affection for your partner.
7. Share your feelings as openly and freely as you can without indulging in self-pity. Let your spouse know you would like to share their feelings.
8. Above all, express yourself clearly and unequivocally so that your spouse will not have to say, "I wonder what was meant by that!" Neither husband nor wife should try to interpret

what the other says, read between the lines, or discern the meanings. If you do not understand, ask questions--otherwise take things at "face value."

9. If you have children and they can write, have them enclose notes or pictures in your letters. Children can use separate envelopes. Send pictures of home, the Christmas tree, activities around the house, etc. Have your spouse write separate letters to the children rather than a joint letter.
10. Relay news of the neighborhood, friends, and relatives. Clip out newspaper articles that might be of interest to your spouse.
11. Write often. If that is hard, supplement with cards (funny or romantic). Cards can help to express your thoughts and feelings, often in a unique or humorous way.
12. Consider OCCASIONAL phone calls, if possible.

### **Messages**

1. Some occasions might call for a speedier method of contacting the service member than a letter: a serious illness or injury, a death in the family, a birth, routine or unexpected hospitalization.
2. Depending upon the severity of the situation, there are two primary ways to send a message--emergency *Red Cross or Western Union messages*. If you are in doubt as to which method to use, contact your Wing Family Support Center for advice. In either case, it is always a good precautionary action to follow a message with a written letter, clarifying the details of what has actually happened.

### **American Red Cross**

In order for the Red Cross to send a message to your spouse, they must have verified information. They do not send greetings, only emergency information and they do not grant emergency leave. If the emergency situation does not occur in the local area, you will save some time by contacting the Red Cross chapter where it does. Ask the Red Cross there to make verification and to contact the service member. In most cases, Red Cross notification is necessary for emergency leave to be granted by the spouse's commander. **THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR RED CROSS MESSAGES.** Before you call, have the following information on hand: grade, full name, SSAN, and complete duty address.

### **Western Union Messages**

Personal and non-emergency messages should be sent through the Western Union system. These include births, seasonal salutations, birthday and anniversary greetings, expected hospitalization, etc.

1. Many people are going to see whatever message you send--before the service member is given the message. Do not say anything that might embarrass you or your spouse.
2. It is recommended that you do not use Western Union to send the service member bad news that is going to cause pain or distress: serious illness, hospitalization complications, a death or injury in the family. If these are sent through Red Cross, it will not cost anything, and the service member will be given the message by the Commander or Chaplain who will be able to advise and comfort your spouse. Otherwise, the message may be delivered with no preliminaries or support.
3. PLEASE! If you do send a message about an illness, injury, or hospitalization, be sure to include the doctor's diagnosis, the prognosis, and the length of any expected hospital stay or recovery period. The service member will feel better if they know everything that you know.

### **FAMNET**

Depending on where your spouse is deployed, your Wing Family Support Center, or an Active Duty Family Support Center (FSC) might be able to get a message to your spouse through the Family Network (FAMNET). Check with your local Wing Family Support Center.

### **Overseas Calls**

1. Nothing can substitute for your spouse's voice. That is why overseas calls are so popular. But the cost is exorbitant! Agree before the separation or deployment starts how many times, and when, they can call. Budget money for the calls during the assignment or deployment so you are financially prepared when the bills start coming in.
2. One way to keep your phone cost down is to be prepared for the call. Keep a list near the phone so you know what to talk about. However, be prepared for the unexpected tears, both yours and your spouse's.
3. It will also be cheaper if, when your spouse calls, you accept the call and ask them to give you the country access code (you can also find this in the information part of your phone book), city code, and phone number, and then you call them back. You will still be charged for the initial three minutes, but it is cheaper when you call your spouse direct if you plan on talking for more than five to ten minutes. Look in the phone book or call the operator and see what hours are cheaper; ask your spouse to use those hours whenever they can. Agree if you cannot get through in fifteen minutes that your spouse will call you back.
4. In some cases, your spouse might be able to call you free of charge from his/her deployed location through government telephone lines (DSN).

### **Care Packages**

1. A "care package" is exactly what it sounds like--a little bit of home that says, "I love you; I'm thinking about you." With just a little planning, they can be a great link over the distances. Care packages are also a morale builder during remote assignments or deployments. Speculation and excitement run throughout an entire shop when just one package arrives. When you get your first "Thank You" letter, you will be eager to start your next package.
2. Be careful of what you send--the one rare commodity is privacy. What you send will undoubtedly be seen by a number of people. Even most officers share their quarters. Packages going overseas are subject to customs inspection and may be opened by the host country inspectors. Do not expect a lot of romantic talk on any recorded messages your spouse may send home--most spouses would be too embarrassed for anyone else to hear what they most want to say.

### **Mailing Tips**

1. Check with UPS on mailing restrictions.
2. Do not use wrapping paper if you can help it, and string will foul up the postal machines. The post office recommends you use the reinforced, nylon strapping tape.
3. Sender will not have to pay custom tariffs on packages mailed to an APO or FPO.
4. Put an extra address card **INSIDE** before you seal the package. If the box should be damaged, and neither address on the outside can be read, it will be opened by the post office. If they can not find where it should go from the contents, the whole package goes to the dead-letter bin.
5. Be sure that if you are sending a package for a special occasion to mail it so it has plenty of time to arrive. Better to arrive a little early than to let them think you have forgotten them.
6. Do not forget to mark any packages that contain a recorded message, music, or VCR tape with the words "MAGNETIC RECORDED TAPES INSIDE--DO NOT X-RAY".



**SECTION III – REUNION**

**REUNION**



*(A time to rebuild, reunite and rekindle your marriage and relationship)*

**Helpful Hints for Reunion**

1. The reunion of a family after a separation can be just as stressful as the separation itself. If your family has experienced some strain or tension during a reunion, you are not alone. You may have wondered why an occasion that is "supposed" to be so romantic and exciting should turn out less than perfect.
2. From the moment you are separated from the person you care about, you may begin to build up an image of that person in your mind. You may fantasize about how wonderful everything will be when you are together again.
3. You may remember the members of your family as they appear in the photograph in your wallet--the picture perfect all-American family. A similar process is happening with the spouse and children. The missing member may be placed on a pedestal as the warrior out defending the country. Memories of everyday life such as making ends meet, occasional disagreements, and disciplining the children, begin to fade from everyone's mind. The reunion is seen as the solution to all problems. "Once we are together again, everything will be perfect." However, reality rarely has a chance to live up to the high expectations you have set in your minds.
4. This is not meant to be a forecast of "doom and gloom." Homecomings can be very happy occasions as long as all family members make an effort to be as realistic as possible. If the tendency to not pick after oneself around the house occurred before the separation, that habit probably has not miraculously disappeared. If a weight problem existed prior to the separation, do not expect a fifty-pound loss to have occurred during the separation. If one of

the children was experiencing problems at school, do not expect the problem to disappear at reunion time.

5. Talking to one another and working through the everyday challenges that family life presents is what is important. This does not all have to be accomplished on the day of the family reunion. Give yourselves some time to enjoy one another. Everyone needs to get reacquainted before problem solving begins.

