New Army Family Survival Guide

Fort Benning, GA

Army Family Team Building
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Fort Benning, GA 31905
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A Warm Welcome to the Army Family!!

Congratulations on becoming a member of the Army Family. We hope this handbook will make it easier for you to integrate into the larger Military Family. Life with the military will bring many changes and challenges, but with a smile and a positive attitude, it can be the adventure of a lifetime.

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE
ACS
Real-Life Solutions for Successful Army Living

This handbook covers general information concerning the military. After you arrive at your first military duty location, you and your Soldier should acquaint yourselves with the area and the post/base facilities. You are also encouraged to attend a newcomers' briefing or orientation. Each post/base has its own way of welcoming newcomers. The facilities and services that are available will vary depending on the size of the post/base.

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Welcome

Congratulations on becoming a member of the Army Family. We hope this handbook will make it easier for you to integrate into the larger Military Family. Life with the military will bring many changes and challenges, but with a smile and a positive attitude, it can be the adventure of a lifetime. This handbook covers general information concerning the military. After you arrive at your first military duty location, you and your Soldier should acquaint yourselves with the area and the post/base facilities. You are also encouraged to attend a newcomers' briefing or orientation. Each post/base has its own way of welcoming newcomers. The facilities and services that are available will vary depending on the size of the installation.

The Family Readiness Group also known as FRG, is a command-sponsored organization of Soldiers, civilian employees, family members and volunteers belonging to a unit. Our FRG is made up solely of volunteers. The purpose of the FRG is to assist unit commander in enhancing family readiness. Encourage self- sufficiency by providing information, referral assistance and mutual support. To provide a network of communications among family members, chain of command and community resources. We like to think of the FRG as just being a good neighbor!

Everyone is automatically a member of the FRG simply by being assigned to the unit. You do not have to join and you should not wait to be asked to come to a meeting. Upon arrival to your first duty station, ask about your FRG and volunteer to be involved. The FRG always needs good volunteers. Remember, not all FRG are the same, and each are only as good as what your volunteers put into them. So it's up you to you as a volunteer to be a part of creating a positive FRG environment.

The purpose of this Guide is to give you a glimpse into your Soldier's BCT experience and help you integrate into the Army so that you may become empowered, well- informed, and resilient Army families.

What Can You Expect from Us?

1. You can expect to have the opportunity to learn about the Army. We have a program called **Basic Training for New Army Families.** You can read more about this later.

2. You can expect to get tons of information about the Army through the Family Survival Guide (FSG), Commanders Letter (CL) and on the FaceBook page.

3. You can expect to receive the most current and up to date information that is available through the Company FaceBook page.

What Can We Expect from You?

We expect you to be responsible to learn the information that we have provide for you. Take some time and read all of it and then re-read it as many times as you need to. We also suggest printing it as well. As stated before, our goal is for you to be become empowered, well- informed, and resilient Army Families. This cannot happen unless you take responsibility for yourself**. We will not do for you what you can and should do for yourself!**

We expect you to be flexible and understanding. There is a reason for everything we do even if you don't understand or agree with it. As a family member you are oftentimes not entitled to have an explanation. We understand that is frustrating because we are in the same boat, but experience has taught us that Army life is much easier if you learn to go with the flow!

We expect you follow the rules of the Company FaceBook page. Although you, as a family member, did not enlist in the Army, you do have to follow the rules the Army has set forth. This is practice for the real Army is what you will encounter at your first duty station. Thus the reason we insist on strict adherence to the rules of this page**. It is important to note that your Soldier is held responsible for your actions.** So please act accordingly.

Any rude or derogatory comments after a volunteer has deleted a question or answered a question will result in you being banned from the page immediately. We have a zero tolerance policy for this!

Statements that you “would sure like to see pictures of ……” and “Sure wish I could get call from……..” and others like it will be DELETED. If it becomes a problem you will be banned from the page.

Requests for photos, phone calls, direct messages to your soldier, or requests for us to relay messages to your soldier will be DELETED. If it becomes a problem you will be banned from the page.

Any rude or derogatory comments anywhere on the page will result in you being immediately banned! The use of offensive language or racial slurs will result in you being immediately banned from this page. We have a zero tolerance policy in regards to this as well.

We reserve the right to add to these rules as we deem necessary.

**Note: Please help us keep this site family friendly! There are lots of grandparents and children that visit it to see their loved ones! Don’t be “that” person!

ASKING QUESTIONS

Please keep your questions to the “need to know” kind, rather than the “would like to know” kind. Our volunteers are spouses that have very busy schedules so please respect their time by asking relevant questions that ARE NOT ALREADY ANSWERED IN THIS GUIDE. Information that you have already been given in this Guide and any question that has already been asked and answered in previous questions on FaceBook will not be repeated. We suggest you read the entire Family Survival Guide, print it out, and refer back to it BEFORE you ask a question.

BCT TRAINING PHASES EXPLAINED

Week 0: Reception

Soldiers complete administrative actions required to become part of the Army. Simple tasks are done, such as medical examinations, setting up pay, and initial issue of equipment is completed. This process typically takes between two and three days but can take over a week in some cases.

Weeks 1-3: Red Phase

Welcome to BCT! Soldiers meet their Drill Sergeants and begin training. While often considered a difficult week for Soldiers due to the adjustments, it is actually pretty easy compared to later weeks. Most classroom-type training occurs in this period where Soldiers learn about:

- Ballistics and Rifle Marksmanship Fundamentals
- Personal financial management
- Law of Land Warfare
- Uniform Code of Military Justice (Military Law)
- Dismounted Land Navigation (using a map and compass)
- Fundamentals of Physical Readiness
- Nutrition
- Rappelling and navigating rope bridges
- Drill and Ceremonies (marching)
- Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) Defense (often referred to as the Gas Chamber)
- Fieldcraft
- Patrolling

Weeks 4-6: White Phase

This phase is sometimes referred to the rifleman phase, qualification phase, shoot phase, and some other names. Whatever the term, the training focus is the same...how to identify, track, target, and effectively engage targets with a rifle. In a word, Soldiers learn "Marksmanship". The training is progressive and becomes more difficult as the training progresses:

- Fundamentals of Rifle Marksmanship are reinforced
- Zero a rifle (align the rifle sites to hit targets at different distances)

Engage targets at various distances

Engage targets at various distances using three different positions

Prone supported (laying down with a brace to hold the weapon steady)

Prone unsupported (laying down using only your hands to hold the weapon steady)

Kneeling unsupported (one knee on the ground, resting the weapon on the other knee)

Night Infiltration Course (Low crawl several hundred meters while machine guns are being fired overhead.)

Live Grenade Throws

Engage targets at various distances with limited time

Prioritize and engage multiple simultaneous targets at various distances with limited time

Engage targets at various distances, with limited and variable amounts of time, with a changing number of simultaneous targets available at any particular time...passing this requirement is also known as **Rifle Qualification**.

Weeks 7-9: <u>Blue Phase</u>

The culminating phase of BCT, Soldiers combine the skills they learned in earlier phases of training to complete advanced combat tasks.

Advanced Rifle Marksmanship

(close combat and use of aiming tools such as lasers)

Patrol and attack as a squad

Maneuver and engage targets as part of a team

Employ "crew-served" and more powerful weapons

M203 40mm Grenade Launcher

Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT - Fighting in a city)

Convoy Defense

Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Defeat

Long-distance Road Marching with combat load

Forward Operating Base (FOB) operations

Control Point operations

Cleaning and resetting all assigned equipment / Final Inspection

Week 10: Graduation

The final week of BCT is all about you and your Family. After completing the final training events to include a week of field training and a 16km march under load back into the main part of the post, Soldiers are given a day with their Families to catch up and share their experiences. On the following day, Soldiers graduate and are sent to the next phase of their training that in almost all cases is Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

Basic Training for New Army Families

Fort Benning is pleased to announce a program that will prepared for the Army Lifestyle and introduce you to Family Readiness Groups (FRG), manage your expectations and empower you with the skills that you will need to become resilient Army Families! Your willingness to participate is the only criteria. Everyone is welcome to join in!
Basic Training for New Army Families is a disciplined course designed to transform civilian families into informed, high functioning, resilient, empowered Military Families, much like Basic Training for Soldiers transforms civilians onto Soldiers.

Basic Training for New Army Families is staffed by FRG volunteers and guided by Army Community Service (ACS) and Army Family Team Building (AFTB) staff and has the potential to meet the specific educational needs of BCT Families. It is our goal to each new Army Families how to use Programs and Services already available.

During the next 10 weeks you will have the opportunity to take a series of online classes called Army Family Team Building (AFTB). Army Family Team Building is a training/awareness program designed to increase the self-sufficiency and self-reliance of military family members. The classes are available in both English and Spanish. These classes will provide you with just about all the information a new Army family should need. In essence, you can train at the same time as your Soldier so that you will be better prepared for this new Army life. It is a great opportunity to show support to your Soldier!

There are a total of 24 online classes. The shortest class takes about 10 minutes with the longest taking about 40 minutes. You will need to register for AFTB, but we will provide the directions with screen shots so it will be easy to enroll.

In exchange for the Family members completing BOTH AFTB Level I and Level II, the Company will post a picture of the Soldier in Training. To receive the picture, the Family member emails copies of their AFTB Level I & II certificates to the Fort Benning Army Family Team Building (AFTB) Program at benning.aftb@gmail.com . Along with copies of the Certificates of Completion,

the Family member **MUST** include the Soldiers name, soldiers unit (Platoon, Company/Troop & Battalion/Squadron) and class number to the AFTB Program. The lack of this information will delay the posting of the picture.

There will be a limit of one picture per Soldier. It is the Units' responsibility to take the pictures and post them on the Company FaceBook page. **There will also be a 1 week delay in posting of the pictures.** *All Certificates of Completion will be due by Friday and the photo will be posted on the Company FaceBook page the following Friday.* The AFTB office will forward a list of names to the Unit on Monday morning.

There may be when circumstances beyond our control will happen and photographing your soldier's may not be possible, whether it be a last minute change in the training schedule or the volunteer may have their own personal matter to deal with, so please be patient and understanding. A message will be posted in the event pictures are delayed.

"Give a man a fish, feed him for a day! Teach him to fish, feed him for a lifetime!"

HOW TO ACCESS…..

BASIC TRAINING FOR NEW ARMY FAMILIES

***Please note: www.myarmyonesource.com is not compatible with Apple computers/tablets. The best browsers to use Windows Explorer or Mozilla Firefox.

Go to: www.myarmyonesource.com

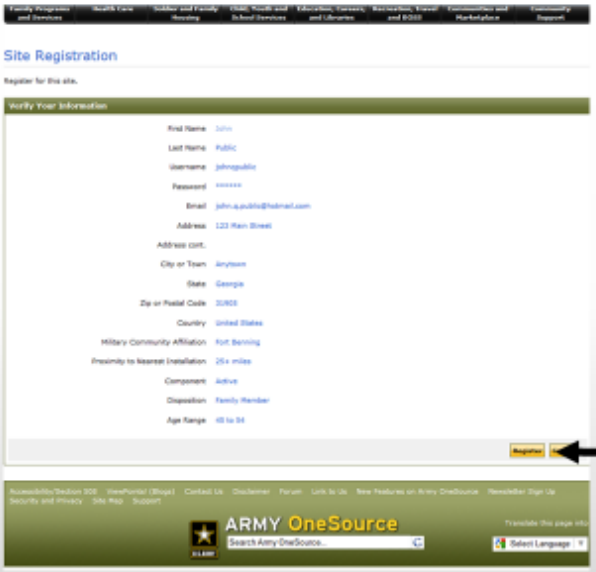
Click here to Register for AFTB Modules

Once you complete your registration, here are some of the benefits of the website.

