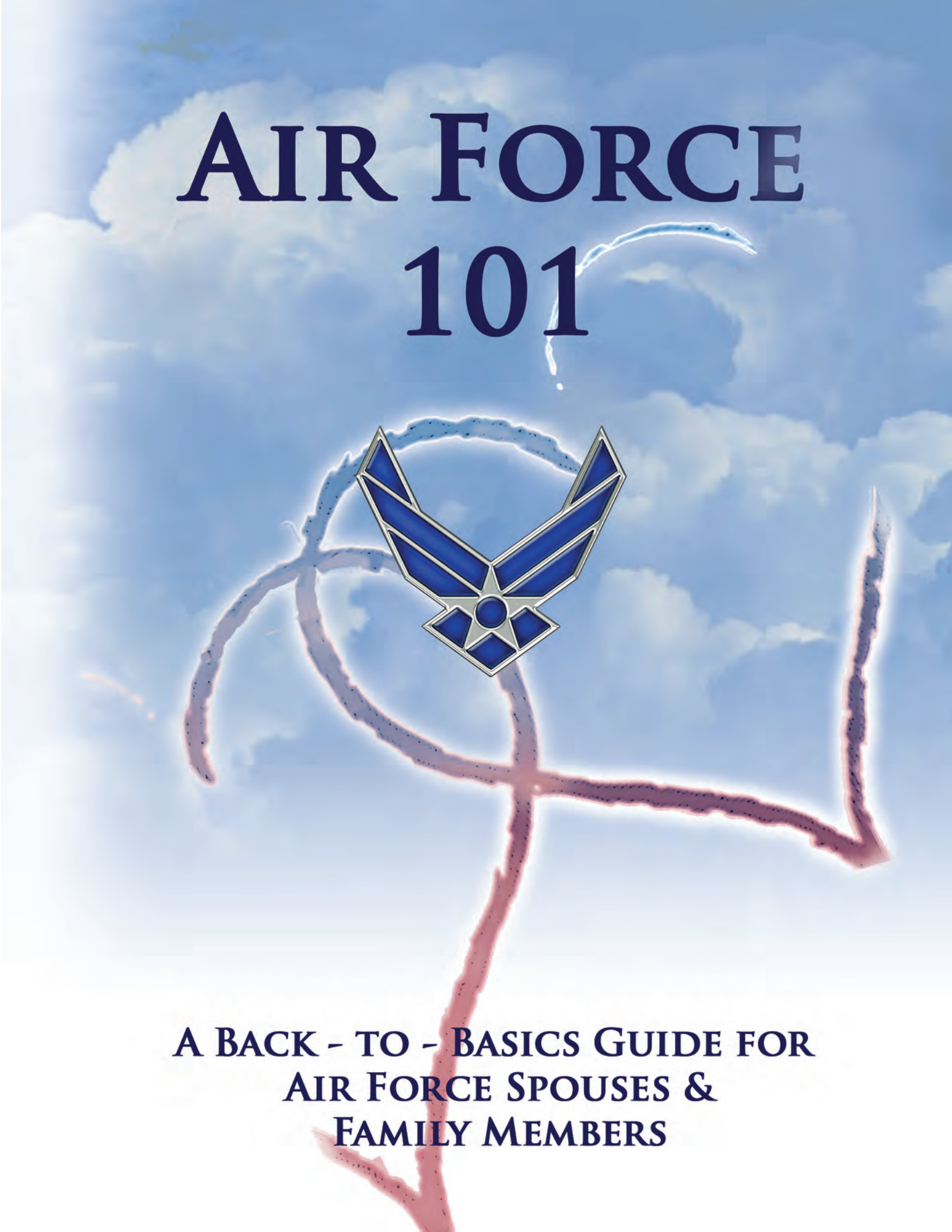
Air Force 101



A Back - to - Basics Guide for Air Force Spouses & Family Members

WELCOME to the Air Force Family!

We hope this guide helps answer your questions and connects you with the people, information and helping agencies that exist to ensure you and your family successfully navigate your Air Force adventure!

We want this guide to be a key part of your spouse & family "toolbox." It will familiarize you with the Air Force mission, organization, rank, structure, traditions, resources and programs.

Our Air Force is one big family--Active Duty, Guard, Reserve and Civilian. It takes all of us to execute the Air Force mission.

As an Air Force spouse and family member, you serve your country as well! Thank you for your service and commitment to this great team!

Dawn Goldfein

Tonya Wright

To access guide:
https://www.usafservices.com/Home/SpouseSupport.aspx

Questions/Suggestions, please e-mail:
usaf.pentagon.af-al.mbx.af-alsaa@mail.mil

Updated 10 April 2017

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Our United States Air Force (USAF)

~Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow~

Air Force history really began when the Army acquired America's first military aircraft, the Wright Flyer, on 2 Aug 1909, designated Signal Corps Airplane No. 1. The "aeroplane" was designed and created by Orville and Wilbur Wright. The demonstration flight took place on Fort Myer, Virginia.

With President Harry S. Truman signing the National Security Act of 1947 on July 26, 1947, the Department of the Air Force, headed by a Secretary of the Air Force, was created.

On September 18, 1947, W. Stuart Symington became Secretary of the Air Force, and on September 26, General Carl A. Spaatz became the USAF's first Chief of Staff.

- General Mark A. Welsh III is serving as the 20thth Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

September 18th is celebrated as the Air Force's birthday, and in 2014, the USAF will be 67 years young!

In April 1967, Congress approved the position of Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and the first was CMSAF Paul W. Airey.

- CMSAF James A. Cody is serving as the 17th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

Air Force Mission

Airmen bring to the Nation's military portfolio five interdependent and integrated core missions that have endured since President Truman originally assigned airpower roles and missions to the Air Force in 1947. Although the way we do them will constantly evolve, the Air Force will continue to perform these missions so that our military can respond quickly and appropriately to unpredictable threats and challenges. Today, we call our core missions: (1) air and space superiority; (2) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); (3) rapid global mobility; (4) global strike; and (5) command and control.

- **Air and Space Superiority**
  This permits joint forces freedom from attack and freedom to attack, and it is a mission the USAF has done exceptionally well – not since 15 April, 1953, has an enemy combat aircraft killed a servicemember in the American ground forces.

- **Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance**
  Simply put, ISR is keeping eyes and ears on our adversaries, but it is the foundation upon which every joint, interagency, and coalition operation achieves success. Our 34,000 ISR Airmen identify and assess adversary targets and vulnerabilities from hideouts to bunkers to mobile launchers with greater accuracy than ever seen in the history of warfare.

- **Rapid Global Mobility**
  American power can be projected quickly to anywhere on the face of the earth as a result of the Air Force's capability for rapid mobility. The Air Force's 122,000 air mobility Airmen provide swift deployment and the ability to sustain operations by delivering essential equipment and personnel for missions ranging from major combat to humanitarian relief operations around the world. Mobility forces also provide in-flight refueling, which is a unique Air Force capability and the linchpin to joint power projection at intercontinental distances.

- **Global Strike**
  Global strike, a significant portion of America's deterrence capability, means that the Nation can project military power more rapidly, more flexibly, and with a lighter footprint than other military options. With the expertise of over 26,000 Airmen, the Air Force's nuclear and conventional precision strike forces can credibly threaten and effectively conduct global strike by holding any target on the planet at risk and, if necessary, disabling or destroying it promptly—even from bases in the continental United States.

- **Command and Control**
  Airmen employ the Air Force's other four interdependent and enduring core missions through robust, adaptable, and survivable command and control systems. Using the specialized skills of over 53,000 command and control Airmen, the Air Force provides access to reliable communications and information networks so that the joint team can operate globally at a high tempo and level of intensity. Air Force command and control systems give commanders the ability to conduct highly coordinated joint operations on an unequaled scale using centralized command, distributed control, and decentralized execution.

Through these core missions, the Air Force provides Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power for America. Each of these core missions is, in its own right, vitally important to the defense of our national interests; however, no single core mission functions independently. Airpower is maximized when Airmen leverage its unique characteristics—speed, range, flexibility, precision, lethality, and persistence—to harness the integrated power of our air, space, and cyber forces. The Air Force is effective precisely because its interdependent operations are synchronized to provide an unparalleled array of airpower options, giving America the ability to respond quickly anywhere in the world.