### **Air Guard Member:**

1. Ease yourself back into the family gradually. If you come on like a "Sherman tank" and try to bulldoze your way back into your family's life, feelings of resentment will surface. See yourself as a "Special Guest" for a while.
2. Take some time to observe how the family has been running in your absence. You might be tempted to jump right in with "Now that I am home, there are going to be a few changes around here." You will see that some things will change naturally as a result of your presence in the family. If you disagree about the way other things have been handled, wait a few days and discuss it openly with our spouse.
3. Do not try to take over the finances immediately. A complete interrogation regarding the state of the checkbook as soon as you walk through the door is bound to create hostility. Set aside some time when things have calmed down to review the financial situation with your spouse.
4. Take it easy with the children in terms of discipline. For a while, stick with the rules your spouse has established during your absence. Immediately playing the "heavy" will not open up opportunities for you and the children to get to know one another again. It is not difficult to understand why some children are afraid of the returning parent if all they have to look forward to is "a changing of the guard."
5. On the other hand, sometimes it is easy to spoil your children. If you have not seen them for a long period of time, or you are home for only short periods of time, you may find yourself not wanting to discipline them. You are probably eager to make up for the time you were unable to spend with them. This is certainly understandable. But do not put your spouse in the position of constantly playing the "heavy" while you have all the fun with the children.
6. Do not be surprised if your spouse is a little envious of your travels. Your life may look very exciting compared to the job of "keeping the home fires burning." Surprise your spouse with a gift when you return from a new place. This way they can show off their "treasures" from different states or countries and cultures, and share in your experiences.
7. Expect your spouse to have changed. Neither of you is the same person you were a few months ago, or even a few weeks ago. The main adjustment for military families after a separation is the change in roles. Your spouse has learned to cope alone as a matter of

survival. Out of necessity, some of your roles have been taken over in order to compensate for your absence. Try not to be threatened if you find an independent person when you return home. The fact that your spouse can cope without you does not necessarily mean that he or she cares about you any less.

### **Spouse:**

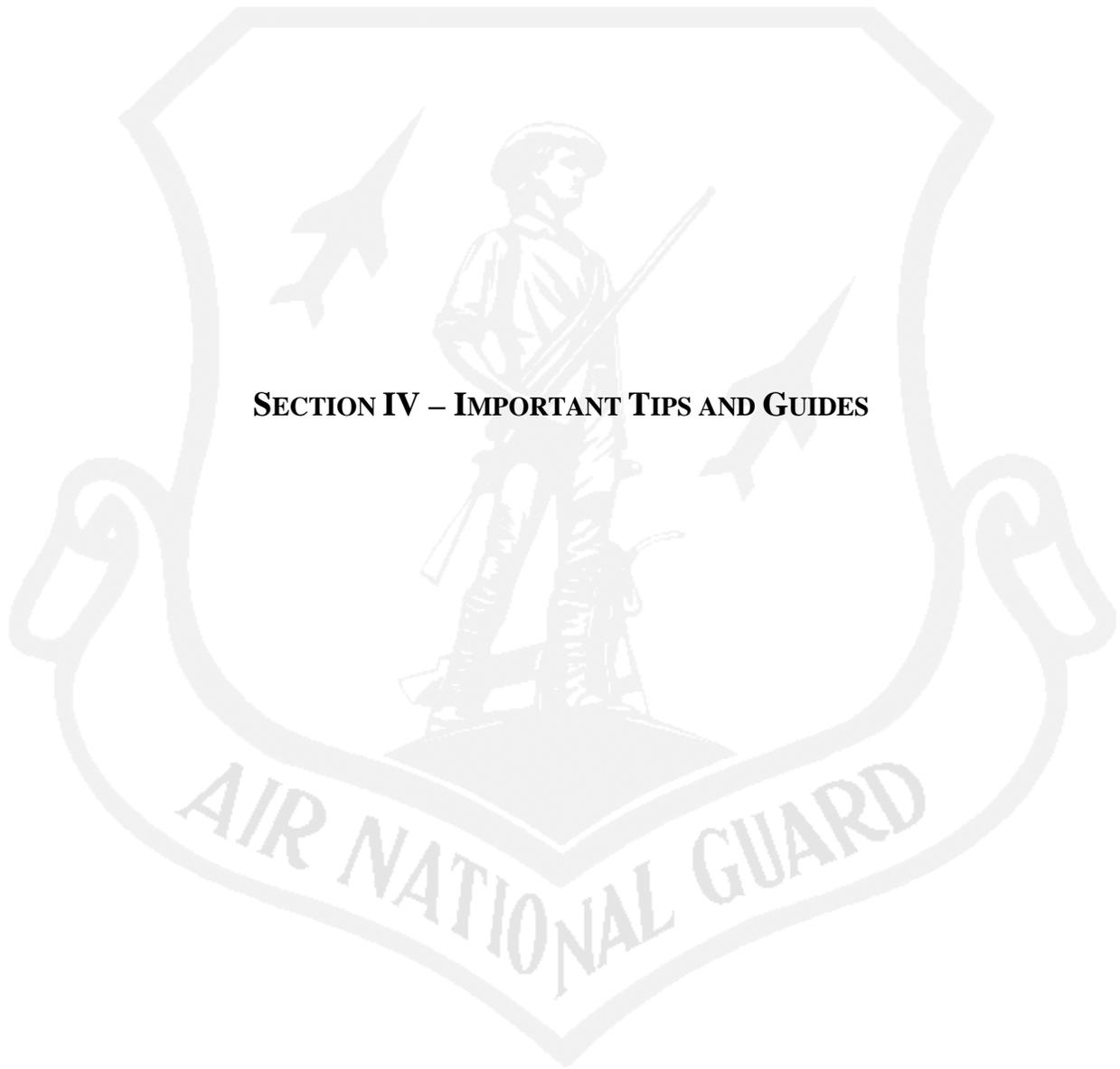
1. Keep in mind that your spouse has been operating in a regimented environment with a daily routine. Transition to family life takes a while. In some instances, your spouse might be a rebellious against any kind of schedule or preplanned activity you have set up. Be patient! There might also be some trouble sleeping soundly throughout the night at first. It takes some time to make the transition from barracks-style living to home living, especially if your spouse has been standing rotating shifts or working irregular hours.
2. Do not take it personally if you find your spouse day dreaming about work- related issues. Your spouse has been immersed in a totally work-related environment while away from home. It takes a while to let go of that world, even when a spouse is relieved to be away from it and home with the family.
3. You might find that your spouse is either surprised or even hurt that you have been able to manage everything so well alone. Try not to get defensive. Everyone wants to feel needed. Reassure your partner that although you are capable of handling the household and family on your own, you need companionship and emotional support. Point out that it also makes life a lot easier when you have someone with whom you can share these responsibilities.

### **Children:**

1. Some children will keep their distances from the returning parent for a while. They may still have unresolved feelings of anger toward that individual for leaving them, and are not ready to allow that parent to be part of their lives yet. They may have to be "courted" for a while until they feel comfortable again.
2. Other children will become "clingers." Each time the parent disappears from sight for a few moments, they think the adult has gone away from home again. As a result they tend to hold on for dear life and not let the parent out of their sight. Be patient. This will pass with time as they see you leave and return again.
3. At reunion time Dad could be meeting his new infant son or daughter for the first time. This can be quite an emotional experience for everyone, including the infant. Parents do not feel that you have to thrust a crying infant into the arms of the returning members. Do not feel overwhelming rejection if your infant will not come to your at first. Give the child some time. Infants are people too, and they need time to develop trust before they feel comfortable with a new adult in their lives.