Click here to start your Registration

Complete all the fields. Please remember that Army One Source will not share this information with anyone!

Click Continue

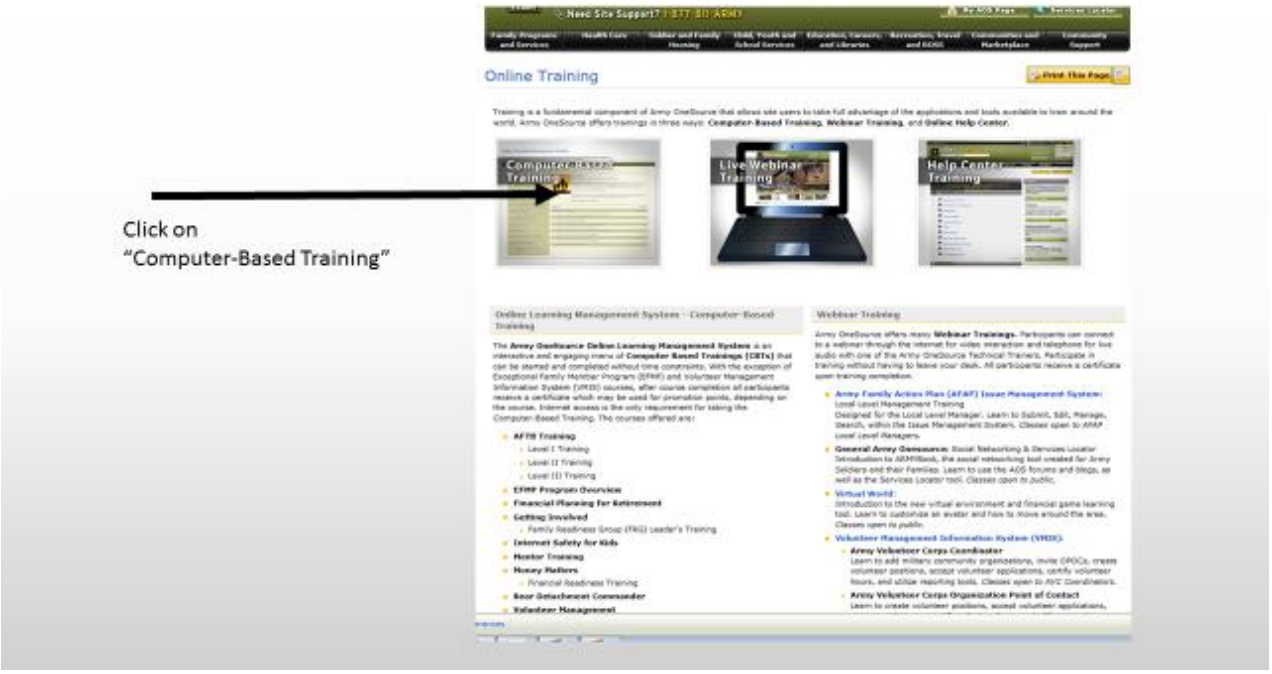


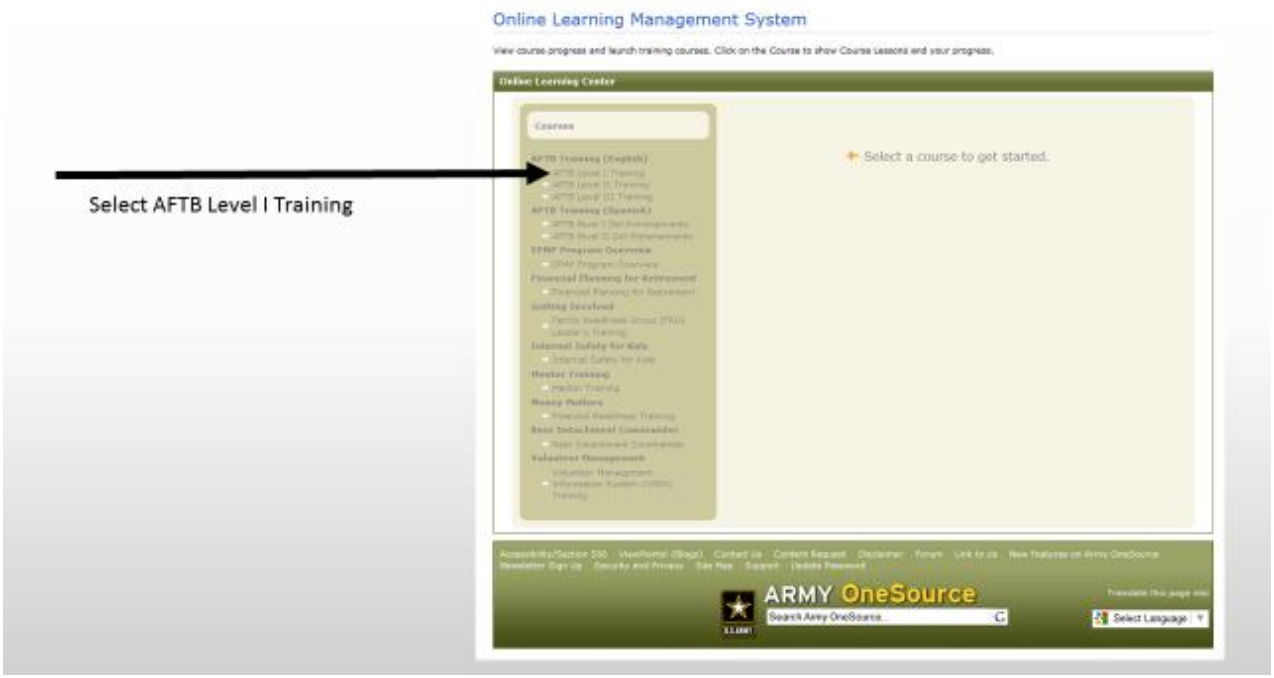
Click on Register

Click Continue

Click on "Online Training"

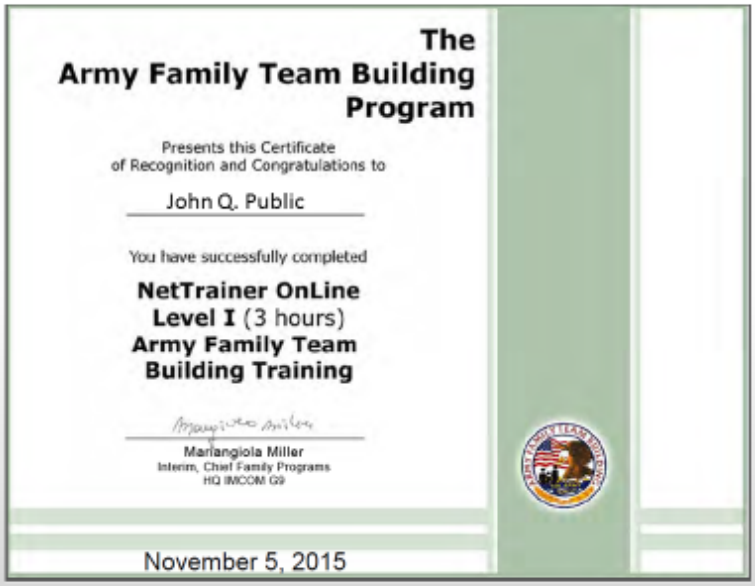
Click on
"Computer-Based Training"




Online Learning Management System
View course progress and launch training courses. Click on the Course to show Course Lessons and your progress.
Online Learning Center
Select a course to get started.
ARMY OneSource
Select AFTB Level I Training

Online Learning Management System
View course progress and launch training courses. Click on the Course to show Course Lessons and your progress.
Online Learning Center
AFTB Level I Training
ARMY OneSource
Click on each of the 10 individual Lesson for AFTB Level I and complete the course content

Once complete, click on Print Certificate

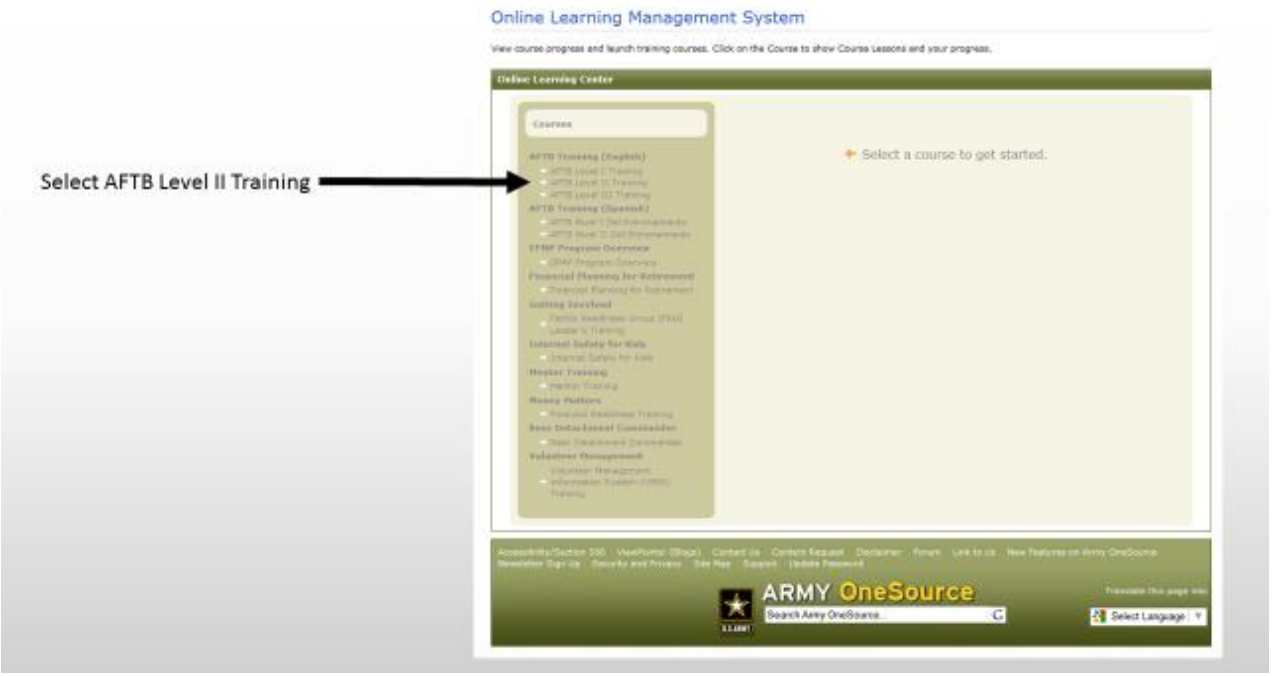


Depending on your internet browser, you have several options to obtain the certificate for emailing:

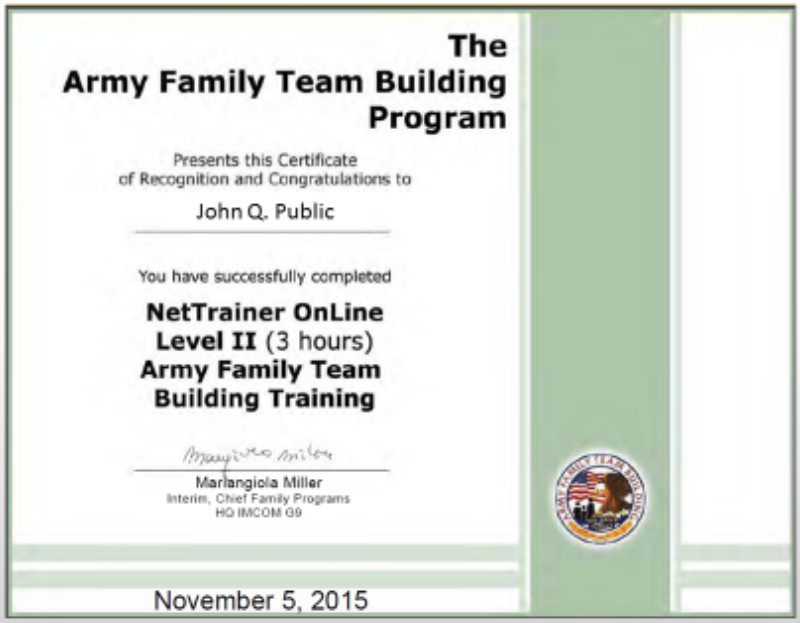
Save the document to a file.