Core Values

The Air Force bases these core competencies and distinctive capabilities on a shared commitment to three values**:** ***Integrity first, Service before self, and Excellence in all we do*****.** The Core Values are much more than minimum standards. They are ideals that unite the men and women of the Air Force in carrying out their mission, and enhance readiness, morale and professionalism. They inspire us to do our very best at all times.

"Aim High . . . Fly-Fight-Win"

October 2010

The Airman's Creed

I am an American Airman.
I am a Warrior.
I have answered my Nation's call.

I am an American Airman.
My mission is to Fly, Fight, and Win.
I am faithful to a Proud Heritage,
A Tradition of Honor,
And a Legacy of Valor.

I am an American Airman.
Guardian of Freedom and Justice,
My Nation's Sword and Shield,
Its Sentry and Avenger.
I defend my Country with my Life.

I am an American Airman.
Wingman, Leader, Warrior.
I will never leave an Airman behind,
I will never falter,
And I will not fail.

The Air Force Symbol

The United States Air Force (USAF) symbol honors the heritage of our past and represents the promise of our future. It retains the core elements of our Air Corps legacy – the "Hap Arnold" wings and star with circle – and modernizes them to reflect our aerospace force of today and tomorrow.

The symbol has two main parts. In the upper half, the stylized wings represent the stripes of our strength – the enlisted men and women of our force. They are drawn with great angularity to emphasize our swiftness and power, and they are divided into six sections, which represent our Air Force distinctive capabilities: aerospace superiority, global attack, rapid global mobility, precision engagement, information superiority, and agile combat support.

In the lower half are a sphere, a star and three diamonds. The sphere within the star represents the globe. It reminds us of our obligation to secure our nation's freedom with Global Vigilance, Reach and Power. The globe also reminds us of our challenge as an expeditionary force to respond rapidly to crises and to provide decisive aerospace power, worldwide.

The area surrounding the sphere takes the shape of a star. The star has many meanings. Its five points represent the components of our one force and family – our active duty, civilians, Guard, Reserve, and retirees. The star symbolizes space as the high ground of our nation's aerospace force, and as the rallying symbol in all our wars, it also represents our officer corps, central to our combat leadership.

The star is framed with three diamonds, which represent our core values – integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do. The elements come together to form one symbol that presents two powerful images – at once it is an eagle, the emblem of our Nation, and a medal, representing valor in service to our Nation.

The Air Force Song

by Robert Crawford

Off we go into the wild blue yonder,
Climbing high into the sun;
Here they come zooming to meet our thunder,
At 'em boys, give 'er the gun!
Down we dive spouting our flames from under,
Off with one helluva roar
We live in fame or go down in flame, hey!
Nothing'll stop the U.S. Air Force!

Minds of men fashioned a crate of thunder,
Sent it high into the blue;
Hands of men blasted the world asunder;
How they lived God only knew!
Souls of men dreaming of skies to conquer
Gave us wings, ever to soar!
With scouts before and bombers galore, hey!
Nothing'll stop the U.S. Air Force!

Here's a toast to the host
Of those who love the vastness of the sky,
To a friend we send a message of his brother men who fly
We drink to those who gave their all of old,
Then down we roar to score the rainbow's pot of gold
A toast to the host of men we boast, the U.S. Air Force!

Off we go into the wild sky yonder,
Keep the wings level and true.
If you'd live to be a gray-haired wonder
Keep the nose out of the blue!
Flying men guarding our Nation's border,
We'll be there, followed by more.
In echelon we carry on, hey!
Nothing'll stop the U.S. Air Force!

A Little History on the Air Force Song . . .

In 1938, Liberty magazine sponsored a contest for a spirited, enduring musical composition to become the official Army Air Corps song. Of 757 scores submitted, the version by Robert Crawford, from Fairbanks, Alaska, was selected by a committee of Air Force wives. The song was officially introduced at the Cleveland Air Races on September 2, 1939. Fittingly, Crawford sang in its first public performance. Crawford was a transport pilot in WWII. He was a Lt Col in the Air Force Reserve and passed away at age 62 in March 1961.

A Tribute to the Military Spouse

(Adapted for Magnolia Day 2005 at Eglin AFB)

In our role as military spouses, we see a slice of life that few others have the privilege to experience...

- a set of ABUs means Duty;
- a pair of spit-shined boots conveys Honor;
- our American Flag calls out Country as it waves more brilliantly in the breeze;
- hometown parades arouse more emotion;
- any patriotic song is a musical message with the deepest meaning;
- a duffle bag on a baggage claim gives you pause and an immediate connection;
- a hand-over-the-heart is as stirring as an embrace;
- a parting kiss can hold you for months because it has to;
- the "welcome-home" moment can fill you up forever;
- a grave marker is a sobering reminder of the meaning of freedom and the ultimate sacrifice;
- an Eagle's soar provides unwavering inspiration.

So, there you are ...
The military spouse.

The one asked to be strong.
The one willing to belong.
The one at home who is often required to do it all.
The one who raises your children with love and faith; who instills the pride to help them understand "freedom isn't free."
The one who relocates on a moment's notice far from home and family, far from friends, far from "retail therapy" – to remain deeply rooted in a marriage that has been tested and survived more challenges than the number of battle streamers tied to the Unit Guidon.
The very one who seldom complains because you are blessed and proud to stand beside your very own American Hero – everyday…
Your Airman, Soldier, Sailor, Marine, or Coastie – who serves the greatest Nation on earth!

MANY THANKS for all you do – we're the best because of YOU!

Military Terms and Acronyms

AAFES	**Army and Air Force Exchange Service; also called the BX** *Covers the retail stores on the Air Force base available to authorized users (someone who as a valid military ID card, e.g. active duty member, family member, retiree, or spouse of a retiree).*
AB	**Air Base (Overseas)**
ABU	**Airman Battle Uniform**
ABW	**Air Base Wing** *Provides base operating support for an Air Force Base.*
ACC	**Air Combat Command**
Accompanied Tour	*Tour of duty with family members*
ACSC	**Air Command and Staff College**
AD	**Active Duty**
ADSC	**Active Duty Service Commitment**
Advanced Pay	*Payment before actually earned*
AEF	**Air Expeditionary Force** *Deployed Air Force wings, groups, and squadrons committed to a joint operation.*
AETC	**Air Education Training Command**
AFAF	**Air Force Assistance Fund** *Annual campaign to raise money for four official Air Force charitable organizations.*
AFAS	**Air Force Aid Society** *Organization located at the A&FRC that provides emergency financial assistance to active duty, retirees, and their family.*
AFB	**Air Force Base**
AFI	**Air Force Instruction (Regulations)**
AFIT	**Air Force Institute of Technology**
AFMC	**Air Force Materiel Command**
A&FRC	**Airman & Family Readiness Center** *Designs, develops, and conducts quality of life programs according to base and community needs and capabilities. The A&FRC mission is to ensure resources required to support the entire base are available and accessible.*
AFRC	**Air Force Reserve Command**
AFSC	**Air Force Specialty Code**
Allotment	*Designated payment by member to bank or individual*
Allowance	*Pay and special compensation*
ALS	**Airman Leadership School**
AMC	**Air Mobility Command**
AMN	**Airman**
ANG	**Air National Guard**
APO	**Air Post Office (overseas)**
ARC	**American Red Cross**
Article 15	*Disciplinary action*
ASAP	**As Soon As Possible**
AT	**Annual Tour**