4. Plan to spend some time individually with each one of your children by doing some activity that is special to them. This allows the parent to get reacquainted with each child in a way that is most comfortable for that particular child. It also makes children feel special and appreciated for their individuality.
5. Expect your children to have changed both physically and emotionally. Sometimes the changes are barely noticeable from day to day, but if you go away, you might discover upon your return that your toddler is walking, your fourth grader has learned the multiplication tables, and your teenage daughter has a new boyfriend.

**SECTION IV – IMPORTANT TIPS AND GUIDES**



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Important Names & Numbers:**

Sponsor's Wing: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Squadron: \_\_\_\_\_

Duty Section: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

OIC/NCOIC Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Orderly Room Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Commander's Name & Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

First Sergeant's Name & Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's TDY location (if releasable): \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's TDY Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Commercial & DSN Phone Number for Spouse's TDY location (if available): \_\_\_\_\_

Names and Numbers of Friends at Home base: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons to Contact in Case of Emergency at (i.e., relatives). Names, Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY DATA**

**Importance Of A Power Of Attorney**

1. The power of attorney is a legal instrument that deserves your serious consideration. In important personal matters, it may often be necessary for your spouse, a parent, or another competent person to act for you in your behalf, and a power of attorney becomes an essential document.
2. Most attorneys and legal assistance officers are in a position to furnish you with a general power of attorney that covers most contingencies. This may very well satisfy your personal needs. Otherwise, you may prefer to have a more specific power of attorney drawn by your attorney or your legal assistance officer.
3. If a power of attorney is to be executed in connection with life insurance policies, it is not always feasible to employ a standard form. Insurance contracts contain multiple features and any power of attorney given in connection with them should be tailored to fit the specific contract. Check with your legal office for guidance.
4. One of the most important and least known powers of attorney is the one given to a baby sitter. If you have children and they become ill while you're away, no doctor, on or off base, can treat the child unless it is an emergency. In other words, all the doctors can do is keep your child alive until you can be located. A power of attorney gives the baby sitter legal right to seek medical assistance for your child. A copy of this power of attorney should also be kept with the child's medical records,
5. In any event, before you execute a power of attorney, be sure you understand exactly what you want your attorney-in-fact to do in your place. For example, you may want to limit the duration of the instrument to a period of time you expect to be in the military service or overseas.
6. It is important for you to periodically review your existing power of attorney(s). Your changing needs may necessitate the revision of an existing power of attorney, ensuring it accomplishes exactly what you need done and nothing else. Remember that it is a good habit to periodically review ALL of your legal instruments (power of attorney, will, etc.) A little time spent reviewing and revising may save you a great deal of trouble later.

**The Importance Of A Will**

1. Should you die without a Will, the state in which you live will make one for you. However, the Will made for you by law is most rigid and arbitrary in its distribution of your estate after your death. You will not have any say as to disposition of your assets. Therefore, regardless of the size, nature or extent of your estate, everyone should have a skillfully prepared Will that carries out your wishes and desires.

2. Your Will, when properly and accurately drawn, allows you to distribute your estate in almost any manner you desire and permits you to nominate the person of your choice to carry out your mandates at a minimum of expense to the estate. You can direct the period of time over which your estate will be distributed and all the terms and conditions for said distribution. You can appoint other fiduciaries such as guardians, trustees, and others to administer and tend to the needs of minor children in accordance with your wishes and desires and not that of creditors or distant relatives or some stranger to your loved ones. A Will provides a valuable link in the chain of title for all real property (houses, lots, farms, etc.).
3. No single Will form exists that can be used in all parts of the United States. In addition, it is important to remember that the desires and needs of individuals can differ. See a lawyer of your own choice for the preparation of your Will and that of your spouse. If you need assistance, visit your base legal office.

### **Family Member Care Plan For Military Married To Military And The Single-Parent**

All military members married to military members and single-parent military members with minor children must have a Family Member Care Certification or Childcare Plan. The Family Care Plan is a working plan. It helps provide guidance for caregivers during mobilization. It helps guardians and others with care for family member's financial, legal, and medical needs. Family care plans alleviate some of the pressures involved in deployment, mobilization, training, etc. The plans allow you to concentrate on your mission and be more productive. Family Care Plans include information as to how you want family business conducted in your absence. Also, included in this plan are forms, instructions for care, legal authorizations, and names, addresses, and telephone numbers of people involved in the Family Care Plan. With no time to prepare a Family Care Plan in the midst of departure, it is essential to have a plan before the mobilization or TDY. Check with your orderly room and Wing Family Support Center for assistance in developing your plan. Review AFI 36-2908 for further information.

### **TRICARE Healthcare Information**

1. Families of deployed members are entitled to TRICARE health services from day one of your deployment **IF** you are a Traditional Guardsmen on orders for 31 + days of Active Duty.
2. Family members are automatically entitled to TRICARE **Standard/Extra**. They are Eligible for TRICARE **Prime** if orders are for more than 179 days.
3. Your family members lose their coverage at midnight of the last day of duty, regardless...
4. Family members can go to their own doctors if they want, *but* TRICARE will only pay 80% of what *they* think is a fair and reasonable cost...*and* will pay after a deductible is met (either \$50.00 or \$150.00, depending on rank).
5. Family members can see a doctor who is "in the system" & TRICARE will pay 85% of the price agreed to by the doctor. The deductible still applies!
6. Family members are eligible for **space available care** at military medical treatment facilities.

**TRICARE levels of coverage:**

1. **Standard** - akin to CHAMPUS
2. **Extra** - resembles a plan using a Preferred Provider Organization
3. **Prime** - resembles a traditional HMO operation, BUT is *not available* to families unless the Reservist is on active duty for a minimum of 180 days (not available in all locations).

**Traditional Guardsman Responsibilities:**

1. You must see to it that all family members have in their possession a valid military ID card.
2. You must register all family members in DEERS and the data has to be kept up-to-date.
  - a) Obtaining a military ID card, and registering in DEERS and can be done at *any* military facility
3. You must give your family a copy of your orders.
4. If family is eligible and wants TRICARE Prime, they must be enrolled at nearest treatment facility

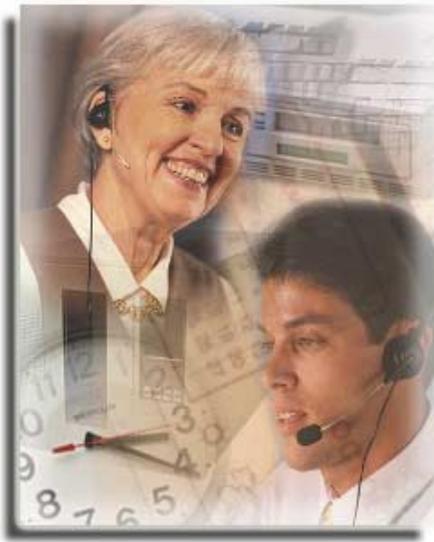
**NOTE: Your family members WILL NOT receive service unless they have an ID card, a copy of your orders, and are enrolled in DEERS!**