Print the certificate and scan it into the computer.

On the keyboard, press control, alt and prt sc all at the same time. Open a word document and right click and click on paste.


Online Learning Management System
View course progress and launch training courses. Click on the Course to show Course Lessons and your progress.
Online Learning Center
Courses
Select a course to get started.
Select AFTB Level II Training
ARMY OneSource
Search Army OneSource...
Select Language

Online Learning Center
Courses
AFTB Training (English)
AFTB Level I Training
AFTB Level II Training
AFTB Level III Training
AFTB Training (Spanish)
AFTB Nivel I Del Entrenamiento
AFTB Nivel II Del Entrenamiento
EFMP Program Overview
EFMP Program Overview
Financial Planning for Retirement
Financial Planning for Retirement
Getting Involved
Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leader's Training
Internet Safety for Kids
Internet Safety for Kids
Mentor Training
Mentor Training
Money Matters
Financial Readiness Training
Rear Detachment Commander
Rear Detachment Commander
Volunteer Management
Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) Training
AFTB Level II Training
Description:
Level II Training is for emerging leaders within the Army community.
In order for your course to register as being fully completed, you MUST click on the 'Return To Training' button on the last page of the course. To print your certificate, return to this page after completing the course. An icon will be available to allow certificate printing.
PLEASE NOTE: EFMP and VMIS training courses do not generate certificates of completion. They are for reference/educational purposes only.
Course Status: Completed
Print Certificate
Once complete, click on Print Certificate
Lessons
Status
AFTB Level II
Completed
1. Lesson 1: Communication Complete
2. Lesson 2: Personal Time Management Complete
3. Lesson 3: Stress Management Complete
4. Lesson 4: Acknowledging Change Complete
5. Lesson 5: Exploring Personality Traits Complete
6. Lesson 6: Enhancing Personal Relationships Complete
7. Lesson 7: Team Dynamics Complete
8. Lesson 8: Personal Conflict Management Complete
9. Lesson 9: Creative Problem Solving Complete
10. Lesson 10: Traditions, Customs, Courtesies, and Protocol Complete
11. Lesson 11: Crisis, Coping, and Grieving Complete
12. Lesson 12: The Volunteer Experience Complete
13. Lesson 13: Family Readiness Groups and the Deployment Cycle Complete
14. Lesson 14: Introduction to Leadership Complete



The Army Family Team Building Program

Presents this Certificate
of Recognition and Congratulations to

John Q. Public

You have successfully completed

NetTrainer OnLine Level II (3 hours)
Army Family Team Building Training

Marlangiola Miller
Interim, Chief Family Programs
HQ IMCOM G9

November 5, 2015

Depending on your internet browser, you have several options to obtain the certificate for emailing:

Save the document to a file.

Print the certificate and scan it into the computer.

On the keyboard, press control, alt and prt sc all at the same time. Open a word document and right click and click on paste.

EMAIL <u>BOTH</u> CERTIFICATES TO:

The Fort Benning AFTB Program

benning.aftb@gmail.com

The Fort Benning AFTB Program will validate your certificates and forward your Soldiers information to the Unit for the special photo of your Soldier.

There are also applications that provides a digital version of the material that is provided in the course. Certifications **cannot** be made through the applications. We encourage Family members to use this as a quick reference guide to all things Army. It is also reference to the material taught in the course. This application also contains contact information for all U.S. Army AFTB programs, as well as descriptions and information about the program.

NEW ARMY FAMILY

SURIVAL GUIDE

RESOURCES

First Things First

The most important and very first thing you should do is ensure your Soldier has you enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, or DEERS. This is the system the military uses to ensure only authorized persons receive treatment at its facilities. Your Soldier must enroll you at a uniformed services personnel office. You can find the nearest uniformed services personnel office by following this link: *http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl*. *In order to be enrolled you will be asked to provide important documents for all dependents and children, such as: marriage license, birth certificates, and social security cards.*

As a new military spouse, you will need a military Identification Card (ID card). Your military ID card is necessary in order to gain access to the valuable services your Soldier's service entitles you to. Your ID card is your access to your medical benefits. Should you be referred to civilian agencies, the ID card is your proof of insurance. The ID card will enable you to use The Exchange (sometimes referred to as the PX), the Commissary, and to receive medical care. ID cards are issued to all Family members who are 10 years or older. Due to its importance, you should always carry your ID card with you and guard it carefully. If the ID card is lost, the loss must be reported to the Military Police as soon as possible. To obtain your ID card, you will need the original or certified copy of both your marriage and birth certificates. You will also need your original Social Security card and a government issued photo ID. The Service Member MUST accompany the Family member in order to authorize the issuance of the military ID card.

Also, we will list out many of the services and benefits provided to military dependents throughout this pamphlet. However, a great source for information and an excellent tool to be able to access is the Army One Source webpage. This web page can direct you to a solution for just about any issue that you may come across. You can access Army One Source at the following link: http://www.myarmyonesource.com/default.aspx

SERVICES & RESOURCES

Army Community Service

Army Community Service (ACS) is a Soldier and Family support center that is usually centrally located on the post. Larger posts may even have satellite locations positioned closer to military Family housing. ACS provides Army Families with information, guidance, assistance, or problem solving in personal or Family matters that are beyond the Family's own resources. Many ACS facilities offer fax and photocopy services as well. All services provided by ACS are free of charge to ID cardholders. Some of the programs run by ACS include, but are not limited to:

- **Army Emergency Relief Program (AER)** provides financial assistance in the form of 0% interest loans and grants to active duty and retired Army personnel and their Families in times of distress. AER services are also available to activated Guard and Reserve Soldiers and their Families, as well as, Survivors.

- **Army Family Action Plan (AFAP)** is an Army-wide initiative to identify issues of concern to improve the overall Quality of Life for Soldiers and their Families. This process is used to identify the most critical well-being issues facing the Army today and provide suggestions about how things can be improved. Senior Army leadership places a great deal of emphasis on issues raised through the AFAP process and work to ensure that, wherever possible, they are resolved.

- **Army Family Team Building (AFTB)** provides three levels of training: "Army 101" type classes for the new Army Family member, as well as, personal and professional development. Classes may be delivered in a classroom setting or accessed online. Topics covered include: acronyms, rank structure, time and stress management, Department of Defense structure and Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) to name a few. All new military spouses are encouraged to take these classes in order to gain a better understanding of the military lifestyle. Soldiers are encouraged to take the classes as well.
- **Army Volunteer Corps (AVC)** provides placement opportunities for volunteers based on

interest and agency needs. AVC assists organizations with volunteer recruitment, training and guidance for volunteer recognition. Volunteering is a great way to make friends, discover more about your new area and to gain valuable work experience. Although volunteer jobs do not offer pay, they do offer a wealth of skills, training, experience and networking opportunities.

- **Employment Readiness Program (ERP)** assists Active duty military, DA civilian employees, spouses, retirees, surviving spouses, and Family members with identifying immediate and long range career goals while teaching the client how to write a successful resume. ERP can provide training and assistance with writing both Federal and a civilian resumes, two completely different types of documents. Classes on networking, professional dress and mock interviews are also offered.

- **Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)** is a mandatory enrollment program for Soldiers and their Family members that are identified with special needs. The EFMP works with other military and civilian agencies to provide comprehensive and coordinated community support, housing, educational, medical, personnel, and respite care services to Families with special needs members. For those military Families with identified special needs members, the EFMP can be an invaluable tool.

- **Family Advocacy Program (FAP)** supports Army Soldier readiness by enhancing Family self-sufficiency, community cohesion, safety, and personal preparedness. The goal of FAP is to prevent Family violence by providing a variety of services designed to strengthen Army Families. Family Advocacy may offer educational classes and other learning experiences on topics such as Stress and Anger Management or Coping Skills to name a few.

- **Financial Readiness Program (FRP)** strives to create informed consumers by offering consumer education classes and individual budgeting counseling. FRP focuses on improving a military Family's financial status and consumer knowledge. FRP can assist with setting up a budget, reducing/eliminating credit card debt and balancing bank statements among other services.

- **Information, Referral & Follow Up Program (I&R)** provides information about Army Community Service (ACS) programs as well as numerous installation and community resources. I&R offers information counseling to determine customer needs and then refers them to the appropriate ACS program or other resources. I&R may follow-up after the referral to ensure that the client received the assistance, information or quality services they expected. I&R also prepares and maintains a comprehensive Information and Resource databank to assist with your integration into your new community. I&R should be your first stop upon arriving at your new duty station.

- **Mobilization & Deployment Readiness Program (Mob/Dep)** helps to better prepare Soldiers and Families for pending deployment. Deployment can be a highly emotional and stressful event. Mob/Dep helps educates the Soldier and Family member on what to expect and the best ways to prepare for all three stages of the deployment cycle...Pre-deployment, Deployment, and Reintegration. Mob/Dep educates, trains and prepares FRGs to be combat multipliers is support of the commander and unit.

- **New Parent Support Program (NPSP)** was developed to help military Families with young children to adapt to parenthood and to thrive as healthy Families no matter where their service may take them. The first three years of life are critical in a child's physical, emotional, and intellectual development. Military life presents some unique parenting challenges that civilian Families may not face, such as frequent deployments, long duty hours, moves to unfamiliar locations, and separation from extended Families and friends. This program is a “must” for all new parents.

- **Outreach Services** provides programs to foster a sense of belonging to the military community, to promote positive attitudes toward military life and enhance retention and readiness. This is done by linking Family support programs to Soldiers and Family members and encouraging utilization of on and off post services. The result will be to reduce isolation, stress and frustration frequently experienced by young military Families.

- **Relocation Readiness Program (RRP)** provides information and resources for today's mobile Army Family. RRP provides information, guidance and assistance to Soldiers and their Families during, before and after moves. Welcome Packets, classes for foreign born spouses, assistance during emergencies, and the Lending Closet are a few of the services offered. New Soldiers and Family Members are encouraged to attend classes offering instruction on how to prepare for moves to include instruction on how to pack up your household goods, how to prepare your children for frequent moves and how to keep up with your student's educational records and transcripts.

- **Soldier and Family Assistance Center (SFAC)** assists Soldiers and Commanders in identifying and resolving emerging health related, personal, And social issues affecting wounded Soldiers, civilians, and their Families, as well as supports the Warriors in Transition (WT) community through the development, coordination, and provision of varied services designed to address complex physical, personal, Family, social, and economic needs.

- **Survivor Outreach Services (SOS)** is an Army program developed to serve Surviving Families of the Fallen. SOS provides long-term support, resources and emotional connections by maintaining a continual relationship between Survivors and the Army. SOS is available to all Survivors: spouses, children, parents, siblings and friends who are grieving the loss of a Soldier regardless of how they died. SOS coordinates with Military, Non-Governmental Organizations and the local community to create a support network. All Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve component Survivors are eligible to participate.