AWOL	**Absent Without Leave** *When a military member is away from duty without authorized leave*
BAH	**Basic Allowance for Housing** *The intent of BAH is to provide uniformed service members accurate and equitable housing compensation based on housing costs in local civilian housing markets. Replaced Basic Allowance for Quarters or BAQ.*
Barracks	*Where military members who are not accompanied by family members live (Also known as dorms).*
BAS	**Basic Allowance for Subsistence** *Meant to offset costs for a member's meals. Each year it is adjusted based upon the increase of the price of food as measured by the USDA food cost index.*
Benefits	*Medical, dental, commissary, BX, etc*
Blues	**Dress uniform**
Butterbar	*Slang term applying to a Second Lieutenant because their rank insignia are gold bars.*
BX/PX	**Base Exchange** *(Managed through AAFES)*
CC	**Commander** *The officer in charge of an entire unit of military members.*
CCAF	**Community College of the Air Force**
CCC	**Command Chief Master Sergeant**
CCF	**First Sergeant**
CDC	**Career Development Course**
CDC	**Child Development Center**
CE	**Civil Engineer**
CFC	**Combined Federal Campaign** *Annual charity fundraising for multiple charities*
Chain of Command	*This is the leadership structure of the military established rank for both enlisted members and officers.*
Chaplain	*Military minister, priest, rabbi, imam or pastor*
Civilian	*Refers to civilian employees who work for the Department of Defense.*
COB	**Close of Business**
Code of Conduct	*Rules by which military members must live*
COLA	**Cost of Living Allowance**
Commissary	*The base grocery store available to authorized users (someone who has a valid military ID card, e.g. active duty member, family member, retiree, or spouse of a retiree). No sales tax is added but there is a small surcharge.*
CONUS	**Continental United States** *Forty-eight adjoining states and the District of Columbia (does not include Alaska or Hawaii)*
Court martial	*Trial system within the military*
CSS	**Commander's Support Staff** *(Squadron's main administrative office)*
DeCA	**Defense Commissary Agency** *(See Commissary)*
DEERS	**Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System** *Registration system for benefits for military members and their family*

Deployment	*Relocation of a military unit/member for operation purposes outside the United States for an extended and specific period of time.*
DEROS	**Date Estimate Return from Overseas**
DFAS	**Defense Finance and Accounting Service** *Organization which monitors military pay*
Dining In	*Formal dinner for military members only*
Dining Out	*Formal dinner for military members and spouses*
DITY	**Do-It-Yourself Move**
DOB	**Date of Birth**
DoD	**Department of Defense**
DoDDS	**Department of Defense Dependent Schools**
DOR	**Date of Rank**
DOS	**Date of Separation**
DPP	**Deferred Payment Plan**
DSN	**Defense Switched Network** *Worldwide military telephone system*
EAF	**Expeditionary Aerospace Force**
EFMP	**Exceptional Family Member Program** *Enrollment program that works with other military and civilian agencies to provide comprehensive and coordinated community support, housing, educational, medical, and personnel services to families with special needs.*
EFMP-S	**Exceptional Family Member Program – Support** *Housed in the Airman & Family Readiness Center and designed to provide support to those with special needs.*
Enlisted	*An individual who is not commissioned (see NCO); either an Airman (rank of E-1 to E-4) or an NCO (non-commissioned officer, rank of E-5 to E-9).*
EPR	**Enlisted Performance Report**
ESC	**Enlisted Spouses Club**
Esprit de Corps	*Morale within unit or organization*
ETS	**Expiration of Term of Service** *Scheduled date of separation from active duty*
Family Advocacy	*Program that addresses family issues and concerns*.
Field Grade	*Majors, Lieutenant Colonels, and Colonels*
First Sergeant	*A key member of every squadron, the First Sergeant (or "Shirt" as sometimes called) is a senior NCO (see below), who has received specialized training in dealing with "people issues." The First Sergeant works directly for and with the Squadron Commander. He/she is knowledgeable about on-base resources available to assist in finding answers/solving problems, as well as managing the recognition of active duty military members' superior performances. The First Sergeant also responds to emergencies within his/her squadron.*
FCC	**Family Child Care** *Child care provided in a licensed provider's home.*
FLT	**Flight**
Formation	*Gathering of military in a prescribed way*

GI Bill	*Education entitlement*
GOV	**Government Owned Vehicle**
GS	**General Schedule** (Civil Service employee)
GSU	**Geographically Separated Unit**
HAWC	**Health and Wellness Center**
HHG	**Household Goods**
Hold Baggage	*Unaccompanied baggage or personal belongings*
Housing Office	*Responsible for managing base housing*
HQ	**Headquarters** (Generally Wing Commander's office)
IAW	**In Accordance With**
ID Card	*Identification card issued to legally recognized member of military family.*
IG	**Inspector General**
JAG	**Judge Advocate General** *(also known as the Base Legal Office)*
K-9	*Dogs specifically trained for military service; also known as Military Working Dogs (MWD).*
Key Spouse	*Outreach program that uses Squadron Commander- or First Sergeant-appointed spouses in units to help address concerns and issues of the families. These volunteers offer support, information and a personal connection to available resources, as well as act as the liaison between the Commander and the families.*
Last 4	*The last four numbers of a person's Social Security number.*
Leave	*Approved time away from duty.*
LES	**Leave and Earnings Statement** *Pay stub*
Mess Dress	*Formal attire for the military member*
MFLC	*Military and Family Life Consultant*
MPS	**Military Personnel Section** (formerly MPF/Military Personnel Flight)
MRE	**Meal, Ready to Eat**
MTF	**Military Treatment Facility** (Base Clinic/Hospital)
MWR	**Morale, Welfare, and Recreation**
NATO	**North Atlantic Treaty Organization**
NCO	**Non-Commissioned Officer** *Enlisted, an individual who is not commissioned, rank of E-5 to E-9*
NCOA	**Non-Commissioned Officer Academy**
NCOIC	**Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge**
NLT	**Not Later Than**
OCONUS	**Outside the Continental United States** *Overseas tour, INCLUDES Alaska and Hawaii*
Officer	*An individual who is commissioned, holding the rank of Second Lieutenant (O-1) through General (O-10).*
OIC	**Officer in Charge**
OJT	**On the Job Training**
OPR	**Officer Performance Report**
OPR	**Office of Primary Responsibility**

OPSEC	**Operational Security**
OPTEMPO	**Operational Tempo** *The pace of an operation or operations; includes all of the activities the unit is conducting; can be a single activity or series of operations.*
ORI	**Operational Readiness Inspection**
Orders	*Spoken or written instructions to military/civilian members (usually for TDY, deployments, or PCS)*
OSC	**Officers' Spouses Club**
OSI	**Office of Special Investigations**
OTS	**Officer Training School**
PCM	**Primary Care Manager** *(Assigned by Medical Group)*
PCS	**Permanent Change of Station** *Reassignment to a different duty station*
Per Diem	*Compensation for the extra expenses incurred while on temporary duty away from one's home station.*
PFMP	**Personal Financial Management Program** *Provides personal financial counseling to all military branches including retirees and widows of service members and GS civilians. The goal of PFMP is the creation of a comprehensive financial management assistance service which will guide individuals and families through the lifecycle of financial wellness.*
PME	**Professional Military Education**
POA	**Power of Attorney** *Legal document permitting a person to act on behalf of another*.
POC	**Point of Contact**
POV	**Privately Owned Vehicle**
PRF	**Promotion Recommendation Form** (for officers)
Protocol	*Military customs and courtesies*
Rank	*Official title/grade of member*
Remote	*An overseas assignment, usually 12 to 18 months; in which families cannot accompany the active-duty member.*
Retreat	*Flag lowering ceremony at end of the day*
Reveille	*Flag raising ceremony at the beginning of the day*
RIF	**Reduction in Force**
ROTC	**Reserve Officer Training Corps**
SBP	**Survivor's Benefit Plan**
SF	**Security Forces**
SGLI	**Serviceman's Group Life Insurance**
Shirt/First Shirt	*First Sergeant*
SME	**Subject Matter Expert**
SNCOA	**Senior NCO Academy**
SOP	**Standard Operating Procedure**
Sortie	*A flight or single flying mission*
SOS	**Squadron Officer School**
Space A	*Space Available (Referring to available seats on aircraft/billeting)*
Sponsor	*A person assigned to assist an in-bound or newly arrived person to a base.*

Squadron	*An Air Force unit which has a First Sergeant and a Commander. Squadrons are usually identified both numerically, and by function. For example: 18FSS (18th Force Support Squadron)*
SSN/SSAN	**Social Security Number**
STEP	**Stripes for Exceptional Performers** (for enlisted)
TAP	**Transition Assistance Program** *Established to meet the needs of separating service members during their period of transition into civilian life by offering job-search assistance and related services.*
TDY	***Temporary Duty*** *Relocation of a military member from their base of assignment to a different duty location or station, such as attending Air Force Leadership School, or specific technical training, for a specific period of time.*
Tech School	**Technical School** *Formal school training for a military job.*
TLA	**Temporary Living Allowance**
TLE	**Temporary Lodging Expenses**
TLF	**Temporary Living Facility**
TMO	**Traffic Management Office** *Organization responsible to handle the movement of a military member's belongings to a new duty location.*
TRICARE	*The health insurance program for military members and their families.*
TSP	**Thrift Savings Plan**
UCI	**Unit Compliance Inspection**
UCMJ	**Uniform Code of Military Justice** *Military's set of laws*
Unit	*Group of military members, both officer and enlisted personnel, assigned to work together with a common vision, mission, and goals.*
USAF	**United States Air Force**
USAFE	**United States Air Force –Europe**
VA	**Veteran's Administration**
WAPS	**Weighted Airman Promotion System** (for enlisted)
WIC	*Women, Infants, and Children's program; also available Overseas.*
Wing Down Day	*A day off for military members, not counted against leave.*

Air Force Chain of Command

Commander In Chief, President of the United States

↓

Secretary of Defense

↓

Secretary of the Air Force

↓

Air Force Chief of Staff

Organization of the Air Force

The Air Force is organized on a functional basis in the United States (CONUS) and on a geographical basis overseas.