**TRICARE Regional Toll-Free Numbers:**

- **Region 1:** includes: ME, NH, VT, MA, DC, CT, .....1-888-999-5198  
RI, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA and Northern VA
- **Region 2:** includes: NC and VA.....1-800-931-9501
- **Regions 3 and 4:** includes: FL, GA, SC, AL, TN, MS, LA and AR.....1-800-444-5445
- **Region 5:** includes: MI, WI, IL, KY, IN, OH and WV .....1-800-941-4501
- **Region 6:** includes: OK, AR and TX.....1-800-982-0028
- **Regions 7 and 8:** includes: AZ, NV, NM, CO, WY, .....1-888-874-9378  
UT, ID, MT, SD, ND, KS, NE, MN, MO and IA
- **Regions 9-12:** includes: CA, HI, WA, OR and AK.....1-800-982-0028

**TRICARE Information Sources:**

- Each Military Medical treatment facility has a Health Benefits Advisor that can provide information and answer questions. Call information number at the local military base or hospital
- TRICARE Information Online: [www.tricare.osd.mil](http://www.tricare.osd.mil). *Complete downloadable information, including the TRICARE Handbook*



## **SUPPORT AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS**

Knowing who to call when you have problems helps to keep the difficulty from seeming like a catastrophe. It is vital to get in touch with the right person or persons who can give you the right information. Following is a suggested list of some of the agencies and support programs that you need to be familiar with. Make sure you contact your Wing Family Support Office for additional information or help.

### **American Red Cross**

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Emergency communications.
- Financial assistance for emergency leave and other special circumstances on a case by case basis.
- Information and referral.
- CPR and First Aid courses.

### **CHAMPUS/TRICARE**

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Advice on filling out claim forms and available civilian medical care.
- Care authorization.
- Nonavailability statements.

**Chapel**

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- **Religious Rites:** Baptism, Holy Communion, weddings, funerals and other sacraments and rites, as required in individual faiths.
- **Counseling:** Religious, individual, family, interpersonal, marriage, morale, and premarital counseling are available.
- **Education:** Religious education program, growth seminars, bible study groups, couples communication, family enrichment, and marriage encounters.
- **Fellowship:** Diverse social activities, youth groups, men's and women's organizations and prayer groups.

**Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)** (Normally Available on Active Duty Bases)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Counseling
- Referral
- Special assignment consideration.
- Special medical or educational help.
- Referral for financial help.
- Respite Care.
- AF Form 1466 Dependent Relocation Clearances.

**Family Advocacy Program** (Normally Available on Active Duty Bases)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Outreach & education on life skills.
- Exceptional Family Member Program.

- Family maltreatment counseling & referral.
- First Time Parents Program.
- Anger Management Classes

**Mental Health** (Normally Available on Active Duty Bases)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- SART (Substance Abuse Reorientation and Treatment).
- Individual, group, family, marital therapy.
- Tobacco cessation program with nicotine replacement therapy.
- Assertiveness training.
- Stress management.
- Biofeedback/relaxation therapy.

**Family Services** (Normally Available on Active Duty Bases)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Loan closet (with kitchen utensils, futons, playpens, strollers, high chairs, car seats, irons, and ironing boards).
- Maintains a list of base brochures on military installations in the US and overseas.

**Family Support Center** (on Active Duty Bases, or at your local Wing)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

The Family Support Center is one of your primary sources of assistance during family separations and crisis situations. Work closely with them.

Services provided:

- Air Force Aid Society financial assistance.
- Information and referral services.

- Transition assistance.
- Special needs assessment.
- Employment Assistance Program.
- Financial management skills assistance and training.
- Support during family separation due to TDY or remote assignment.
- Relocation assistance.
- Volunteer Resources Program.
- Family Enrichment.
- Support Groups.

**Social Actions**

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Equal opportunity and treatment counseling.
- Assist in filing EOT complaints (race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic group, age, or sex).
- Non-EOT Referrals.
- Education/awareness programs (Human Relations).
- Wing and unit human relations climate assessment.
- Speakers available for units and groups on a variety of human relations' topics such as communication, conflict resolution and diversity management.

**Youth Center** (Normally Available on Active Duty Bases)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services provided:

- Summer camps.
- Before and after school programs.
- Recreational opportunities.
- Instructional opportunities.
- Cultural opportunities.
- Educational opportunities.
- Team and individual sport.
- At-risk Youth programs.
- Youth Transition programs.

**Child Development Programs** (Normally Available on Active Duty Bases)

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

Services Provided:

- Full time and hourly care.
- Enrichment Programs.
- Resource and Referral Program.
- Give parents a break.
- Special needs training.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**



*(Many problems spouses have during family separations are money related)*

**Bills**

Designate one person to pay the bills regularly each month. The spouse who is home on a more regular basis usually accepts this responsibility. Although both spouses should be aware of their financial picture, switching back and forth may lead to confusion.

**Spending Plan**

1. Make a complete inventory of your monthly financial obligations (see budget work sheet). Many agencies can assist you in organizing a spending plan for your family including the Active Duty Family Support Center Financial Management Program, some financial institutions and Consumer Credit Counseling agencies. Basically, you need to estimate the amount of money coming in, your "fixed" expenses (housing, utilities, etc.), and the management of the remaining income (savings, emergencies, major purchases, recreation, etc.).
2. Both spouses need to work out a spending plan together. This point cannot be stressed enough since financial difficulty is one of the most common problems military families experience during separation.

**Special Budget Considerations**

1. Cost of long distance phone calls between the spouses and relatives and friends.
2. Non-reimbursable travel expenses of the service member as well as changes in pay entitlement.

3. It is necessary to make allowances in the spending plan to cover these costs or make an agreement not to indulge in these extras and stick to the plan.

### **Allotment**

1. An allotment is a specified amount of money designated by Air National Guard members, which is deducted from paychecks and sent to a designated individual or institution on or about the first of each month.
2. Setting up an allotment ensures that your family receives funds on a regular basis to operate the household whether or not you are home. Plan ahead. It can take several months for the allotment procedure to begin.

### **Two Checking Accounts**

1. Most couples find it helpful to maintain two checking accounts--one for monthly household expenses and one for the service member while away from home. This eliminates the problem of some deposits and withdrawals not being recorded, as a result of two people in two different places trying to operate out of one checkbook.
2. If you decide to operate with one checking account, make sure you work out procedures for maintaining a "Master" check register up to date at all times to avoid confusion and possible problems.

### **Income Tax**

If the family will be separated when taxes are due, decide in advance how income taxes will be filed and who will do it. If you prefer to calculate the taxes while you are away, take into consideration the time it will take to mail tax forms back and forth. Make several copies of all forms that are mailed in case they are lost. Another option is to apply to the Internal Revenue Service for an extension on the filing date. Remember that free tax assistance is available from the base Volunteer Income Tax Assistance office and you should call the legal office if you have any questions.