- **Victim's Advocacy Program** provides immediate response for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Information and referral on services available on and off post are provided to victims and survivors. If you or someone you know is or has experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, contact your local ACS or Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647 for assistance. Additional information regarding the Army Sexual Harassment and Response Policy (SHARP) can be found at the following website: http://www.preventsexualassault.army.mil/

It is important to note that the Army SHARP program extends to all spouses and dependents as well as the Soldier. There are several ways to report sexual harassment or assault through the SHARP program (restricted and unrestricted, primarily), and information on all can be found at the website.

For immediate support regarding sexual assault or sexual harassment call 1-877- 995-5247 or text a location or zip code to 55-247 (within CONUS) or 202-470-5546 (OCONUS) or online chat with a counselor at www.SafeHelpline.org 24 hours a day.

American Red Cross (ARC)

The ARC provides rapid communication and reporting of personal and Family emergencies, financial assistance for emergency leave and disaster assistance. Many volunteer opportunities are available through the ARC. Red Cross volunteers work in libraries, schools and hospital clinics as nurses, social workers and instructors. Red Cross courses are available to both service members and Family members.

Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS)

Child Development Services consist of a network of programs which provide quality care for children of military personnel and eligible DOD civilian personnel. The programs are designed to provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment while providing developmental activities. Full time and hourly care may be offered depending on the facilities and staffing of your new location. CYSS also coordinates and manages all of the on-post children's recreational sports. Fort Benning currently offers soccer, baseball, basketball, football, cheerleading, wrestling and more. Once you find out your Soldiers duty station, follow the link on the Post's main website to the CYSS page to see what sports will be available for your children! CYSS also offers fun and educational classes for children ranging from drivers education and dance to cooking and music! The most important thing to do to prepare your children to be eligible for these great

benefits is to **register** them. You can get more information on registering your children to a particular garrison at the following link to the Army CYSS main page: http://www.armymwr.com/family/childandyouth/

Staff Judge Advocate General (SJA)

This office offers free legal assistance to ID card holders on topics such as powers of attorney, wills, trusts, estates, taxes, adoptions and name changes. The SJA office also has a Criminal Law Division which deals with military justice and a Claims Division. One thing that you and your spouse should seriously consider is setting up a power of attorney. Powers of attorney can be established for a myriad of things, ranging from giving one spouse the ability to register a vehicle in the others name all the way to purchasing a house in their name. The power of attorney gives legal authority for one spouse to conduct legitimate business on the other's behalf. The post legal office will be able to provide you more detailed information regarding each state's view of powers of attorney and what they are required for.

Medical Services

The Military Health System provides medical care via Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) located on military bases and in regional TRICARE Networks of civilian providers.

Every MTF offers information and assistance through the Patient Advocate and the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator (BCAC). The Patient Advocate helps the beneficiary resolve problems or issues that arise at the MTF. The BCAC answers questions about the TRICARE medical benefit and assists with problems that arise when civilian healthcare is used. Both provide accurate information on how to access military or civilian health care.

Upon receiving a military ID card, spouses are automatically entitled to TRICARE Standard with medical coverage retroactive to the marriage date entered in DEERS. This fee-for-service plan

allows the non-Active Duty beneficiary to direct his/her own health care, but it also brings expensive deductibles and cost shares when TRICARE- authorized civilian providers are used. Active Duty Family members can choose to enroll in the HMO plans called TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote. An enrollment form must be submitted to the regional managed care support contractor and a Primary Care Manager (PCM) is assigned. The PCM directs all health care via referrals and authorizations and the beneficiary generally uses TRICARE Network providers; there is no cost for most authorized civilian medical services.
The most comprehensive source for MTF or TRICARE information is the TRICARE Management Activity site at http://www.tricare.mil/.

Once you are successfully enrolled into DEERS, you may enroll yourself and your children into TRICARE using the Beneficiary Web Enrollment at www.tricare.mil.

Using the following link to the TRICARE Plan Finder page you can compare the different types of plans based on your needs and determine which option is best for you and your family: http://www.tricare.mil/Welcome/PlanFinder.aspx

Dental Services

For a low monthly payroll deduction, the sponsor purchases Family dental coverage through the TRICARE Dental Program. Coverage begins the month after the first deduction appears on the leave and earnings statement. However, calling United Concordia (current administrator) to verify coverage before getting dental care is strongly advised. For more information visit: http://www.tricaredentalprogram.com/tdptws/home.jsp\

By law, military dental facilities are authorized to treat Active Duty Service Members only. The military health benefit is very complex and beneficiaries can avoid mistakes that can cost thousands of dollars by using the resources mentioned above to verify coverage and benefits.

Veterinary Clinic

Some military installations offer a Veterinary Clinic which provides preventive veterinary services such as immunizations and health certificates. Animals owned by those residing on post must be micro-chipped and registered with the post veterinarian in order to legally reside in on-post housing. Many installations have policies on how many, what type and which breeds of animals you may have while living in on-post quarters. It is always a good idea to check with the Housing Services Office of a post prior to moving with any pets in order to verify requirements and limitations.

Chapels

Posts may or may not have chapels/churches on post. If there are chapels on post they may offer Protestant, Catholic, Jewish or other religious services, Sunday Schools, Bible studies and various Family religious education classes. If there are no religious services to your liking available on post, venture out into the local community and get to know your neighbors.

Civilian Personnel Assistance Center (CPAC)

This office handles employment information and opportunities concerning civil service jobs.

Education Center

Some posts may have an Education Center. The Ed Center provides the military community with quality educational opportunities. Some colleges offer classes online and occasionally on site. The Ed Center is not designed to take the place of a fully accredited college but, it can get you started. Be sure to check into the educational benefits that may

be available to you such as myCAA and the GI Bill. A global list of education centers can be found at:

http://www.goarmyed.com/public/public_goarmyed-education_centers.aspx

Shopping Facilities

Commissary

The commissary provides high quality grocery products at the lowest possible prices. Items are sold at cost, with only a 5% surcharge added. The surcharge is used for commissary supplies and operating expenses. In general, 30-35 percent can be saved by using the commissary over the local supermarkets. The commissary is a huge cost- saving benefit.

The Exchange

The Exchange is the re-branded name for AAFES, the Army and Air Force department store sometimes referred to as the PX or BX. Other facilities that may be a part of The Exchange include: barber shop, beauty shop, flower shop, gas station, optical center, alteration and dry cleaning, class six (aka the liquor store), and theater. Many exchange complexes have concessions or vendors who are allowed to display and sell their wares and who pay a percentage of their sales to AAFES. The Clothing Sales store sells official items of military clothing and equipment to ID card holders.

Recreation

Bowling

Some posts offer a bowling center with a full line of modern equipment. Leagues and open bowling may be available. If your post has a bowling center, this is a great place to meet with friends, host social functions and enjoy some free time.

Library

Depending on the size of your post, you may or may not have an on-post library. If you have a library, they may offer a wide array of materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, cassettes, compact discs, videos and software. Most libraries have a coin operated copy machine, children's materials, microfilm/fiche readers, computers and printers available for use by ID cardholders.

Leisure & Travel Services (LTS)

LTS provides an extensive schedule of trips and mini vacations to local and regional attractions. Special interest tours may be arranged upon request. Other services include travel information on military recreation areas, Space A air travel and military travel lodging, as well as maps, brochures and train schedules for the local area.

Arts & Crafts

Some posts may have an Arts & Crafts Center. Arts & Crafts offers equipment for a variety of projects such as framing, stained glass and photography to name a few. Trained staff is on hand to offer individual and group instruction. This is another great place to meet new friends, pick up a new hobby or skill and to host social functions.

Automotive Skills Center

Automotive Skills Centers usually have facilities for automotive repairs and maintenance such as fluid changes, alignments and engine rebuilding. The Center may simply provide a space for you to do your own repairs/maintenance or they may perform these services for you for a fee. The Automotive Skills Center may even offer classes on routine vehicle maintenance and repair. Some centers also offer state motor vehicle inspections.

Fitness Centers

Most fitness centers feature fully equipped weight rooms and aerobic exercise programs. Some fitness centers at larger installations may offer basketball and racquetball courts, saunas, tennis courts and even pools. ID cardholders may utilize the fitness centers and sign up for classes. This is a great way to get out and make friends while keeping healthy.

Youth Services

Youth Services provides a full range of social, cultural, instructional and athletic programs for youths 3-18 years old.

Family Readiness Groups

There is often confusion among new Family members as to what Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) are. Very often they are confused with social groups for entertaining and while their activities frequently have a social aspect that is far from the truth.
FRGs are actually official commander programs staffed and led by Family volunteers. Their goals include providing information on Army services, schedules and actions, assisting Families in access to these programs, providing Family input to the Command, and most importantly providing a venue where Army Families can develop new friends and informal support structures to replace those they left behind upon entering the service. Officially they are "organizations of Family members, volunteers, and Soldiers belonging to a unit that together provide an avenue of mutual support, assistance, and a network of communication…."

No matter what you hear about FRGs, good and bad, get linked up with yours.
Each one is different and has different strengths and weaknesses, but you will find your Army experience richer and easier for your participation.

Deployments

Deployments are a fact of military life. There is much written on coping with deployments and reunions. Read as much as you can get your hands on. Talk with as many people as you can that have been through at least one deployment. Talk with other spouses and talk with other Soldiers. Keep in mind that you can learn as much from what NOT to do as you can from what TO do. Crawl across the web and read and digest as many websites, blogs, tutorials and trainings as you can cram into any given day.

Once you have gathered as much information and data as you can stand, then you will want to overlay all of that information over your own unique circumstances and Family. That little plaque form grade school was right...you do put the U in unique. No one else has your exact life experiences, preferences and expectations. No one else is married to your spouse and no one else is living your marriage. It is up to you and your Soldier to figure out what your new normal is going to look like and how it is going to function best.

Once your Soldier is notified of an impending deployment, the two of you should immediately begin formulating a plan of attack. In depth discussions and long range planning will ensue. Serious questions need to be asked and answered.

- Who is going to pay the bills?
- Who is going to manage the bank accounts?
- Where will the spouse live while the Soldier is deployed?
- What will you do with the Soldier's vehicle?
- How will you communicate?
- What types of powers of attorney will you need while the Soldier is deployed?

Now, complicate things even further by throwing a child or two into the mix.

- Who will be the backup to the parent that remains at home if the need should arise?
- Where will the children go to school?
- How will the children communicate with the Soldier?
- How will you keep the Soldier updated on the progress of their child's development and achievements?
- How will you celebrate holidays with the Soldier away?

These and many more questions will need to be considered. Most units will offer training and preparation classes prior to deployment. You are strongly encouraged to participate at every level and to take advantage of every resource you are offered along the way. If your unit is not offering training, ask why. This is your unit and your deployment as well. Be an engaged and productive element and you will benefit not just yourself but other spouses as well.

Military Customs, Traditions and Protocol

Protocol can be a very imposing word**.** In the strict sense, it is the formal rules of conduct at high-level government ceremonies. For military spouses it can be defined as etiquette and good manners blended with the rich heritage of tradition and courtesies of military life. Protocol lets us know what to expect in a given situation and can help you feel more comfortable and at ease. Social functions run the gamut from black tie to blue jeans. With the knowledge of some general guidelines, you will be able to enjoy them all.

Social Obligations

There are lots of social functions associated with military life. These social functions allow you a wonderful opportunity to get to know your Soldier's co-workers and their spouses on a more personal level. Military social life is one of our nicest traditions out of which friendships and camaraderie grow. Military social life is characterized by the exchange of visits, invitations and other courtesies. Remember to be yourself, to do what is comfortable for you and to keep it within your budget. In this way you will entertain because you enjoy it and will soon find yourself building lasting friendships.