Major Commands (MAJCOMs)

A MAJCOM is a major Air Force subdivision having a specific segment of the Air Force mission. Each MAJCOM is directly subordinate to Headquarters Air Force (HAF). The Air Force is currently organized into 10 MAJCOMs (8 functional and 2 geographic). MAJCOMs are interrelated and complementary, providing offensive, defensive, and support elements; they consist of two basic types: operational and support.

Operational Commands

An operational command is a MAJCOM composed in whole or in part of combat forces, or else charged with flying directly in support of such forces. Commands in this category are: Air Combat Command (ACC), Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC), Air Force Space Command (AFSC), Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Air Mobility Command (AMC), Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), and United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE).

Support Commands

A support command is any command that is not an operational command. Support commands provide supplies, weapon systems, support systems, operational support equipment, combat materiel, maintenance, surface transportation, administration, personnel, training, advanced education, communications, and special services to the Air Force and other supported organizations. Commands in this category are: Air Education and Training Command (AETC) and Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC).

Air Force Major Commands

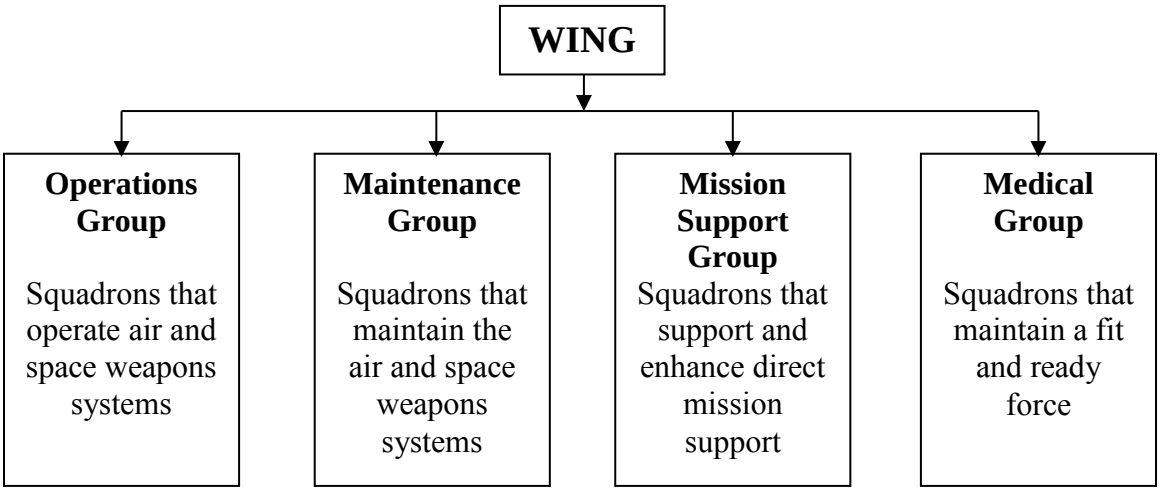
ACC	Air Combat Command, HQ: Langley AFB, VA
AETC	Air Education and Training Command, HQ: Randolph AFB, TX
AFGSC	Air Force Global Strike Command, HQ: Barksdale AFB, LA
AFMC	Air Force Material Command, HQ: Wright-Patterson AFB, OH
AFRC	Air Force Reserve Command, HQ: Robins AFB, GA
AFSPC	Air Force Space Command, HQ: Peterson AFB, CO
AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command, HQ: Hurlburt Field, FL
AMC	Air Mobility Command, HQ: Scott AFB, IL
PACAF	Pacific Air Forces, HQ: Hickam AFB, HI
USAFE	United States Air Forces in Europe, HQ: Ramstein AFB, Germany

Numbered Air Force

A Numbered Air Force (NAF) is a tactical organization that is subordinate to a MAJCOM and is composed of operational units.

Wings

The wing is a level of command below the Numbered Air Force (NAF) and has a distinct mission with significant scope. It is responsible for maintaining the installation and will have several functional groups each composed of subordinate squadrons. On 1 Oct 02, the Air Force implemented a standard organizational structure at wing level to maximize the Air Force's abilities to sustain home station operations and rapidly deploy for worldwide operations.



The different types of wings are operational, air base, or specialized mission.

An operational wing is one that has an operations group and related operational mission activity assigned. When an operational wing performs the primary mission of the base, it usually maintains and operates the base. In addition, an operational wing is capable of self-support in functional areas such as maintenance and munitions, as needed. When an operational wing is a tenant/associate organization, the host command provides it with varying degrees of base and logistics support.

An air base wing performs a support function rather than an operational mission. This type of wing maintains and operates a base, and often provides functional support to a MAJCOM headquarters.

A specialized mission wing performs a specialized mission and usually does not have aircraft or missiles assigned. Examples include intelligence wings and training wings. This wing is either a host or a tenant wing, depending on whether it maintains and operates the base.

Sample Wing Organizational Structure

Military Time

1:00 am = 0100 “oh-one hundred” or “oh-one-hundred hours”

2:00 am = 0200

3:00 am = 0300

4:00 am = 0400

5:00 am = 0500

The above times are also known as “oh-dark-thirty”

6:00 am = 0600

7:00 am = 0700

8:00 am = 0800

9:00 am = 0900

10:00 am = 1000 “ten hundred” or “ten hundred hours”

11:00 am = 1100

12:00 noon = 1200

1:00 pm = 1300 “thirteen hundred” or “thirteen hundred hours”

2:00 pm = 1400

3:00 pm = 1500

4:00 pm = 1600

5:00 pm = 1700

6:00 pm = 1800

7:00 pm = 1900

8:00 pm = 2000 “twenty hundred” or “twenty hundred hours”

9:00 pm = 2100

10:00 pm = 2200

11:00 pm = 2300

12:00 midnight = 2400

United States

ALABAMA	Maxwell AFB
ALASKA	Eielson AFB
ARIZONA	Davis-Monthan AFB
ARIZONA	Luke AFB
ARKANSAS	Little Rock AFB
CALIFORNIA	Beale AFB
	Edwards AFB
	Los Angeles AFB
	Travis AFB
	Vandenberg AFB
COLORADO	Buckley AFB
	Peterson AFB
	Schriever AFB
	USAF Academy
DELAWARE	Dover AFB
FLORIDA	Eglin AFB
	Hurlburt Field
	MacDill AFB
	Patrick AFB
	Tyndall AFB
GEORGIA	Moody AFB
	Robins AFB
IDAHO	Mt Home AFB
ILLINOIS	Scott AFB
KANSAS	McConnell AFB
LOUISIANA	Barksdale AFB
MASSACHUSETTS	Hanscom AFB
MISSISSIPPI	Columbus AFB
	Keesler AFB
MISSOURI	Whiteman AFB
MONTANA	Malmstrom AFB
NEBRASKA	Offutt AFB
NEVADA	Creech AFB
	Nellis AFB
NEW MEXICO	Cannon AFB
	Holloman AFB
	Kirtland AFB
NORTH CAROLINA	Pope Field
	Seymour Johnson AFB
NORTH DAKOTA	Grand Forks AFB
	Minot AFB
OHIO	Wright Patterson AFB
OKLAHOMA	Altus AFB
	Tinker AFB
	Vance AFB
SOUTH CAROLINA	Shaw AFB
SOUTH DAKOTA	Ellsworth AFB
TENNESSEE	Arnold AFB
TEXAS	Dyess AFB
	Goodfellow AFB
	Laughlin AFB
	Sheppard AFB
UTAH	Hill AFB
WASHINGTON	Fairchild AFB
WYOMING	F.E. Warren AFB