**PERSONAL AND FAMILY READINESS GUIDE** →

**Cash Flow Worksheet #1 – Monthly Income**

TYPE OF INCOME	ESTIMATED	ACTUAL
BASIC PAY		
QUARTERS ALLOWANCE (BAQ)		
SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (BAS)		
CLOTHING ALLOWANCE		
VARIABLE HOUSING ALLOWANCE (VHA)		
SPECIAL PAY (FLIGHT, PRO, ETC.)		
MEMBER'S OFF DUTY PAY (NET)		
SPOUSE'S EARNINGS (NET)		
CHILD SUPPORT (RECEIVED)		
INTEREST/DIVIDENDS		
OTHER INCOME		
<b><i>TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME</i></b>		

**Cash Flow Worksheet #2 – Monthly Expenditures**

TYPE OF EXPENSE	ESTIMATED	ACTUAL
<b><i>FIXED EXPENSES:</i></b>		
SAVINGS (PAY YOURSELF FIRST)		
SOCIAL SECURITY		
MEDICARE		
FEDERAL WITHHOLDING TAX (FTW)		
STATE WITHHOLDING TAX (STW)		
AFRH		
SGLI		
COMMERCIAL LIFE INSURANCE		
DUES AND CLUB MEMBERSHIPS		
CHILD SUPPORT/ALIMONY (PAID)		
VEHICLE INSURANCE		
RENT/MORTGAGE		

**PERSONAL AND FAMILY READINESS GUIDE** →

<i>VARIABLE EXPENSES:</i>		
ELECTRICITY		
GAS		
WATER/SEWER		
TRASH		
HOUSE/YARD UPKEEP		
TELEPHONE		
GROCERIES		
PERSONAL CARE ITEMS		
SUPPLIES (CLEANING, ETC.)		
AUTOMOBILE (GAS & OIL)		
AUTOMOBILE MAINTENANCE/REPAIR (Routine)		
LICENSE/TAX/INSPECTION		
CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES		
LAUNDRY/DRY CLEANING		
SCHOOL COSTS (TUITION)		
SCHOOL SUPPLIES (BOOKS, ETC)		
CHILD DAY CARE		
ALLOWANCES		
BEAUTY/BARBER SHOP		
MEDICAL/DENTAL		
MEDICINES & DRUGS		
GLASSES/CONTACTS		
NEWSPAPERS/MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS		
CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS		
HOBBIES & SUPPLIES		
FOOD		
SNACKS		
CABLE TV		
RECREATION/ENTERTAINMENT		
TOBACCO PRODUCTS		
BEVERAGES		
BANK SERVICE CHARGES		
POSTAGE		
VETERINARY COSTS/PET FOOD & CARE		
OTHER EXPENSES:		
<b>TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES</b>		

THE FAMILY WHEELS



*(The family car is one of your most valuable possessions while your spouse is away. Please take care of it)*

**Automotive Checklist**

1. Where should the car be taken for service: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the car need to be lubricated before the end of this assignment or deployment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) If yes, at what mileage? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does the car need a tune-up? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Should the spark plugs be changed? \_\_\_\_\_
    - At what mileage should they be changed? \_\_\_\_\_
    - What brand and type plugs should be used? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Mileage at last tune-up: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Mileage at next scheduled tune-up? \_\_\_\_\_
6. At what mileage should the oil be changed? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) What type and weight of oil is used? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Where should this be done? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Should the oil filter be changed? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Is a new air filter needed? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) When should a new air filter be installed? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Can you replace the filter yourself? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What type of gasoline does the car use? ( )Leaded ( )Unleaded ( )Unleaded Premium
9. Is there water in the battery? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Is the battery in good condition? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) What kind and size of battery should be purchased, if needed? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Where should a new battery be purchased? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Are the tires in good condition? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Is there at least a 1/4" tread? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Do you know how to check for tread depth? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Will the tires last through a deployment? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) If needed, what size, type, and brand of tires should be purchased? \_\_\_\_\_
  - e) Is there a guarantee on the present tires and is it readily accessible? \_\_\_\_\_
11. When is the car insurance premium due? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) How much is it? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) To whom is it paid and how? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Does the car have an inspection sticker and, if so, when does it expire? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Where should it be taken to be inspected? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Where are the car's registration papers or cards? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) When does the registration expire? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Do you need a power of attorney to register your car? \_\_\_\_\_
14. When does your base sticker expire? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Are there extra car keys in the house? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) If yes, where are they? \_\_\_\_\_

## **Common Car Problems**

1. **Starting Difficulties:** If your car refuses to start, but the battery has enough power to crank the engine, you may not be using the correct starting procedures. For most cars, starting the engine when it is cold requires that you depress the gas pedal to the floor then release it. Turn on the ignition and attempt to start the car, the engine should start. If not, pump the accelerator two to three times and try again. If for some reason you have pumped the accelerator several times and you begin to smell a faint odor of gasoline, chances are you've flooded the engine. This means that there is too much gas in the engine. In this case, wait for two or three minutes and depress the accelerator all the way to the floor, hold it while cranking the engine, and the car should start. As soon as it does, release the accelerator. If it doesn't start, there may be some mechanical problem.
2. **Cold Weather Starts:**
  - a. If the temperature has been close to freezing for several hours, your car may be hard to start. Be sure to depress the accelerator all the way to the floor twice and release it before cranking the engine. When starting, the engine will probably turn over sluggishly and slowly pick up momentum. Follow this procedure for a maximum of five times. If the engine still won't even show any sign of life, quit. Any more attempts will just kill your battery.
  - b. There are several other tricks for cold-weather starts. Chemical sprays are available for you to spray into the air intake unit, which sits on top of the engine. Before cranking, however, make sure to read the manufacturer's instructions to the letter since these sprays are highly flammable.
3. **Dead Battery:**
  - a. A battery is considered "dead" when it no longer has enough power to turn the engine over. If there is only enough power in the battery to just slowly turn the engine, chances are that the engine is not going to start.
  - b. Using a charger can recharge a battery that has lost its charge. Normal chargers take household current and transform it into the type needed in the battery. Battery chargers are almost as expensive as new batteries, but by taking the battery to a gas station, it can be recharged for only a few dollars.
  - c. Sometimes, because of the age of the battery or "burned out" cells within the battery, the battery will not take a charge. That is, it will go dead as soon as you remove it from the charging device. At this point, the only option left is to purchase a new battery.
  - d. The most common causes of battery failures are:

- (1) Excessive attempts to start an engine that has failed due to mechanical problems.
  - (2) Too many starts (over a period of several weeks) and not enough driving time to recharge the battery with the alternator or generator.
  - (3) Forgetting to turn off headlights and other electrical equipment that doesn't go off when the ignition is turned off.
- e. Finally, equip your car for a "dead battery emergency" by buying a set of jumper cables. These are two lengths of cable with squeeze-type clamps at each end for transferring power from a good battery into a dead one to start the car. Once running, the engine will recharge the dead battery as explained above. Be sure to hook up the jumper cables correctly: watch polarity (+ and -). It is best to go over this procedure with someone who knows how before trying it yourself.