To Go or Not to Go?

Sometimes you may find a conflict of obligations and interests when it comes to deciding which functions to attend. Of course, your Family is your top priority. Usually your unit Hail and Farewells and spouses' coffees or Family Readiness Group functions will take precedence over other functions scheduled at the same time. These social occasions are great opportunities to get to know the people with whom your Soldier works and to discover new friendships. This leads to esprit de corps, or unit spirit, which is a very special military tradition. As part of his/her job as a professional Soldier, your spouse must be loyal to the unit and to its commander. Your Soldier will pull duty, go to the field and may someday be called upon to defend our Nation and our Allies.

Your support of his/her career will be a great help in a tough job.

Invitations

There are a variety of invitations to choose from depending on the mood of the party and the hostess – Evites, informal notes, boxed invitations or handmade creations. An invitation will use only one of the following responses: RSVP or Regrets Only. We cannot stress enough the need to respond to all invitations. Whether your response is a yes or a no, please be considerate and respond to your host/hostess and then follow through.

Types of Responses

Most invitations indicate the type of response requested in a lower corner. *RSVP* is French (*Répondez s'il vous plaît*) which means "Reply if you please" or "Please reply". Call to say "Yes, I will attend" or "No, I will not be able to attend". *REGRETS ONLY* means the hostess is assuming you will attend and you should call your hostess when you are unable to attend. Never assume that you will not be missed. When you receive an invitation, remember your old-fashioned good manners and reply promptly, within forty-eight hours. Consider the waste of time and money if the hostess prepares food for twenty people and only eight guests show up. If, after receiving an invitation, you meet the hostess somewhere, you may refer to the party; however, do not RSVP at that meeting. You must still RSVP by phone, email or by written note. When you decline an invitation, an explanation is not required and should never be requested. Once you accept an invitation and an emergency arises, you may call the hostess and decline. However, once you decline an invitation, you should not reverse your response.

Thank You

Thank-you notes for hospitality and courtesies received are a must and a sign of gracious manners. If your hostess is a close friend, a phone call is sufficient. A handwritten thank-you is appropriate for any occasion whether it is a meal, a gift received or simply a kind deed. Thank-you notes should be sent within five days.

What to Wear

There is always much discussion generated about what to wear to the many social functions you will undoubtedly be invited to. A good rule of thumb to follow is that no matter how friendly the workplace is or how chummy co-workers are, the Army and all of its various functions is STILL your spouse's place of work and business. Always maintain a professional image and manner of dress. Assume that your spouse's boss is checking you out because they are. There are technically only three forms of attire (**Formal**, **Informal and Casual**). However, you will see many things written on invitations in terms of dress codes. The following is a guide to help you decide WHAT to wear to a function.

Formal

Military Personnel: Army Service Uniform (ASU)/bow tie (men) or neck tab (women) Army white uniform/bow tie (men) or neck tab (women)
Army blue mess or white mess with bow tie (men) or

Civilians a ball or dance: White or black tie (men); long or short formal (women)
For a formal dinner: Tuxedo/bow tie (men); long dress, blouse and

Informal

Military Personnel: ASU with four-in-hand tie (men)/black neck tab (women); when not in uniform, dark-colored business suit preferred

Civilians Business suit (men); "Dressy" dress or suit (women)

Casual

Military Personnel: May include the Class B uniform or Army Combat Uniform (ACU); Check with host/hostess

Civilians Open-neck shirt (no tie), slacks with sport coat or sweater (men)
Simple dress, skirt and blouse, or pant suit (women)

Semi-Formal

Although not an official category of dress, the host or hostess that uses this description most likely expects guests to wear a business suit (men) or a cocktail dress (women).

Very Casual

This usually means jeans, shorts or sundresses. There is no military dress for this category.

Texas Casual, Beach Wear, etc.

These types of categories are usually “defined” by local custom and policy. It would be best to ask the host or hostess if you are unsure.

Notes:

Social Functions

Promotion Party

The promotion party, a time-honored tradition, is usually given by an officer or NCO or a group of officers or NCOs with similar dates of rank, shortly after being promoted. It does not have to be a fancy affair but provides a chance to invite friends and their spouses to share the good fortune.

Unit Parties

Although the unit is usually the host, unit members and guests share the cost and planning of the party. The most popular unit party is the Hail and Farewell which welcomes the incoming members and farewells the departing members. These parties build the unit spirit and camaraderie and are successful only if everyone supports and participates.

Dining In

The Dining In is an old military tradition that has been passed down from the British. As the most formal event, a Dining In allows Officers and NCOs of a unit to celebrate its successes and to enjoy its traditions and heritage. It is strictly an Officer/NCO affair, no spouses are invited.

Dining Out

When spouses are invited to a Dining In, it becomes a Dining Out. This gives the spouses an opportunity to see all the "pomp and circumstance" that goes with the tradition. The spouses will enjoy the opportunity to dress in their dressiest dinner gowns or tuxedos and spend a fun evening with their Soldier and his/her fellow Soldiers.

Receptions

A reception is usually held in honor of a special guest or after a change of command. There may or may not be a receiving line. Guests mingle and visit with the other guests. Conversations are usually light and of short duration. When you wish to move on to greet other guests, a simple "Excuse me…" will do and then leave. Before departing, thank the hostess and host and bid good-bye to the guest of honor.

Parades and Review

Certain traditions and courtesies should be observed during these ceremonies. Spectators stand for the playing of the national anthem and the anthems of other countries represented. As troops pass in review, spectators stand as the national colors approach and pass. Depending on post/base policy, spectators may be required to stand for the playing of other songs such as the Army Song.

A review is usually smaller than a parade. If the reviewing officer is a General Officer, the spectators will stand at the beginning of the ceremony for the playing of "Ruffles and Flourishes" and/or the sounding of the accompanying gun salute.

These events are an important part of the military. Parades can be held for many reasons, but the following are some of the most frequent:

- *Change of Command:* the outgoing commander officially passes the unit colors to his/her successor.
- *Presentation of awards and medals:* Soldiers are recognized and commended publicly for their achievements or valor in the outstanding performance of duty.
- *Retirement:* Every soldier who retires after 20 years or more of service is honored by a parade to give tribute to his/her years of loyal service.

Reveille and Retreat

If you are on post in the morning for Reveille (flag being raised) or in the evening for Retreat (flag is being lowered), stop and stand facing the flag or the sound of the music. Soldiers will salute. Family members (to include children) may place their right hand over their heart. Stand quietly until the music has stopped. If you are in a car, stop, get out and follow the same procedure. If you have small children in the car, you may remain in the car, however, please stop the vehicle until the music stops playing. On an Air Force or Navy base, you are only required to stop the car and remain seated inside.

Other Military Functions and Courtesies

- At all social functions, invited guests should try to speak to the guest (s) of honor and always bid good-bye to the hostess and/or host.

- Always be punctual for social functions, however, do not arrive early. You may arrive early to meetings so that you can socialize before the meeting and the meeting can start on time.

- At a ball or dining out, the ladies stand for the posting and retiring of the colors. They also stand and drink for all the toasts except the toast "to the ladies". If you do not drink alcoholic beverages, you may lift your glass for the toast as a token or toast with your non-alcoholic beverage. Ladies may stand for a standing ovation for a speaker.

- When entering or leaving an installation with a guarded gate at night, dim your headlights 50 feet before the gate so that you will not blind the guard.

- Although the military has a defined rank structure, spouses have no rank. It is still proper to address senior officers and their spouses by their last name, until they ask you to do otherwise.

- A chaplain may be addressed as chaplain, or if Catholic, by Father. A doctor is addressed by military rank, although in a clinic setting you may find "doctor" more comfortable.

- You are welcome to attend a change of command ceremony without a specific invitation. Attendance at the reception following should be by invitation.

- The topic of children at events is a touchy subject. When children are invited, it will be specified on the invitation. If an event is intended for adults only, please

be respectful of the host and other guests and leave your children at home with adequate supervision or at a childcare facility. Children are welcome at parades and reviews as long as they are quiet and well-behaved.

- When the colors (Honor Guard containing the US flag) “passes in review” during a parade, it is expected that all in attendance will stand and remain standing until the honor guard passes by your location. It is also customary for civilians to place their right hand over their heart in a show of respect and allegiance. Soldiers (both active and retired) may salute whether in uniform or civilian attire.

- Soldiers are not permitted to do a few things while wearing their uniform in order to lend dignity and honor to the uniform and respect for all that it conveys. Some of the unauthorized actions while in uniform are: chewing gum, showing public displays of affections such as holding hands or kissing, wearing earphones, talking on a cell phone or eating while walking or wearing a backpack or front pouch for a baby to name a few.

Personal Affairs

Powers of Attorney and Wills

Many military spouses may face both personal and financial problems during periods of separation due to deployments or Temporary Duty (TDY). To handle these problems, you need to be prepared. Many military couples use the power of attorney as their legal instrument during geographic separations. There are two types of power of attorneys. The general power of attorney enables the spouse to conduct all the Soldier’s personal affairs, while the special power of attorney is used for only one specific purpose, i.e., to sell a car. Powers of attorney should be issued for only a limited period of time so that the document can be reviewed and revised at certain intervals. The JAG office can assist in drafting, notarizing and witnessing a power of attorney. JAG will also assist in drawing up wills. Every Soldier and spouse should have a will.

Personal Papers

It is important that the following papers and documents be kept in a safe place and hand carried, **NOT packed** when moving:

1. Current ID cards and/or passports for all Family members
2. Birth certificates
3. Marriage certificates
4. Checking and savings account numbers
5. Insurance policies (car, life, personal property)
6. Wills
7. Power of Attorney
8. Title and car registration
9. Complete household inventory
10. Letters of adoption
11. Alien registration card (green card)
12. Divorce papers
13. Naturalization papers
14. Immunization records
15. Medical records

When it is Time to Move

Living in a variety of places is exciting as well as challenging. Moving can be fun if you are well prepared for the move and know what to expect. Every Soldier is given a weight allowance according to his pay grade. This weight allowance is the maximum weight authorized to be moved at government expense under the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR). Your total JTR allowance includes the weight of personal property, household goods you ship, things you place in storage and goods you send ahead to your new duty station. The Soldier pays all charges connected with any excess weight and this can be very costly. Therefore, it is important to stay within the weight allowance. A split shipment means you can ship some household items early so they

will be at your new duty station when you arrive. Your second shipment may arrive after you do.

Some transportation offices may provide transportation briefings. You may want to attend one prior to each move. At the briefing, you may be given information about pickup and drop-off scheduling, what items are excluded from shipping, the insurance coverage limits the US government will reimburse for damage or loss along with lots of other information. Additional coverage can be purchased from outside agencies. This coverage must be purchased prior to the shipment.

The wave of the future is for the Soldier to make arrangements for the transportation of household goods him/herself on www.move.mil . Use of this site should be self-explanatory. Transportation office personnel will assist Soldiers experiencing difficulty only after the Soldier has made a concerted effort to complete the arrangements him/herself online.

Some helpful moving hints:

1. Log into www.move.mil immediately upon receiving orders in order to initiate the movement of your household goods.

2. Hand carry personal papers, expensive jewelry, coin or stamp collections or other valuables. On packing day, make sure everything that is going with you in the car is either already in the car or put in a room that does not need to be packed BEFORE the packers arrive.

3. When something is dismantled by the movers such as a crib, put all small parts in a small plastic bag and label it. Make sure the movers put all small plastic bags together and mark the box or have the movers tape the plastic bag to the piece of furniture. This will help the delivery company find your parts and put your items back together. Ensure that the packers use the appropriate packing material to prevent breakage.