Joint Bases (AF Installations)

JB Andrews (JBA), Maryland
JB Charleston (JBC), South Carolina
JB Elmendorf-Ft Richardson (JBER), Alaska
JB Langley-Ft Eustis (JBEL), Virginia
JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JBMDL), New Jersey
JB San Antonio (Randolph, Lackland, Ft Sam Houston-JBSA), Texas

Joint Bases (Army Installations)

JB Anacostia-Bolling (JBAB), District of Washington
JB Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Washington

Joint Bases (Navy Installations)

Joint Mariannas – Navy (Anderson AFB), Guam
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPH-H), Hawaii

Overseas

ASIA	Kadena AB, Japan Kunsan AB, South Korea Misawa AB, Japan Osan AB, South Korea Yokota AB, Japan
EUROPE	Aviano AB, Italy Incirlik AB, Turkey Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal Ramstein AB, Germany RAF Lakenheath, UK RAF Mildenhall, UK Spangdahlem AB, Germany

OPSEC – What is it?

Operations Security is governed by Air Force Instruction (AFI) 10-1101. Simply summarized, "OPSEC is the process of identifying critical friendly information and analyzing friendly actions related to operations, acquisition, and other activities to identify those actions that can be observed by potential adversaries … it is a methodology applicable to any operational activity."

<u>What does this mean, in English?</u>

OPSEC protects US military operations – planned, in progress and those completed. The success of these operations, the lives of servicemen and women in harm's way and the lives of your children and yourself may be jeopardized by seemingly small bits of unclassified information from telephone calls, e-mails, blogs, tweets, and just simple small talk at a restaurant. Our growing reliance on electronic communications and social media has become the greatest threat to OPSEC.

Picture a large jigsaw puzzle with many pieces. Sometimes two pieces fit together and sometimes they don't – immediately. In OPSEC, every bit of information is a puzzle piece. When alone, some information might seem unimportant, but when matched with data, our enemies of freedom can put together the "big picture" of a military operation.

Our enemies rely on family members to know and reveal pieces of sensitive information, especially through social media. Social media is a wonderful way to feel close to a loved one who is far away, but can also compromise the safety of our Airmen. We must balance our fundamental right to freedom of speech and responsibly safeguard valuable information from our adversaries. When communicating on sites like Facebook, DO NOT post the following information, directly or indirectly: deployment/return dates; information about location, mission, equipment status, unit morale, and future ops; and photos of loved one at identifiable deployed location. Refer to AddendumB (Slides): Key Spouse OPSEC for Social Networking

Bottom line? Basic truths for OPSEC – "if in doubt, leave it out," "loose lips do sink ships," and, "a FB post is worth a thousand consequences."

For supplemental information, refer to *Addendum B (Slides): Key Spouse OPSEC for Social Networking*, at the end of this Guide. You may also contact the OPSEC Office on any military base for additional questions on communications security.

Force Protection (FP) Conditions

The following is a brief explanation of FP Conditions. The specific measures (such as ID card checking) carried out under each condition can vary from base to base, in the continental U.S. and overseas. If you have questions about FP Conditions, talk to the Security Forces personnel at your military base.

Alpha
There is the threat of possible activity against the base or resources under operational control of assigned/hosted units. Increase your vigilance against a possible local threat against Air Force resources.

Bravo
There is the increased and more predictable threat of possible activity against the base or resources under operational control of assigned/hosted units. Maximize your vigilance against a possible local threat against Air Force resources. Be cognizant of who does and who doesn't belong in your work area.

Charlie
An incident occurs or intelligence is received that indicates imminent terrorist acts against the base or resources under operational control of assigned/hosted units. Secure all work areas and implement 100% identification and entry control procedures for all facilities. Look for suspicious activity and report it immediately.

Delta
A terrorist attack occurs at the base, or intelligence is received that indicates terrorist attack will be directed against the base, or against resources under operational control of assigned/hosted units. Secure all work areas and implement 100% identification and entry control procedures for all facilities. Look for suspicious activity and report it immediately.

Married to the Air Force . . .
"Off We Go!"

The following checklist should be completed as soon as possible after marrying an Airman. The active-duty member must accompany the new spouse, or provide a specific power of attorney to the new spouse, if he or she cannot be there.

✓ **DEERS Enrollment**

Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is an automated information system that lists all military members and their dependents eligible for military benefits, including TRICARE. All military members are listed automatically, but their family members must be registered at the Military Personnel Section (MPS) when they apply for an ID card or when there is a birth in the family.

Required documents to register a spouse include:

- Birth certificate
- Social Security Card
- Marriage Certificate
- Official Picture ID, such as a driver's license.

Required documents to register a stepchild:

- Parents' marriage certificate
- Divorce decree with custody information
- Child's birth certificate
- Child's social security card

Required documents to register an adopted child:

- Final adoption decree
- Child's birth certificate
- Child's social security card

NOTE: Marriage certificates, divorce decrees and birth certificates must be certified. Copies are permissible. A 120-day temporary ID card may be issued until a certified copy of the marriage certificate or birth certificate is received.

✓ ID Card

Once you are enrolled in DEERS, you are eligible to receive a military ID card. When applying, be sure to bring a picture ID (such as a driver's license). After you receive your ID card, *guard it carefully and always carry it with you*!

You will be required to show your ID card for access to military bases and facilities. With this card, you are eligible to use the Commissary, BX, Air Force recreational facilities, legal office, and medical care.

All family members at the age of 10 or older are required to have an ID card. Also be sure to check the expiration dates and renew them before they expire.

✓ Tricare

If you are registered in DEERS and have a valid ID card, you are covered by one of the TRICARE (health care) programs. See page 67 in this guide for program information.

✓ Virtual Record of Emergency Data (vRed) and Servicemember's Group Life Insurance (SGLI)/Family SGLI

As a newly married Air Force spouse, please discuss the update of information on the vRed, SGLI and Family SGLI with your active-duty member – *it is critical that these documents be current and accurate!*

The Air Force member should also:

- At Military Personnel Section (formerly the MPF)
  - Update vRED
  - Name change (if applicable)
  - Update Military Personnel Data System
  - Update dog tags (if applicable)
  - Change BAS/BAH entitlement (if applicable)
  - Update address (if applicable)
  - Indicate beneficiary on SGLI/Family SGLI (if applicable)

- At Finance/Military Pay
  - Finalize change to BAS/BAH entitlements (if applicable)

- At the Legal Office
  - Obtain, update or change wills
  - Obtain specific powers of attorney if the military member is deployable

✓ Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)

Many new spouses do not know that military retirement pay ends when the member dies. If the member has an accident or serious illness and dies right after retiring, the spouse will not receive the retirement pay. The SBP is an option so the spouse can receive a portion of the retirement pay if the member dies after retirement. A premium is withheld from the retirement pay and the surviving spouse will get a percentage of the retirement pay. It's important that the active-duty member and spouse become familiar with SBP as soon as possible to determine if it is an option for them. Contact the SBP Officer at the A&FRC for more information or check the website: http://www.afpc.af.mil/library/casualty.asp

✓ Getting a New Social Security Card

For information and to download forms, go to http://ssa.gov/replace_sscard.html.

- For a name change on your card, you will need documentation that shows your old name and your new name. Your new card will show your new name but will have the same number as your old card. Your old social security card cannot be accepted as evidence of identity.

- For a new card, you will need to provide documents that show your age, citizenship or lawful alien status, and who you are; for example, a birth certificate and a school record. If you have downloaded the form, additional examples are listed.

- NOTE: The Social Security Administration cannot accept photocopies of documents. You must submit original documents or copies certified by the custodian of the record. Notarized copies are not acceptable.

- If you were born outside the United States, you also generally must show proof of U.S. citizenship of lawful alien status.