### **In Case of an Auto Accident**

An auto accident occurs in the United States every 90 seconds, so buckle up for safety. If you are involved in an accident, **STOP IMMEDIATELY AND....**

1. Aid any injured persons. Call a doctor. Do not move the injured person as movement may add to their injury. If necessary, call an ambulance.
2. Call an officer of the law.
3. Do not admit responsibility -- make no statement regarding the accident except to the police. The law requires that you give your name, address, and license number. You are not required to give any other information at the scene of the accident.
4. **DO NOT REVEAL THE EXTENT OF YOUR INSURANCE COVERAGE TO ANYONE.**
5. Take notes concerning all details of the accident. Be sure to get names and addresses of all injured persons, occupants of all cars, and other witnesses.
6. **REPORT ALL ACCIDENTS TO YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY IMMEDIATELY.** Your insurance company will not provide proof of financial responsibility to your state authorities until the company receives your accident report.

**FINAL PRE-SEPARATION CHECKLIST**

1. Have you discussed your feelings on the deployment and your spouse's return? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Have the children been included in discussions on where you are going, when you are coming home, why you are leaving? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you reached an agreement on frequency of letter writing/phone calls? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have current family snapshots? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Have you recorded your children's favorite bedtime stories/songs on cassettes? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do both the deploying member and remaining parent or guardian understand what the Wing Family Support Center, Family Services, Air Force Aid Society, American Red Cross, Chaplain etc. can do for you and how to contact them? \_\_\_\_\_

**Security**

1. Has the home been given a security check? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do all window locks work? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do the windows open or are they painted shut? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do all door locks work properly? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you have keys for all doors or combinations for all padlocks? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does the smoke alarms function and do you know how to test them? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are all emergency numbers posted where they can easily be referred? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is there an appropriate message on the answering machine? (Having a male voice sometimes discourages crank phone calls) \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you need to change your phone number to an unlisted number? (If so, make sure member's unit has this new number in case of emergencies) \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical**

1. Do you know and understand how to use the medical facilities, and do you know how to use TRICARE? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you know who your children's pediatrician is and what his/her phone number is? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you know your children's dentist/orthodontist and their schedule? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is your family enrolled in DEERS? \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial**

(See Financial Matters Section for More Information)

1. Have you determined who will pay the bills? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you have a spending plan? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you both understand the spending plan? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does your spending plan consider the following?

Rent/Mortgage
Utilities
Food
Automobile Maintenance
Insurance
Loan Payments
Emergencies
Long Distance Phone Calls
Postage
Telegrams
Travel (Leave)
Entertainment
Presents
Savings _____

5. Has an allotment been established? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Will the allotment be in effect in time? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Is there a "backup" plan if the allotment is late? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Have you established two checking accounts? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you decided upon a procedure for income taxes? \_\_\_\_\_

**Legal**

1. Do you know spouse's social security number? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you provided for Power of Attorney? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you have current wills? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have guardians for the children been named in the will? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does everyone who qualifies have a government identification (ID) card? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Will any ID cards need renewing? \_\_\_\_\_

7. If ID needs renewing, has Form DD 1172 been completed? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Is military member's record of emergency data on record and current? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you know the process for moving your household goods? \_\_\_\_\_

**Important Papers**

1. Are the following important papers current and in an accessible safety deposit box?

Power of Attorney
Wills
Insurance Policies
Real Estate (Deeds, Titles, Mortgages, Leases)
Bank Account Numbers
Charge Account Numbers
Savings Bonds
Birth Certificates
Marriage Certificates
Naturalization Papers
Citizenship Papers
Family Social Security Numbers
Inventory of Household Goods
Car Title(s)

2. Do each of your family members have the following phone numbers?

Police
Fire
Medical (Hospital/Doctor)
Service Member's Contact Number
Service Member's Unit in Local Area
Spouses in Unit/Squadron
Reliable Neighbors
Relatives
Children's School
Spouse's Workplace
Utilities
Repair Shops
Insurance Company
Wing Family Support Center

**Household Maintenance**

1. Do you know whom to call if something breaks? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you know how to operate the furnace? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does the furnace have clean filters? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the furnace need periodic supplies of oil/gas? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is the hot water heater operating properly? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are any pipes or faucets leaking? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Toilets operate correctly? \_\_\_\_\_
8. All drains operate correctly? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are the following appliances operating correctly?

Stove
Refrigerator
Freezer
Dishwasher
Microwave
Clothes Washer
Clothes Dryer
Television
Air Conditioner

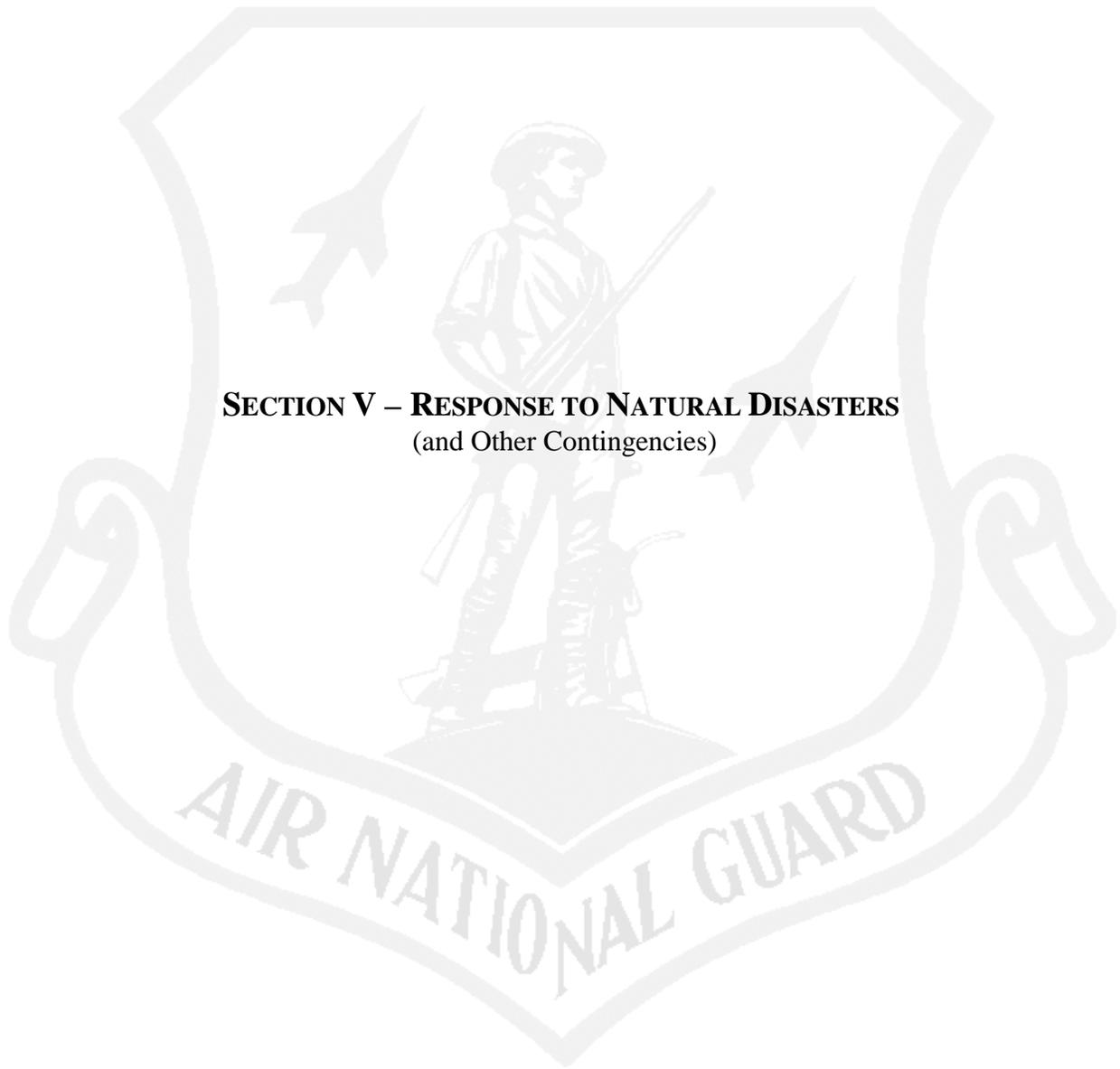
- 10. Does everyone know where the fuse box is? \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. Are the switches of the fuse box labeled? \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. Are there extra fuses? \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. Is there adequate outside lighting? \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Is there a list of repairpersons? \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Are there tools in the house? \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. Is the lawn mower tuned? \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. Is there an adequate amount of firewood? \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME CONVERSION CHART**