4. Prevent packers from taking items from one room to be packed in another with the other room's contents.

5. Since light items may be left in dresser drawers from overseas moves, you may want to put clothing that you are not taking with you, in the drawers before the moving company arrives.

6. Put all cleaners and liquids in a place where they will not be packed. Be sure to discard trash or it may be moved with you to your new home.

7. Save the original boxes and packaging from your high dollar items such as TVs, stereo equipment, computers and other fragile items. You can have the packers put the items back in these boxes and then seal the boxes.

8. Wash curtains and linens before you ship them since you will not have time to wash them all at your new duty station before you use them. Simply pull them out of the box at your new location, press and hang.

9. To prepare your refrigerator and/or freezer before shipment and/or storage, clean it thoroughly. Place coffee grounds or charcoal in an old sock. Put the sock along with crumpled newspapers inside the freezer and/or refrigerator to help absorb moisture and deter the growth of mold and mildew.

10. When unpacking your household goods, make sure to shake out every piece of packing paper. Small items can be inadvertently thrown out with the paper.

11. Compile a complete inventory of household goods and keep it up to date. It is recommended that you take a photograph of all high value items.

12. Remember that ACS has a Lending Closet where you can borrow a multitude of household items to hold you over until your own personal household items arrive. Most

Lending Closets will have inflatable mattresses, folding tables and chairs, dishes, pots and pans, small appliances, and highchairs. Use of these items is free.

Housing

A primary Department of Defense (DoD) goal is to assist military members and their Families in finding safe, affordable housing in the military community. Military housing initiatives have taken many forms over the years ranging from government-funded, owned, and operated housing to public-private partnerships. Today, DoD is taking a comprehensive approach to a total housing solution that includes the Military Privatization Housing Initiative (MPHI) and the Automated Housing Referral Network (AHRN). Major initiatives are underway to improve housing and the quality of life for service members and Families.

On December 1, 2010, Army Housing introduced the new Army Housing Online User Services website. This is the official website for finding information on Family, Single Soldier and Off-post housing options. This interactive site features installation welcome videos, estimated off-post housing costs and allows you to check your position on the on-post housing wait list. If you should ever need further assistance with your housing needs, the Housing Services Office at your current and gaining installation will be able to accommodate your needs. https://www.housing.army.mil/ah/

A Soldier assigned to permanent duty within the United States, who is not furnished government housing, is eligible for Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) based on the Soldier's dependency status at the permanent duty station zip code. Those stationed overseas are eligible for an Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) based on the dependency status. BAH is intended to cover the costs of the current market rent, average utilities, and renters insurance. BAH is based on rental data that reflects the current rental market conditions not the historical circumstances surrounding various mortgage loans. A homeowner's monthly mortgage payment is not used in the

computation because the monthly cash outlay of a homeowner is not a good indicator of the economic costs of home ownership. What this boils down to is that your BAH should be the guide to how much you should spend on a place to live in any given location. If you rent or purchase a home that exceeds your monthly BAH, then you will have to assume the additional costs on your own. BAH will not vary based upon your choices or preferences. BAH is a set amount across the board. You can look up the BAH rates and learn more about BAH at: https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm

The frequent moves of Families from one installation to another, from low-cost rural areas with limited off-post housing availability to high-cost urban areas and back again, is a major source of stress for Army Families. Our Housing Services Offices are tasked with the mission to locate, secure and deliver community housing to approximately 70 percent of Soldiers with Families that will reside in local community housing. To ease the stress of moving, a Joint Services housing referral solution sponsored by the Department of Defense, directly connects service members and their Families to available housing in the community they are relocating to through an internet solution: Automated Housing Referral Network (AHRN). AHRN (www.ahrn.com) is a web-based service that allows relocating military Families to find available housing in their new location *before* they move. It is an internet based solution in a Soldier's permanent change-of-station (PCS) process. AHRN facilitates home finding at any time of day from anywhere in the world, removing inefficiencies, cost and stress from the PCS process. For the military member, functional features such as detailed descriptions of properties and local areas, current BAH calculations, rental partnership properties and military only For Sale By Owner (FSBO) listings, provide immediate results to our savvy customer in today's online world. AHRN is unique in that it targets only military personnel and their Families and limits its access to military only. Unlike other rental web sites, AHRN does not charge fees for rental listings, which helps ensure a robust selection of listings. In a nutshell, this a FREE service dedicated to you! AHRN is deployed at 68 Army locations, as well as at Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps bases. The Army alone has over 200,000 of the half million registered military members.

Employment

The Department of Defense (DoD) has created programs to help address the challenges faced by military spouses. The three main resources are the Employment Readiness Program at ACS, the Military Spouse Career Center, and Military OneSource. These resources are designed to offer military spouses assistance in reaching their employment and career goals. These programs also provide tools to help address the unique challenges military spouses face when beginning a job search. Because military spouses are invaluable to the health and welfare of military Families and to the retention of those serving, DoD provides many employment and career services to military members and they continuously strive to adapt and improve on these programs as the needs of military spouses change.

The Employment Readiness Program is a resource offered by each of the military branches. These programs provide training and information to military spouses in order to help them to reach their employment and career development goals. Although the programs do not guarantee employment, they provide spouses with the tools and skills necessary to identify and actively pursue employment that matches well with their needs and skills. Some of the services provided include:

* personalized job skill assessment and career counseling
* resume and cover letter preparation
* internet and printer access
* information on local employment opportunities
* career seminars
* assistance with identifying career goals and job searches
* information on the impact of relocation on employment and coping strategies
* support and encouragement

Words of Wisdom from Army Family to Another

Switching gears from being a civilian to a soldier as an individual can be difficult, but when your Army Family is in the equation, there are different circumstances and situations that must be taking into consideration when making decisions. No one will ever tell you that being a part of an Army Family is easy but, it is certainly doable and definitely worthwhile. Always know that you are not alone! There is a *whole* Army Family out there to help you and your family out. You are about to embark on the adventure of a lifetime, hold on tight and enjoy the ride.

- Be supportive of your Soldier's job: understand that it is difficult for him/her just as it is difficult for you.

- Be strong for your spouse and children. Understand that it is just as hard for your spouse to be away from the Family as it is for you to take on everything by yourself.

- Take time for yourself. Find a sitter to get some time away from the kids, go to the gym, plan a night with your friends, or anything you enjoy that you do not normally have time to do. Find a healthy outlet so you do not get overwhelmed. If you get overwhelmed, allow yourself to cry and then pick up and move on.

- Be patient when your spouse is away. Understand and remind yourself that this is part of being a military spouse, and you are strong enough to get through it.

- ALWAYS communicate with your spouse. Understand what each of you are going through and support each other. This will not only keep your relationship strong while being away from each other but also help you each through it.

- Always be a part of the FRG. Some FRGs are amazing and go out of their way to be helpful, supportive and fun. Other FRGs just haven't gotten it right...yet. If you find that your FRG isn't quite what you would like it to be, then get in there and change it. Volunteer for various jobs and be the change you want to see.

- Be sure to start your "military education" off properly by taking all of the Army Family Team Building (AFTB) classes. The classes start off with basic Army 101 kind of information and build up to honing your leadership skills. This is where you get your "MS degree...military spouse degree".

- Make a friend, explore and enjoy your new "home". When your Soldier has some free time, you'll know just where to take him/her.

- Make sure you educate yourself about the resources that are available to you and your Family!

- Make all your plans in pencil and don't buy a house until you've arrived at your new duty station.

- Keep a running list of every address you have ever used AND the dates of when you used that address. This will come in VERY HANDY when it comes time for you or your Soldier to apply for or renew your security clearances.

Useful Websites

www.myarmyonesource.com

This website will give you the inside scoop on all things Army. This should be one of your "favorites" on your browser.

www.militaryonesource.com

This website gives you the lowdown on all branches of service...Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines.

www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil

This website will give you the latest and greatest information on duty locations for all military services. Be sure to check out your new post online here.

https://apps.militaryonesource.mil/MOS/f?p=PMM:ENTRY:0

Plan My Move is a very helpful tool to use when planning your next PCS move. The site has a very useful calendar tool that can help you organize your move down to the smallest detail.

http://www.move.mil/

Move.mil is an internet-based system that allows you to manage DoD household goods moves. Move.mil allows you to self-counsel and submit your application online, instead of traveling to a Transportation Office (TO). You are also offered the option to file a claim online, and to settle directly with your moving company, called a Transportation Service Provider or TSP. You will be afforded Full Replacement Value (FRV) of lost and damaged goods, as opposed to depreciated value offered in the past. Using Move.mil also offers you the opportunity to make sure only quality, reputable companies handle and ship your personal belongings, and those of your fellow service members and DoD civilians, by completing the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS).

http://www.myarmyonesource.com/FamilyProgramsandServices/FamilyPrograms/ArmyFamilyTeamBuilding/default.aspx

Army Family Team Building empowers individuals, maximizing their personal growth and professional development through specialized training, transforming our community into a resilient and strong foundation meeting today's military mission.

http://csf2.army.mil/

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness website is a structured, long term assessment and development program to build the resilience and enhance the performance of every Soldier, Family member and DA civilian.

What does it mean?

A new Army Family will quickly discover that the military has its own language, which consists of acronyms. Once you understand that these acronyms stand for a phrase or words, you will easily learn to speak military jargon. You may at least attempt to guess what they represent. Following is a list of common terms and acronyms.

A

AAFES	Army/Air Force Exchange Service
ACAP	Army Career and Alumni Program
ACES	Army Continuing Education System
ACS	Army Community Service
AD	Active duty
ADJ	Adjutant
AER	Army Emergency Relief
AFAP	Army Family Action Plan
AFN	American Forces Network
AFRTS	American Forces Radio/TV Network
AFTB	Army Family Team Building
AG	Adjutant General
AGR	Active Guard Reserve
AIT	Advanced Individual Training
AMC	Army Materiel Command
AMMO	Ammunition
ANCOC	Advanced NCO Course
ANG	Air National Guard Area of
AO	operations Armored
APC	personnel carrier
APF	Appropriated funds
APFT	Army Physical Fitness Test
APO	Army post office
AR	Army Reserve/Army Regulation/ Armor
ARC	American Red Cross
ARCOM	Army Reserve Command/ Army Commendation Medal
ARNG	Army National Guard
ARPERCEN	Army Reserve Personnel Center
ASAP	As soon as possible
ASG	Area Support Group (OCONUS)
AT	Annual training
AVC	Army Volunteer Corps
AVCC	Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator
AVN	Aviation
AWOL	Absent without leave

B

BAH	Basic allowance for Housing
BAS	Basic allowance for subsistence
BC	Battery/Brigade/Battalion Commander
BCT	Basic combat training
BDE	Brigade
BDU	Battle dress uniform
BN	Battalion
BNCOC	Basic NCO Course
BSB	Base Support Battalion (OCONUS)

C

CAR	Chief of Army Reserve
CASCOM	Combined Arms Support Command
CDR	Commander
CDS	Child Development Services
CG	Commanding General
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CID	Criminal Investigation Division
CINC	Commander in Chief
CNGB	Chief, National Guard Bureau
CO	Commanding officer/company
COB	Close of business
COLA	Cost of living allowance
CONUS	Continental United States
CP	Command post
CPO	Civilian Personnel Office
CPX	Command Post Exercise
CQ	Charge of quarters
CSC	Community Spouses' Club
CS/C of S	Chief of Staff
CSA	Chief of Staff, Army Chief of
CSAR	Staff - Army NG Community
CVC	Volunteer Center Calendar
CY	year
CYS	Child and Youth Services

D

DA	Department of Army
DAG	Deputy Adjutant General
DDRP	Drug Demand Reduction Program
DECA	Defense Commissary Agency
DEERS	Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System
DEH	Director of Engineering & Housing