✓ Applying for a New Social Security Card for a Child

It's easy to apply at birth. When you give information for your baby's birth certificate, you'll be able to apply for a social security number (SSAN) for your baby, by providing both parents' SSANs. The Social Security Administration will assign your newborn a number and mail the social security card directly to you.

If you apply for your baby's number at a Social Security Administration office:

- Fill out an application (you should provide both parents' SSANs);
- Show evidence of your child's age, identity and citizenship; and
- Show evidence of your identity.

Airman and Family Readiness Center

(FORMERLY CALLED THE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER)

Airman & Family Readiness Centers offer support and assistance to all Department of Defense employees and their families. This support exists at all active military installations (Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps) and at many of the active Guard/Reserve bases. Be aware that the Centers can be referred to by different names, depending on the military branch of Service (Air Force = Airman & Family Readiness Center; Army = Army Community Service; Navy/Marine Corps = Fleet and Family Support Center), but the services they provide are comparable.

Airman & Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) Services:

Air Force Aid Society (AFAS). The AFAS is the official charity of the Air Force and is a non-profit organization that promotes the Air Force mission by assisting Air Force active-duty and family members, as well as retirees, in emergency situations. Although assistance is decided on a *case-by-case basis*, AFAS can provide assistance in the form of interest-free loans or grants for basic needs, such as living expenses (food, utilities, rent); emergency leave travel; funeral expenses of immediate family members; moving costs, and unexpected auto repairs. In addition, AFAS funds provide funding for many quality of life initiatives, such as:

Bundles for Babies
Nursing Moms (Loans to help pay for breast pump purchases)
Respite Care
Give Parents A Break
Car Care Because We Care
Disaster Assistance (AFAS will supplement if necessary after the Red Cross assists)
Childcare for Volunteers
Child Care for PCS
HeartLink (Orientation for new spouses)

In addition, AFAS sponsors the General Henry Arnold Education Grant Program (a $2000 education grant to eligible applicants), and Spouse Tuition Assistance (for those stationed overseas).

Key Spouse Program is the unit-based, commander-directed, family readiness and assistance program, with the primary objective of building resilient families. Well-informed families are strong families, and that strength contributes to the success of unit's mission accomplishment.

The Key Spouse (KS) is a volunteer appointed by the unit commander to serve as a communication link between the chain of command (commander and first sergeant), commander's spouse or key spouse mentor, and families. The KS provides timely information and referral services to families, serving as a "lifeline to family readiness." Depending on the size of the unit, more than one KS may be appointed. The A&FRC provides initial and recurring training to the KS and acts as a significant unit resource.

Family Readiness Program prepares families and single military members for deployments and short tours. A resource network for the member and spouse/family will be provided throughout the three phases of deployment: pre-deployment, post-deployment, and reunion; spouses are encouraged to attend these briefings when held. Families of active-duty, Guard, and Reserve members will be assisted as they depart from, arrive at, or settle near a base without their sponsors. The Readiness NCO serves as an advisor to unit commanders, first sergeants, key spouses, and unit support group leaders. The program also facilitates the Hearts Apart Program.

Hearts Apart Program is for spouses, loved ones, and families of all military members who are separated due to deployments, remote tours, or extended TDY. Hearts Apart encompasses initiatives such as morale/video calls, Give Parents a Break, Car Care Because We Care, and monthly activities for the families, which will vary by base. At the monthly activities, helping agencies such as A&FRC, first sergeants, chaplains, and MFLCs are available to discuss any issues families may have. Families are encouraged to network there and help each other.

Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC)

- Provides short term, situational, problem-solving counseling services to service members and their families.
- Provides psycho-education to help military service members and their families understand the impact of stress, deployments, and family reunions following deployments and the stresses of military lifestyle.
- MFLC services augment existing military support services.
- Services can be provided on or off military installations to accommodate clients.
- Services provided to individuals, couples, families and groups.

Military OneSource

Military OneSource offers tremendous support to military families. It provides a 24-hour, 7 days a week, toll free telephone and Internet/Web-based service for active-duty members, the Guard and the Reserve (regardless of activation status), and their family members.

Military OneSource can provide information on topics such as:

- Parenting
- Child care
- Education
- Relocation
- Financial and legal matters
- Emotional issues and well-being
- Grief and loss
- Deployment and reunion issues
- Tax returns
- Translation/Interpreter services

Free educational materials (booklets, CDs, articles) are available in many subject areas.

Military OneSource provides real help, anytime, anywhere 7/24/365 through calling **1-800-342-9647** or at **www.militaryonesource.com.**

Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) provides services to all DOD personnel designed to ease the stress of moving from one location to another, stateside or overseas. We provide Smooth Move briefings, or informational workshops, for both stateside and overseas moves, which are loaded with tips to prepare individuals and families for their upcoming PCSs. RAP also offers a variety of classes to help with adjustment to the new area and local culture. Kids on the Move is a class designed specifically to assist children with relocating concerns.

RAP also provides vouchers for Child Care for PCS, a program funded by AFAS, which pays for 20 hours of childcare per child from an on-base licensed provider at both ends of a move.

www.militaryonesource.com
www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil

The websites listed above have current information on military installations worldwide to ease the uncertainty of a new assignment (schools, employment outlook, housing, and accessibility to books, videos, and computer software to help families plan the trip).

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is a Congressionally-mandated program designed to assist military personnel/families who are separating or retiring from the military, as well as DOD civilians adversely impacted by downsizing or Reduction-in-Force (RIF). The emphasis is on job search and transitional preparation, rather than job placement. This program is administered through mandatory pre-separation counseling, employment related workshops and seminars, and one-on-one counseling. Congress requires that all personnel be afforded "pre-separation counseling" one year prior to separation or two years prior to retirement, but no later than 90 days prior, except in the case of a short notice separation. During this counseling, personnel are advised of any or all available benefits and entitlements, and of programs to assist them in retirement/separation as well as future employment.

TAP professionals provide recurring education on employment-related processes: transferable skills, want ads, networking, electronic job search, resume and cover letter preparation, interviews, career planning, self-assessment, financial planning, dressing for success, company research, and job offer negotiation. In addition, the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) covers VA programs, to include disability compensation and vocational rehabilitation. Spouses are invited.

Employment Program assists spouses with obtaining local employment or preparing for a job search when they PCS to another base. Program workshops enable spouses to increase their marketability and employability through assessments, resume preparation, interview techniques, image enhancement and career planning. Some managers maintain listings of the jobs being advertised in the local area, plus access to numerous websites containing job banks. This program can also assist clients wanting to target Federal Civil Service employment or positions with the Base Exchange and the Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) activities.

Volunteer Resource Program (VRP) assists individuals in finding volunteer jobs that suit the clients' interests and career goals, as well as helping local and base communities in staffing their volunteer needs. Personnel volunteering on base receive free childcare, funded by Air Force Aid Society, with a licensed on-base provider or at the Child Development Center. The number of weekly hours of paid childcare varies base to base.

Personal Financial Readiness Program (PFRP) provides education, information, and counseling in the area of personal financial management to any ID card holder to enhance their ability to make informed consumer choices. Outreach is done through workshops, Commanders Calls, one-on-one financial counseling and computerized financial programs. Basic budgeting and credit card education is also held for First-Term Airmen at their initial operational base of assignment.

Personal & Family Work Life (P&WL) provides assistance with individual and family concerns and offers prevention and enrichment services designed to strengthen adaptability to the demands of military life. P&WL programs help individuals anticipate and meet challenges throughout the stages of the family life cycle. They provide individual assessments and referrals to on-/off-base agencies/professionals for personal, marital, or family issues and concerns. They also sponsor a variety of skills-based workshops including parenting, couples communication, problem solving, time and life management, single parent support, stress management and anger management. The professional services of a Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC) for adults and youth are also available.

Information & Referral (I&R) Program provides customers with information about installation and community resources; it is a link between client needs and available services both on- and off-base.

Wounded Warrior Program was designed to ensure Airmen receive on-going support and care from point of injury to no less than 5 years after separation or retirement. The A&FRC provides personalized services in such areas as transition and relocation assistance, employment search, resume-building, and financial counseling.

Exceptional Family Member Program – Support (EFMP-S) is a community support function designed to provide assistance to those family members with special needs. Services include: information & referral, respite care, early intervention and school information, and relocation and financial assistance.