*(Keep this handy for when you get ready to call)*

KOREA	JAPAN	HAWA	PST	MST	CST	EST	CMT	GRMNY	IRAQ	THAIL	VIET
0100	0100	0600	0800	0900	1000	1100	1600	1700	1900	2300	2400
0200	0200	0700	0900	1000	1100	1200	1700	1800	2000	2400	0100
0300	0300	0800	1000	1100	1200	1300	1800	1900	2100	0100	0200
0400	0400	0900	1100	1200	1300	1400	1900	2000	2200	0200	0300
0500	0500	1000	1200	1300	1400	1500	2000	2100	2300	0300	0400
0600	0600	1100	1300	1400	1500	1600	2100	2200	2400	0400	0500
0700	0700	1200	1400	1500	1600	1700	2200	2300	0100	0500	0600
0800	0800	1300	1500	1600	1700	1800	2300	2400	0200	0600	0700
0900	0900	1400	1600	1700	1800	1900	2400	0100	0300	0700	0800
1000	1000	1500	1700	1800	1900	2000	0100	0200	0400	0800	0900
1100	1100	1600	1800	1900	2000	2100	0200	0300	0500	0900	1000
1200	1200	1700	1900	2000	2100	2200	0300	0400	0600	1000	1100
1300	1300	1800	2000	2100	2200	2300	0400	0500	0700	1100	1200
1400	1400	1900	2100	2200	2300	2400	0500	0600	0800	1200	1300
1500	1500	2000	2200	2300	2400	0100	0600	0700	0900	1300	1400
1600	1600	2100	2300	2400	0100	0200	0700	0800	1000	1400	1500
1700	1700	2200	2400	0100	0200	0300	0800	0900	1100	1500	1600
1800	1800	2300	0100	0200	0300	0400	0900	1000	1200	1600	1700
1900	1900	2400	0200	0300	0400	0500	1000	1100	1300	1700	1800
2000	2000	0100	0300	0400	0500	0600	1100	1200	1400	1800	1900
2100	2100	0200	0400	0500	0600	0700	1200	1300	1500	1900	2000
2200	2200	0300	0500	0600	0700	0800	1300	1400	1600	2000	2100
2300	2300	0400	0600	0700	0800	0900	1400	1500	1700	2100	2200
2400	2400	0500	0700	0800	0900	1000	1500	1600	1800	2200	2300

**SECTION V – RESPONSE TO NATURAL DISASTERS  
(and Other Contingencies)**



## RESPONSE TO NATURAL DISASTERS AND OTHER CONTINGENCIES



### General

This brochure outlines the most basic steps you should take to prepare for an evacuation. Depending on the disasters that are likely to occur in your area, you can do much to protect your home and your family. To obtain additional information on how you can minimize the effects of specific types of disasters, contact your base or local emergency management office. If you are having problems finding information or are unsure about what type of information you need contact your Wing Family Support Center. We are all aware of the constantly changing world situation and the potential for the mobilization/deployment of our armed forces; however, we often neglect to consider the possibility of disasters striking right here at home. Planning for these eventualities is a necessary part of modern life--a toxic

spill, a blizzard or other natural or man-made disaster can reap as many casualties as any battlefield event. *Severe weather conditions CAN and often DO create 'Natural Disasters'*. One of the much-neglected parts of "Personal Readiness" deals with our ability to protect ourselves against natural and man-made Disasters. The tips included in this guide are not intended to be all-inclusive and are certainly no substitute for the specific guidance available through your base and community Disaster Preparedness agencies.

One aspect of disaster is the evacuation or displacement of Air National Guard service members and families. No matter how small in scope, an evacuation may seem, *it is a crisis time* for the affected families and communities. All individuals have some problems with evacuation. The majority of individuals possess coping skills that enable them to adapt and successfully survive the evacuation, but some may find it harder to confront the difficulties they encounter during this time. The information in this brochure is based on the experiences of families and service providers in previous evacuations and from disaster research findings. The information and suggestions provided can help you ensure that an evacuation does not adversely effect the overall health and well being of Air National Guard members and their families.

### What to expect during a disaster:

- a) *Confusion*: Many people are unprepared for an evacuation and do not know what to bring. Children will not want to evacuate without the family pets.
- b) *Need for credible and timely information*: Without reliable information, rumors about looting and the status of the evacuated base can easily begin. Lack of information

escalates fear, stress, and erodes confidence in leadership charged with protecting the evacuees and their property.

- c) *Evacuees with multiple needs:* In addition to material assistance evacuees need financial and emotional assistance. Support services are essential at each stage of an evacuation. An efficient support structure that addresses both physical and emotional needs will alleviate the stress that is associated with displacement and evacuation.

### **Why is preparation the key to successful evacuation?**

While the Air National Guard, Air Force and other disaster relief agencies can provide some assistance during an evacuation they can not replace items you may forget or leave undone when you evacuate. *"If only I had been prepared"* is a statement that no one should have to make. Families have learned that being prepared makes evacuation easier and much less stressful. They also found that your outlook on evacuation is very important. If you can look at evacuation as a challenge, coping will be easier. Preparing ahead of time will help you adopt this outlook. You will be able to avoid many obstacles and you will gain confidence in your ability to cope with an evacuation. *Prepare now to make evacuation easier later.* This booklet will help you prepare for an evacuation. It discusses actions you and your family should take to be prepared in case of disaster or evacuation:

- a) Get Information
- b) Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit
- c) Create an Emergency Plan
- d) Store your Disaster Supplies Kit
- e) Know how to turn off utilities
- f) Choose places to meet and a non-local contact

### **Your Evacuation Checklist**

1. Find out which disasters are likely to occur in your area.
2. Ask how you would be warned of an emergency:
  - a. On duty: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Off duty: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Learn your community's evacuation routes and your installation's evacuation procedures.

4. Find where your local shelters are located: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Ask about assistance for elderly family members or family members with special needs.