DEROS	Date of estimated return from overseas
DFAS	Defense Finance and Accounting System
DI	Drill instructor
DO	Duty officer
DOB	Date of Birth
DOD	Department of Defense
DOIM	Director of Information Management
DOR	Date of Rank
DPCA	Director of Personnel and Community Activities
DCA	Director of Community
DPP	Deferred Payment Plan
DSN	Defense Switched Network (current term for Autovon)
DZ	Drop Zone

E

EAP	Employment Assistance Program
EDRE	Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise
EE	Emergency Essential
EER/OER	Enlisted/Officer Evaluation Report
EFMP	Exceptional Family Member Program
EM	Enlisted Member
EMC-C	Equipment Maintenance Center – CONUS
EN ER	Enlisted
ESGR	Employment Readiness
ETS	Employer support of the Guard and Reserve
ESC/ECSC	Expiration of Term of Service Enlisted Spouses Club/Enlisted and Civilian Spouses Club

F Family

FAC	Assistance Center Family
FAP	Advocacy Program Family
FCP	Care Plan
FDU	Full Dress Uniform
FLO	Family Liaison Office
FM	Family Member/Field Manual
FOUO	For Official Use Only
FP	Family Program
FPC	Family Program (Guard)
FPCON	Force Protection Condition
DPW	Director of Public Works
DENTAC	United States Army Dental Activity

F

FRC	Family Readiness Coordinator (Reserve)
FRG	Family Readiness Group
FRO	Family Readiness Officer
FRL	Family Readiness Liaison
FSA	Family Separation Allowance
FSSA	Family Supplemental Subsistence Assistance
FTX	Field Training Exercise
FY	Fiscal Year
FYI	For Your Information
G	General Equivalency Diploma
GED	General Officer
GO	General Schedule (Government
GS	civilian employee pay grades)
GSA	General Services Administration

H

HHC/HHD	Headquarters & Headquarters Company/Detachment
HOR	Home of Record
HQ	Headquarters
HQDA	Headquarters, Department of the Army
HRC	Human Resources Command
HRO	Human Resource Office
HS	Home Station

I

IADT	Initial Active Duty Training
IDT	Inactive Duty Training
IE	Initial Entry
IET	Initial Entry Training
IG	Inspector General
IMA	Installation Management Agency / Individual Mobilization Augmentee
ING	Inactive National Guard
IO	Information Officer
IRF	Immediate Reaction Force
IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
ITO	Information Travel Office/ Invitational Travel Order
ITT	Information, Tours, and Travel

J

JAG	Judge Advocate General
JR EN	Junior grade enlisted personnel
JR NCO	Junior grade Noncommissioned Officer
JUMPS	Joint Uniform Military Pay System

K

KIA	Killed in Action
KP	Kitchen Patrol

L

LES	Leave and Earnings Statement
LN	Local National
LOD	Line Of Duty
LOG	Logistics
LP	Listening Post
LZ	Landing Zone

M

MACOM	Major Army Command
MAINT	Maintenance
MCCW	Military Council of Catholic Women
MEDDAC	Medical Department Activity
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
METL	Mission Essential Task List
MFO	Multinational Forces and Observer
MI	Military Intelligence
MIA	Missing In Action
MILPO	Military Personnel Office
MOBEX	Mobilization Exercise
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MP	Military Police
MRE	Meals Ready to Eat
MSC	Major Subordinate Command
MSO	Morale Support Officer
MUTA	Multiple Unit Training Assembly
MWR	Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

N

NA	Not Applicable
NAF	Non-Appropriated Funds (generated locally)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NCOER	Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report
NCOIC	Noncommissioned Officer in Charge
NCOSC	Noncommissioned Officers' Spouses' Club
NEO	Noncombatant Evacuation Operation
NG	National Guard
NLT	Not Later Than

O

OBC/OAC	Officer Basic/Advanced Course
OCAR	Office of the Chief, Army Reserve
OCONUS	Outside Continental United States
OCS	Officer Candidate School
OD	Officer of the Day
OHA	Overseas Housing Allowance
OIC	Officer-In-Charge
OJT	On the Job Training Operational
OPSEC	Security Operational Readiness Exercise
ORE	
OSC/OCSC	Officers' Spouses' Club/Officers' and Civilian Spouses' Club

P

PAC	Personnel Administration Center
PAM	Pamphlet
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PDA	Public Display of Affection
PERSCOM	Total Army Personnel Command
PLT	Platoon/primary level training
PM	Provost Marshal (police chief)
PMO	Provost Marshal Office
PMOS	Primary Military Occupational Specialty
POA	Power of Attorney
POC	Point of Contact
POE	Port of Embarkation
POI	Program of Instruction
POV	Privately Owned Vehicle
POTO	Plans, Operations and Training Office
PT	Physical Training
PWOC	Protestant Women of Chapel
PX	Post Exchange
PZ	Primary Zone/Pickup Zone

Q

QOL	Quality of Life
QM	Quartermaster
QTRS	Quarters (living area)

R

RA	Regular Army
RAC	Religious Activity Center
RC	Reserve Component
RCI	Residential Community Initiative
RD	Rear Detachment
RDC	Rear Detachment Commander
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force

R&D	Research and Development
R&R	Rest and Relaxation
RFO	Request For Orders
RIF	Reduction In Force
RO	Round Out
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
RRM	Recruiting and Retention Manager
RRC	Regional Readiness Command
RSG	Regional Support Groups
RST	Re-Scheduled Training
R.S.V.P.	Reply whether or not you can attend (respondez s'il vous plait)
RTS	Regional Training Site
REG	Regiment
REGT	Regulation

S

SBP SD	Survivor Benefit Plan
SDNCO	Staff Duty
SDO	Staff Duty Noncommissioned Officer
SES	Staff Duty Officer
SFPC	Senior Executive Service (senior civilian employee grades)
SGLI	State Family Program Director (NG)
SIDPERS	Servicemen's Group Life Insurance
SJA	Standard Installation/Division Personnel Reporting System
SLO	Staff Judge Advocate School
SMI	Liaison Officer Supplemental
SOCOM	Medical Insurance
SOP	Special Operations Command
SQD	Standing Operating Procedure(s)
SQT	Squad, a unit within a platoon
SRB	Skills Qualification Test
SSS	Selective Reenlistment Bonus
SSN	Selective Service System
SZ	Social Security Number Secondary Zone

T

TAG	The Adjutant General
TASC	Training and Support Center
TDY	Temporary Duty
TIG	Time In Grade / The Inspector General
TLA	Temporary Living Allowance
TMP	Transportation Motor Pool
TPU	Troop Program Unit
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
TTAD	Temporary Tour Active Duty

U

UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice
USAR	United States Army Reserve
USARC	United States Army Reserve Command
USARF	United States Army Reserve Forces (Schools)
USO	United Services Organization
USPFO	United States Property & Fiscal Office
UTA	Unit Training Assembly

V

VA	Department of Veterans Affairs (formerly Veterans Administration)
VHA	Variable Housing Allowance
VOLAR	Volunteer Army

W

WB	Well-being
WG	Wage Grade
WO	Warrant Officer
WOAC	Warrant Officer Advanced Course
WOC	Warrant Officer Candidate Course
WOSC	Warrant Officer Senior Course

X

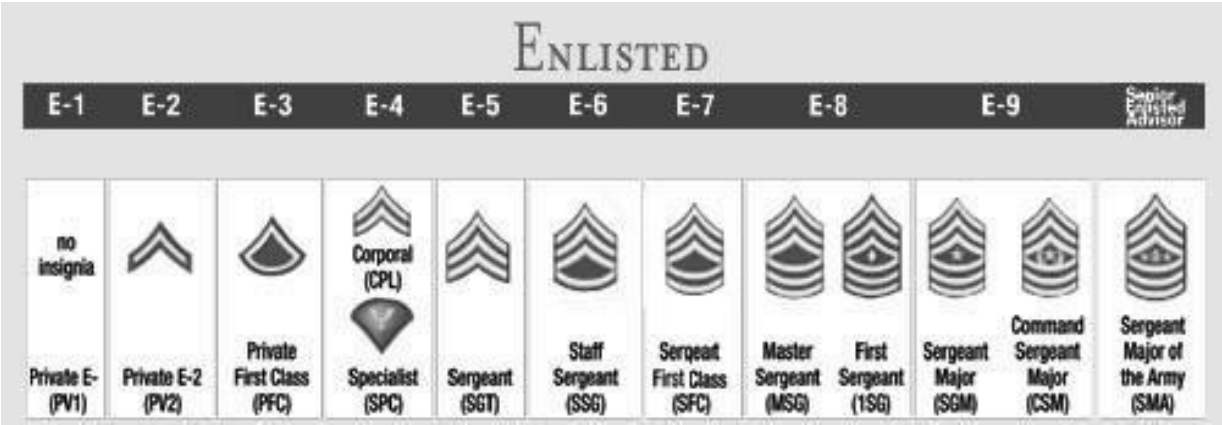
XO	Executive officer

Military Time

Telling military time may also confuse anyone new to the Army. Just remember that the time up to 1200 is the same as civilian time without the colon (:). After 1200 hours, the time is in the afternoon or evening. You will subtract 1200 from the military time (i.e.1400 minus 1200 is 2:00p.m.). Once you master this, you will be able to go back and forth between military time and civilian time.

Regular Time	Military Time	Regular Time	Military Time
Midnight	0000	Noon	1200
1:00 a.m.	0100	1:00 p.m.	1300
2:00 a.m.	0200	2:00 p.m.	1400
3:00 a.m.	0300	3:00 p.m.	1500
4:00 a.m.	0400	4:00 p.m.	1600
5:00 a.m.	0500	5:00 p.m.	1700
6:00 a.m.	0600	6:00 p.m.	1800
7:00 a.m.	0700	7:00 p.m.	1900
8:00 a.m.	0800	8:00 p.m.	2000
9:00 a.m.	0900	9:00 p.m.	2100
10:00 a.m.	1000	10:00 p.m.	2200
11:00 a.m.	1100	11:00 p.m.	2300

Army Ranks


ENLISTED
E-1
E-2
E-3
E-4
E-5
E-6
E-7
E-8
E-9
Senior Enlisted Advisor
no insignia
Private E- (PV1)
Private E-2 (PV2)
Private First Class (PFC)
Corporal (CPL)
Specialist (SPC)
Sergeant (SGT)
Staff Sergeant (SSG)
Sergeant First Class (SFC)
Master Sergeant (MSG)
First Sergeant (1SG)
Sergeant Major (SGM)
Command Sergeant Major (CSM)
Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)

OFFICER
0-1
0-2
0-3
0-4
0-5
0-6
0-7
0-8
0-9
0-10
SPECIAL
Second Lieutenant (2LT)
First Lieutenant (1LT)
Captain (CPT)
Major (MAJ)
Lieutenant Colonel (LTC)
Colonel (COL)
Brigadier General (BG)
Major General (MG)
Lieutenant General (LTG)
General (GEN)
General of the Army (GA)

W-1
W-2
W-3
W-4
W-5
Warrant Officer (WO1)
Chief Warrant Officer (CW2)
Chief Warrant Officer (CW3)
Chief Warrant Officer (CW4)
Chief Warrant Officer (CW5)

Army Ranks (continued)

Enlisted Ranks

- **Junior Enlisted Personnel (E1-E4)** enter the military as Recruits, and once they complete their Basic Military Training, they generally attain rank. Some enter as Privates, but depending on education level can immediately attain the rank of PV2 or PFC, and upon completion of basic training, some may attain the rank of Specialist. Enlisted personnel form the foundation of the Army's manpower.
- **Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO)** are expert Soldiers who have undergone professional military training courses and have proven themselves to be capable and responsible. They serve s the link between the officers and the junior enlisted Soldiers and are referred to as the "backbone of the Army". There are Junior NCOs (E4-E6) and Senior NCOs (E7-E9).