School Liaison Officer (SLO). Given that the average military family moves 9 times in a 20-year career, military children are often faced with a variety of school-related challenges, such as school choice, transfer of records, immunizations, advanced study/accelerated programs, special education needs, and graduation requirements.

The SLO promotes transitional support for school children through communication, awareness and partnerships among local schools, military units, and parents. The SLO improves the educational environment by advocating for military children's needs and providing a process to address and resolve specific issues. In addition, the SLO acts as the primary advisor and representative for the installation commander at school functions throughout the education community as it relates to the military dependent child.

The Key Spouse Program

The Key Spouse (KS) Program is a unit-based, commander-directed, family readiness and assistance program, with the primary objective to build resilient families. Well-informed families are strong families, and that strength translates to the unit's successful mission accomplishment. It is a collaborative effort between the unit leadership, the KS volunteer, and the Airman & Family Readiness Center.

The KS is typically a spouse volunteer in the unit who is appointed by the commander and serves as a communication link between the chain of command (commander and first sergeant), commander's spouse or key spouse mentor, and fellow spouses/families. The KS provides timely information and referral services to families, as necessary, serving as a "lifeline to family readiness." Depending on the size of the unit, more than one KS may be appointed. The A&FRC provides initial and recurring training to the KS volunteers and acts as a collaborative unit resource.

Ongoing communication between the KS and families of deployed members via calls, e-mails, newsletters, and social gatherings, allows deployed families to remain connected with their Air Force unit and community, and reduces stress and the sense of isolation. Thanks to this connectivity, deployed families report fewer personal problems and issues during separation.

For more information on the KS Program, contact your First Sergeant or the A&FRC.

First Sergeant

"My job is People … every one is my business!"

One of the most invaluable resources available within every squadron/unit is the First Sergeant or "Shirt." The First Sergeant's primary duty is to promote the morale, welfare, and health of the enlisted Airmen and families in their squadron, and advise and assist the commander in maintaining discipline and standards. When an Airman has a problem about pay, leave, travel, dependent care, work details, housing, etc., the First Sergeant can facilitate resolution through his/her established relationship with appropriate agencies, on- or off-base. The First Sergeant also assists spouse/family members any time, especially when the Airman is TDY or deployed, and works closely with the squadron's Key Spouse. New spouses are encouraged to meet and become acquainted with their First Sergeant.

HeartLink

An Orientation for New Air Force Spouses

The Heart Link Program is designed for new Air Force spouses. It concentrates on the Air Force mission, customs, traditions, protocol, as well as resources and services.

Do you have a full understanding of what the Air Force is all about, what all those funny words (acronyms) mean, what the correct military protocol is, what services are available, etc.?

Confusing, isn't it? This one-day class was developed to help clear up your confusion by helping you learn more about the Air Force.

We meet in the morning to get acquainted over coffee and snacks. During the day, guest speakers will present a variety of helpful information. For example, someone from Finance will explain what a Leave & Earnings Statement (LES). But this won't be a dull day of just listening to briefings. We also have some exciting games and you'll receive coupons, gifts, door prizes and a delicious, free lunch.

You will also receive your first Air Force coin and learn about the interesting history of this military tradition!

We want this day to be especially for you. So, if you have children, please ask about arrangements you can make for free childcare during the orientation.

Come enjoy the day and network with other spouses as important member of the Air Force community!

Sign up at your Airman & Family Readiness Center!

Coin History

The coins date back to a WWI encounter between a downed American flyer and some suspicious French.

The French thought the flier to be a German saboteur and wanted to execute him. However, when the flier presented his unit insignia to his would-be executioners, they recognized his squadron. Rather than shoot him, his captors presented him with a bottle of wine.

When the flier returned to his squadron and related his experience, it soon became customary to carry a medallion or coin at all times for the following challenge: a challenger would ask to see the coin. If the challenged individual could not produce his coin, he was required to purchase a drink of choice for the challenger. However, if the challenged could produce the coin, then the challenger was required to pay for the drink.

This tradition has continued and grown in popularity over the years. Today, the rules of engagement demand that the coin be on your person at all times and that the owner is responsible for the coin's security.

The modern coin challenge is as follows:

If the coin strikes a hard surface, it constitutes a challenge and requires an immediate response in which all other coin owners must produce their coins.

- If everyone produces a coin, the challenger must buy a round of drinks for the group.
- If any coin owner fails to produce his coin, he must buy a round for all those producing theirs.

There are several versions of coin history and tradition, but in any case, if you are a known coin owner, be sure to carry it "on your person" wherever you go!

Military Spouse Career Advancement Account

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) provides military spouses the opportunity and financing to receive the training and education needed for portable careers that will persist during the military lifestyle of multiple relocations. The Department of Defense has funded a maximum benefit of $4,000 with a fiscal cap of $2,000 to eligible military spouses to use toward associated degree programs, licenses, certifications, or credentials leading to employment (not higher degrees). The spouse must finish the program of study within three years from start date of first course.

Eligibility:

- Spouses of active-duty members: E1-E5, W1-W2 and O1-O2.
- Spouses of activated Guard & Reserve with the same ranks are also eligible (must be able to start and complete while sponsor is on Title 10 orders.

A military spouse can apply for MyCAA Financial Assistance after creating a MyCAA Career and Training Plan on www.MilitaryOneSource.com.
For further information, contact MilitaryOneSource at 1-888-342-9647 or visit your base A&FRC.

Additional Base Resources

Child Development Center (CDC)

Base CDCs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). They accept children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. The development of the "whole" child and interaction in a social setting are extremely important aspects of the Child Development Program. Affective, social, creative, cognitive, language and physical growth are key elements.

The Child Development Program includes computers in all the preschool rooms. Weekly curriculum plans, which are age appropriate, are developed for the individual needs of each child. Classroom curriculum includes science, math, literacy, arts, woodworking, dramatic play, music and outdoor play.

Eligibility – Varies base to base. Typically, children are eligible for enrollment as a dependent of a military member or DoD civilian.

Costs – The weekly fee is based upon total family income and includes two meals and two snacks each day, including formula and baby food for infants. All meals and snacks meet USDA requirements. Drop-In hourly care (varies base to base) is provided on a space available basis. Reservations guidelines also vary base to base.

Registration – Patrons must complete an application for CDC enrollment. Applicants are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. If two applicants apply at the same time, priority will be given to single military, then to dual military families.

The CDC also offers employment opportunities for military spouses throughout the world.

Family Child Care (FCC)

The FCC program offers:

- Extended Care Program
- 20 Free hours of child care for PCS paid by AFAS
- Training for parents and providers (on safety, health & child development issues)
- Lending library for licensed providers
- Aid to parents in search of quality care
- USDA approved meals
- Providers with in-home care for:
    - Before and after school
    - Weekend and evening hours
    - Hourly "drop in" care
    - Infant care
    - Preschool learning environment

Youth Center

The Youth Center is open to youth 6 to 18 years old. Children who are 6-8 years of age must be supervised by an adult at all times, unless they are in a structured program. Weekly fees are based on total family income.

Activities are planned throughout the year and pre-teens and teens can participate in dances, parties, field trips, special events, lock-ins, skating and basketball. Check with your installation's Youth Center to find out what they offer!

Youth programs are also offered in cooperation with other organizations. These may include: 4-H Clubs, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Air Force Service Agency, Civil Air Patrol and intramural sports.

Pen Pal Program
The Pen Pal Program matches incoming youth with a youth sponsor stationed at the base of reassignment. The youth sponsor will be the communication link with the incoming youth and provide information about schools, activities and things to do at the new base. The youth sponsor will also welcome and introduce the new youth to the Youth Activities Center.

Youth Employment
A youth babysitting certification program is offered through the Youth Activities Center for children 12 years and older. Once the course has been completed, names are maintained on file at the Youth Activities Center for parents to use for babysitters.

Legal Office

The Legal Office provides military families with powers of attorney, notaries, wills, assistance with paperwork for reimbursement on household goods claims, divorce and dependent care issues, Soldiers & Sailors Civil Relief Act, debtor-creditor issues, consumer law problems, veterans' reemployment rights, landlord-tenant and lease issues, tax assistance, and involuntary allotment issues. They cannot assist Air Force members or their families with establishing commercial enterprises, criminal issues, ethics violations, Law of Armed Conflict, issues the Air Force has an interest in, legal concerns of other parties, drafting or reviewing legal documents, or representation in civil court.