### **Prepare A Disaster Supplies Kit**

1. Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation.
2. Disaster Kit Prepared \_\_\_\_\_ Location of Kit: \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) Water. One gallon per person per day. Store in sealed unbreakable containers and replace every six months. Store at least a three-day supply of water.
  - b) Food. Store non-perishable foods that need little preparation or cooking. Include foods for family members with special diets. Store at least a three-day supply of food.
  - c) First Aid Kit. Assemble a basic first aid kit with the following items:
    - Band-Aids in assorted sizes
    - Sterile gauze pads and rolls
    - Scissors, tweezers, and a needle
    - Antiseptic and cleansing agent
    - Thermometer and tongue blades
    - Sunscreen
    - Safety pins
    - Non-prescription Drugs, aspirin, laxative, antacid, anti-diarrhea
  - d) Tools and Supplies:
    - Eating utensils
    - Battery powered radio and extra batteries
    - Flashlight and extra batteries
    - Can opener, utility knife
    - Personal hygiene items
    - Toilet paper and towelettes
  - e) Clothing:
    - Sturdy shoes
    - Rain gear
    - One complete change of clothing per person

f) Special Items:

- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Items for infants, diapers, formula, medication, and bottles
- Prescription drugs
- Eyeglasses, contact lens supplies
- Pet care items: food, shot records, a carrying case

g) Important Family Documents: (In a fire and water proof container)

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds stocks and bonds
- Passports, social security cards, military ID cards, immunization record
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card numbers
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Important telephone numbers
- Family Records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

3. Depending on the amount of time you have and policies for the evacuation you may consider bringing:

- Irreplaceable items, photos, heirlooms, etc.
- Entertaining games and books
- Blankets or sleeping bags

**Create an Emergency Plan**

Meet with household members and discuss each disaster that could occur and how to respond:

1. Discuss evacuation warnings and procedures
2. Make sure each family member knows where the disaster supplies kit is
3. Learn how to turn off gas, electricity, and water in your home
4. Know where to find emergency phone numbers and non-local contact phone numbers
5. If children are alone, find a neighbor or friend they should go to

**Store Your Disaster Supplies Kit**

1. Store your kit in a convenient place known by all family members.

2. Store your kit in easy to carry container such as a duffel bag, backpack, or covered trash container
3. Keep items that can get wet in airtight plastic bags
4. Change your water and food supplies every six months

**Know How And Where To Shut Off Utilities**

Write the location of each and instructions for shutting off:

1. Main water valve \_\_\_\_\_
2. Circuit Breaker \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gas Valve \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose Places To Meet And A Non-Local Contact**

Write down places to meet and a non-local contact in case your family is separated

1. Within home meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Outside home meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Neighbor/friend if children are alone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Non-local relative or friend for check-in**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

**If You Need To Evacuate**

1. Listen to your radio for location and instructions to emergency shelters.
2. Follow instructions of local Disaster Preparedness officials/installation commander.
3. If you can go home before evacuating:
  - a) Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes
  - b) Take your disaster supplies kit
  - c) Lock your home
  - d) Use travel routes specified by local officials/installation commander

4. If you are sure you have time:
  - a) Shut off your utilities
  - b) Let others know when you left and where you are going
  - c) Make arrangements for pets
5. If you have problems at any time during an evacuation, call your Wing Family Support Center or the Active Duty Family Support Center at any military installations

## **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND STRESS MANAGEMENT DURING AN EVACUATION**

### **Counseling.**

During an evacuation you or members of your family may experience difficulties coping or be overwhelmed by grief and loss. You may want to talk to a professional, or you may want tips on how you can give support to a family member who is having a difficult time. In either case, the Wing Family Support Center can provide you with information and/or referrals.

### **Medical Care.**

Stress and grieving often affect physical health. If you are experiencing eating or stomach disorders, headaches, sleeping disorders or any health problems the installation clinic or hospital can help you.

### **Support Groups.**

Mutual support groups help survivors share experiences and work through the stages of grief and loss. If you are interested in joining an existing support group the Wing Family Support Center can help you find one that suites your needs.

### **Issues for Children.**

As a parent, you should pay special attention to your children during an evacuation. Children will feel many of the same things you do. Their normal routines have been disrupted. They will look to you for guidance and to see how you are coping with the evacuation. Each child will respond differently to the disaster. Some may exhibit reactions quickly and others may not show feelings for weeks or even months after the disaster occurred. In any case, it is very normal for children to express their feelings about what has happened in one way or another. It is natural for your child to display some behavior changes after an evacuation. Some children may try to escape or deny the situation while others will want to draw attention to themselves. Children need help getting over a traumatic situation because they may feel scared and insecure. They will

need you to give them reassurance that everything is OK. They will also need special attention and a lot of love during this period.

**Some ways you can help:**

1. Answer your child's questions. Discuss in simple terms what is going on.
2. Tell your child how you feel.
3. Reassure your child often that they are loved and will be taken care of.
  - a) Hold your child and comfort him or her.
  - b) Continue as many regular routines with your child as you can.
  - c) Read stories, play games, and eat meals together.

**When you have reached a final destination.**

Do not expect your child to immediately resume his or her past behavior. They will also need time to adjust. Things you can do at the final destination are:

1. Stay in touch with your child's teacher. They can give your updates on your child's behavior and coping.
2. Plan special family events. The best place for a child to overcome a traumatic situation is within the family.
3. Involve your child in rebuilding your new lives. Have them help with home projects and clean up.

If you need outside help at any time for your child, contact the Wing Family Support Center, your doctor or a religious leader. They can help you find family-centered emotional support for your child.

If you need information or any other help for yourself or a family member, do not hesitate to contact the Wing Family Support Center. Evacuations are stressful and it is natural to experience many strong new feelings. To assist you, the Wing Family Support Center, or an Active Duty Family Support Center can provide information and referrals to military and/or local agencies to help you manage stress.

**ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE**

**American Red Cross:**

Provides a variety of disaster relief services for Air Force and Air National Guard Families. The Red Cross can help you locate family members during an evacuation.

**Legal Assistance:**

The wing legal office can help you file claims for property damage. Information on civilian attorneys is available through this office.

**Child Care:**

Depending on the policies of your wing, childcare services can often be provided on a limited basis through volunteer services.

**Medical Care:**

The wing clinic can help you and your family locate assistance for major illnesses or other important medical needs.

**Transportation Assistance:**

Depending on the policies of your wing, transportation (limited) may be arranged for family members that do not have transportation. This is normally handled through volunteer services.

**Chapel:**

The wing chapel program offers religious services and programs. Chaplains and religious leaders are also available for counseling.

**Wing Family Support Center:**

Offers a wide range of services and support programs as well as information and referral.

*For more information on location and phone numbers of these agencies and for any other needs, contact the Wing Family Support Center*

## **CASUALTY SITUATIONS**

### **General**

Military air disasters, natural disasters, terrorist activities, and wartime situations are potential casualty situations. Any casualty situation is a tragedy and can be a byproduct of modern technology and the military mission.

There are many places where you can find help. Counseling, mental health, and religious services are available through on and off base sources. Financial assistance, legal assistance, and other material assistance are also available. Do not hesitate to seek outside help. See your Wing Family Support Center for assistance and guidance.

Check with your Wing Family Support Center to obtain a copy of your base's Disaster Preparedness Instructions.