Officer Ranks

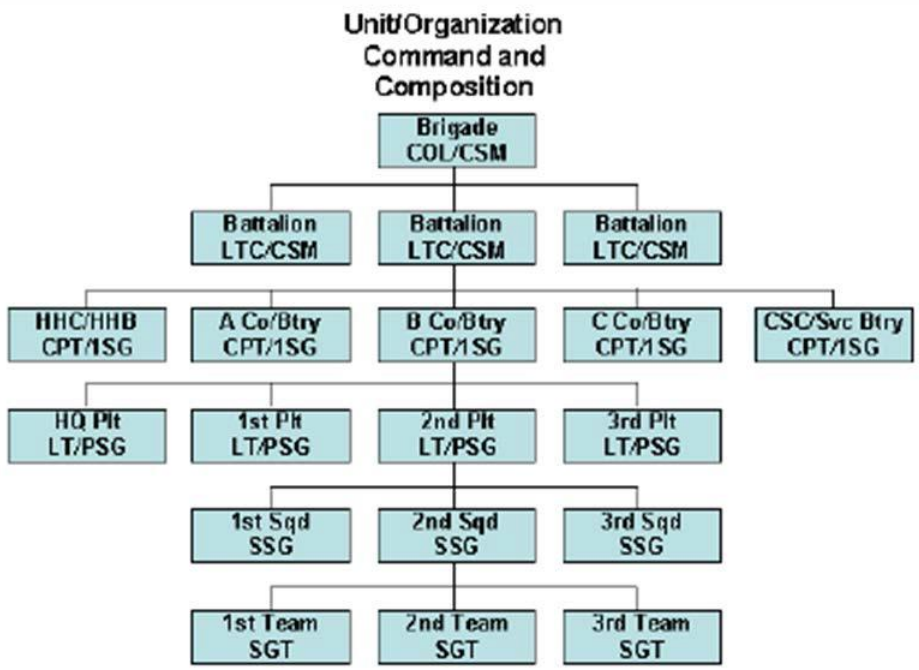
- **Warrant Officers** are referred to as Mr. or Ms. when being formally addressed verbally. Warrant Officers are generally educated technicians on their specified fields. They are considered experts in certain military technologies or capabilities.
- **Commissioned Officers** serve leadership and staff roles in a variety of different branches of the Army.
  - **Junior Officers** are also known as Company Grade Officers. The Company Grade Officers are Second Lieutenants (2LT), First Lieutenants (1LT) and Captains (CPT). They will command platoons or companies of Soldiers. They oversee the execution of orders and ensure the welfare of the Soldiers in their command. They are most important in small-unit combat and earn the respect of their Soldiers by leading by example.
  - **Field Grade Officers** are the mid-level officers within organizations from battalion up. They are the staff officers of every senior level Headquarters (HQ) from the Pentagon to the combatant commands. Majors (MAJ), Lieutenant Colonels (LTC) and Colonels (COL) make up the Field Grade Officer ranks. They may serve as staff officers and/or commanders. Many have successfully commanded at the company level and, in the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel may command battalions and brigades

respectively. Field Grade Officers orchestrate the day-to-day activities on most staffs.

- **General Officers (GOs)** are the Soldiers with the highest ranks in the Army. They are responsible for the planning of policies which affect the entire Army. They will command Divisions, Corps, and Armies. Presently, the five levels of General Officers are Brigadier General (BG), Major General (MG), Lieutenant General (LTG), General (GEN) and General of the Army.
-

Command Structure

This chart depicts a Brigade (BDE), Battalion (BN), and a Company (CO) organization generally repre
what you may find in a military unit. There may be more or fewer battalions or companies in the unit w
staff positions.



Unit/Organization	Composed Of	Commanded By
Battalion/Squadron	Headquarters & 2-6 Companies/Batteries/Troops	Lieutenant Colonel (Command Sergeant Major)
Company/Battery/Troop	Headquarters & 2 or more Platoons	Captain (First Sergeant)
Platoon	2 or more Squads/Sections	Lieutenant (Platoon Sergeant)
Squad/Section	7-11 Soldiers	Staff Sergeant

Military Phonetic Alphabet

A – Alpha	N – November
B – Bravo	O – Oscar
C – Charlie	P – Papa
D – Delta	Q – Quebec
E – Echo	R – Romeo
F – Foxtrot	S – Sierra
G – Golf	T – Tango
H – Hotel	U - Uniform
I – India	V – Victor
J – Juliet	W – Whiskey
K – Kilo	X – X-ray
L – Lima	Y - Yankee
M – Mike	Z - Zulu

This booklet is meant to be a continuously evolving and improving project. As you learn and grow as Army Families, please let us know what we should be sharing with the next generation. Please provide your feedback on this project to your Troops FRG Leader so we can keep improving the quality and helpfulness of this document! Best wishes!

Common Questions & Answers

PHONE CALLS AND INTERNET ACCESS

When will I receive phone calls?

Throughout your soldiers 10 weeks of BCT he/she on average will have 3 opportunities for phone calls, one per phase as stated in the Battalion Commanders Letter. These phone calls are a privilege and may be taken away or granted at any time. The initial call giving you the address counts as your red phase phone call. We know it was only 10 seconds long, but it still counts!

The FRG volunteers who run the FACEBOOK page do not know when phone calls will occur. If they find out ahead of time they will post it on the page. Questions about when phone calls may occur will not be tolerated. In addition soldiers may have the chance to earn additional phone calls by excelling in training such as PT and scoring high on Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM), just to name a few.

When phone calls are permitted there will be a time limit, usually no more than 5-10 minutes, and it is up to the soldier as to who they will call. For some soldiers placing a phone call can be mentally challenging, as they want to stay focused on the mission at hand (graduating BCT) thus why some may not call anyone. Some soldiers will opt to call a best friend or a girlfriend/boyfriend instead of family. If you are unavailable when your soldier attempts to call it is up to each Company Command Team as to whether your soldier will be granted a second attempt.

We recommend you be uplifting and encouraging if and when you receive a call. The area code for Fort Benning is 706, but the call may come from a different area code. In some cases soldiers will share a few cell phones to make calls. If you do not hear from your soldier “no news is good news”.

Can we send them cell phones?

Cell phones are collected at the beginning of BCT and stored away. Any cell phones mailed

will be locked away with the others. Soldiers will receive their phones back, usually, on the day before Family Day. In extreme circumstances the use of cell phones can be permitted at the Drill Sergeant's (DS) discretion, this may only apply when several soldiers are placing calls on the same day (there are approximately 4 pay phones per company).

Do our Soldiers have access to the internet while in BCT?

No. Due to this we ask that you refrain from posting personal messages to your soldiers on the main page as they will not receive them!

Can I call the company or battalion to get updates on my soldier?

No. You will need to keep in contact with your soldier through letters and phone calls (when permitted). Soldiers should keep you abreast to their training in these letters.

If you have any questions or concerns we urge you to use this FACEBOOK page to address them. Please understand that we will NOT provide information about an individual soldier's progresses in BCT. In general, no news from official channels is good news!

**Generally you should hear from your soldier within 72 hours of arriving to their unit to provide you with their company, platoon and address information. Again this is not always the case, in the event you have not heard from your soldier within 7-10 days of their arrival, you may call the Fort Jackson Installation Operations Center at (803)751-7671 for assistance in determining their location.

You will need your SIT's full name and social security number.

VISITING

Can we visit our soldier while they are in BCT?

NO, you will be denied seeing your soldier by the company command or DS. Any attempt in visiting will put your soldier at risk of getting into trouble.

ADDITIONAL MAIL INFO

****Note: Please make sure to read the Mail FAQ'S in the Commander's Letter as the information below is a supplement to that.**

Fort Benning is a large military installation and it takes time to get mail to your SITs. It is a five step process for roughly 13,000 pieces of daily mail; arrival at the Fort Benning post office, to our brigade, to each of the five battalions, and then to one of five companies in our battalion, and then sorted one more times to each of the four platoons. This entire process takes approximately 3-5 days beyond the time to get from your house to Fort Benning, Georgia....puts new meaning to the phrase "snail mail"! Not to mention the last 3-4 steps are all HAND sorted. Mail may take as long as 2 weeks (10 business days) to get to your soldier. Do not let this discourage you, your soldiers are explained of this process as well. **Your strongest source of communication with your soldiers will be through mail, so please write, write, write.**

Remember your soldier is very busy and may not be able to write back as often as they would like or even at all.Mail is a HUGE morale booster – keep sending letters! We cannot stress this enough! Thus explaining why it is in here twice!

Tip from previous families—send self-addressed/stamped envelopes to the soldiers, easier for them to write back, include addressed envelopes to other family members and friends.

Soldiers have access to the troop store frequently, so please do not send items in bulk as their space is limited.

It is suggested to send your mail through the USPS, sending mail via UPS or FedEx will not get a package to your soldier any faster, as ALL incoming mail to Ft. Benning is delivered to the APO (Army Post Office) and distributed with the general USPS mail.

In addition, please do not send mail to the attention of the battalion commander. Contrary to popular belief this does not get the mail to your soldier faster, it in fact will heed the process.

You will get mail FROM your Soldier quicker than your Soldier will get mail FROM you.

TRICARE / DEERS / MILITARY IDs/FINANCE

When will I receive my TRICARE (health insurance) packet?

Most will receive their packet within 2 weeks of their soldier in-processing, it can take up to 4 weeks. You must be enrolled in DEERS in order to use your **TRICARE** benefits.

Contact your local **TRICARE** office to verify enrollment http://www.military.com/benefits/tricare/tricare-service-centers.
Once you are enrolled, you will have medical coverage.
Please contact your local **TRICARE** office to find a medical provider in your area.

DEERS Contact Information: Toll-free: 1-800-538-9552 TTY/TTD: 1-866-363-2883

Obtaining your military I.D.

Your soldier will get you enrolled while in-processing at reception, form DD172 will be sent to you within 2-4 weeks of in-processing.

Your soldier will maintain control over the documents needed to enroll you in DEERS/TRICARE. YOU WILL LIKELY NEED THESE DOCUMENTS BACK so please write to your solider and give them a reminder to send them back ASAP.

To locate the nearest I.D. Card issuing office visit here https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl (NOTE it does not need to be an Army branch office to issue you the I.D.) Be sure to bring all documentation with you, generally it is the DD172 form, Marriage License, Driver's License, and Social Security card. Be sure to call them to verify the documentation you need to bring. Also most offices can schedule you an appointment, doing so will cut down your wait time.

When will my soldier start receiving pay?

Pay can take up to TWO months to begin (your soldier will receive back pay). We are unable to provide or assist you in any way regarding pay. If your soldier has any questions, he/she needs to go through the Drill Sergeants to make an appointment with finance. The soldier is the only one that finance will speak to regarding pay issues.

ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY INFO

What do I do if there is a family emergency?

As stated in the Battalion Commander's letter, if any emergencies arise while your soldier is in BCT, contact Red Cross. They will go through the proper channels in getting the information to your soldier.

The number for is Red Cross: 1 (877) 272-7337 Have the following ready: Full name, Rank/rating, Branch of service (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard), Social Security number or date of birth, and Military address.

Contacting the company or the battalion with an emergency prior to contacting Red Cross will only slow the message getting to your soldier, as the Army has policies set in place for notifications to the soldiers, first is receiving the message from Red Cross.

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