Family Advocacy Program

Part of the Base Medical Group, Family Advocacy is the agency dedicated to fostering healthy families and communities through education and outreach to identify and prevent abuse or neglect of family members. The staff is responsible for investigating reports of domestic abuse and provides recommendations for intervention services if the domestic abuse is substantiated.

Family Advocacy also provides marriage and family classes in such areas as anger management, parenting, counseling and referral, and prevention services, as well as

interpersonal and organizational conflict resolution. They also offer pre- and post-natal care classes. The New Parent Support Program helps with breastfeeding guidance and nurse home visits. Family Advocacy also assesses reassignment clearances for families enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program - Support (EFMP-S). They validate that their needs can be met at the new assignment.

Mental Health Clinic

Part of the Base Medical Group, Mental Health provides counseling and referral, stress management programs, and drug and alcohol abuse counseling. They may sponsor support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and groups for those who have been sexually or physically abused, as well as groups for families who have a disabled member. Mental Health is also the point of contact for Critical Incident Stress Management, and can provide debriefings and one-on-one assistance for those who have experienced a traumatic event.

Patient Advocate

Located at the Base Medical Facility, Patient Advocate is the office that handles concerns/complaints from military families about their care or about the medical staff.

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC)

The Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) is available at major DoD installations to assist victims (survivors) of sexual assault. The SARC serves as the single point of contact for integrating and coordinating sexual assault victim (survivor) care 24/7, 365 days a year on the base/installation and assigned geographically separated units. The SARC office also provides required Sexual Assault Prevention Training to Air Force members to reinforce the Air Force's commitment to eliminate sexual assaults through awareness/prevention training, education, victim advocacy, response, reporting, and accountability.

Contact the SARC office if you feel you have been a victim of sexual assault. After contact with the SARC office, you will be assigned a trained Victim Advocate. The Victim Advocate will explain reporting options, and may meet you at the hospital for a medical evaluation, treatment and examination. It is your option to accept/decline victim advocacy.

The DoD Safe Helpline provides a live, confidential and anonymous sexual assault hotline for the DoD community: www.SafeHelpline.org or call 1-877-995-5247.

Education Office

The Education Office provides educational counseling, information about stateside colleges and universities all over the world, and assistance with financial aid and scholarship information. Family members are welcome to participate, but active-duty military have priority to class spaces. AFAS offers the Spouse Tuition Assistance Program (STAP) for spouses who accompany their active-duty Airmen, enlisted and officers, to an overseas location and enroll in a college program. STAP provides partial tuition assistance and

focuses on the completion of degree or certificate programs with increased occupational opportunities for spouses.

Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA) program can provide up to $4000 of financial assistance for military spouses. For up-to-date information, spouses may contact MilitaryOneSource (www.militaryonesource.com or 1-800-342-9647).

For full details on the Post 9/11 GI Bill, contact the Education Office or visit www.gibill.va.gov

Health and Wellness Center

The Health and Wellness Center offers a variety of programs dedicated to prevention and health enhancement. Lifestyle modification and support programs include tobacco cessation, stress management, nutrition education, fitness assessments and personalized counseling, weight management classes, body fat analysis and cardiovascular disease prevention.

Housing Office

First point of contact for any issue to do with housing, both on-and off-base. The Housing Office has listings of available houses and apartments for rent off base, and they maintain the waiting list for on-base housing. For off-base housing, it is always best to check with the Housing Office first to get information about any areas that may be off-limits to military personnel. They can also assist with the lease, in particular the "military clause," which when included in the lease, can release you from a lease if on-base housing becomes available, or if you receive orders to PCS, before the terms of the lease are up.

Thrift Shop

Some military bases may have a Thrift Shop, which is operated by a private/ nonprofit organization where families can put their item(s) on consignment and receive their asking price with a percentage going back to the organization managing the Thrift Shop. This percentage is often used to fund scholarships and other base programs. Donations of new or lightly used items are also welcomed. Families enjoy shopping for "treasures" at the Thrift Shop for minimal cost.

Airman's Attic

The Airman's Attic contains household goods, clothing, furniture and other items available free of charge (grade levels may vary from base to base) to Airmen. Donations of items lightly used and in good condition are always accepted.

Chapel

Military chaplains have been around since the days of colonial forces, often ministering on the battlefield. Today the chaplain remains a vital member of our Armed Forces. Chaplains have the responsibility of caring for the spiritual well-being of military members and their families during peacetime and war. While chaplains are not clinical counselors, they are often called on to help people with various life challenges – issues related to combat stress, deployment, marriage, profession, family, substance abuse, and finances. Chaplains work closely with other base agencies, including the Red Cross, A&FRC, and Family Advocacy, and provide referrals as necessary. They also conduct seminars and retreats. Seminar topics may include: marriage enrichment, parenting skills, anger management. Base Chapels around the Air Force also host Airmen's Ministry Centers (AMCs); each Center is unique to its base, but have the similar purpose of providing a place where Airmen can meet and relax in an alcohol-free environment.

Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF)

Some military installations have a Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF). Use is limited to active-duty, retired, and family members enrolled in DEERS. DoD Veterinary Service is committed to standardization among VTFs. This means no matter which VTF you visit, the same services will be available at the same prices and care standards.

Limited services: eye/ear/skin exams, health certificates, check-ups, blood work (thyroid, diabetes, etc.), microchip implants, PCS preparation, and tests (fecal, canine heartworm, and feline leukemia).

Vaccinations: rabies (1-3 years), kennel cough (1 year), distemper/parvo/lipatol (1 year), distemper/parvo (3 year), FVRCP, and feline leukemia.

Pharmacy: flea and tick products, heartworm prevention medications, vitamins, shampoos, and other medicines.

Contact the local VTF for more complete information and hours.

Base Library

The Base Library serves all active-duty and retired members, DoD civilian personnel, and family members. You must show your military ID to register for their services.

Services include but are not limited to:

- Educational support: CLEP and DANTES study materials and SAT, ACT, GMAT, GRE, and AP test guides.
- Computer resources: free Wi-Fi and use of computer terminals.
- Copy machines
- Monthly/seasonal activities: children's story times; summer reading program; educational seminars

American Red Cross

Today's Red Cross (www.redcross.org) is active around the globe in helping Air Force members and their families in daily life and during deployment and mobilization. The Red Cross can help with:

- Emergency communications between military members and their families. There is a Red Cross office at every major base overseas.
- Financial assistance at times of crisis.
- Counseling and referral.

The Red Cross also offers military and family members lifesaving training (first aid, CPR, and water safety). They are always looking for volunteers, too, to serve in the Red Cross office, hospital, and in various offices throughout the base. Contact the base Red Cross office for placement and training.

Base Exchange or BX

The BX is the military department store. AAFES (Army Air Force Exchange Service) mission is to provide quality merchandise and services at competitive prices (an estimated 25% discount) to active-duty and retired, Reserve, Guard, and family members with proper military ID, and to generate reasonable earnings to supplement appropriated funds for the support of Air Force Morale, Welfare, and Recreation programs and quality of life improvements.

Facilities that make up the BX are: the Main Store (storefront and on-line); Auto Pride; Shoppette; Military Clothing and Sales; and Food Court.

AAFES is also a source of employment for family members. Many associates have worked for years with AAFES as they've moved from one installation to another with their military members.

Commissary

The Commissary is the military grocery store. Base Commissaries are operated by Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) at installations stateside and around the world. Active-duty and retired, Reserve and Guard (on orders), and family members with proper military ID can purchase food and other items at cost with no sales tax. Commissaries are required by law to sell items at prices set only high enough to recover item cost, with no profit or overhead factored into item price. Because the commissary charges you what it costs them, prices will vary from commissary to commissary, depending on local costs. You will see a 5% surcharge covers the operational costs – cashier's salaries, electricity, etc.

In Case of Emergency . . .

If you or someone in your family has a personal emergency, here are general guidelines to follow. Emergency, in this context, is usually defined as a life-threatening injury or illness, or a death. When in doubt, contact the First Sergeant, the Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) office, the American Red Cross (ARC), or your squadron's Key Spouse.

For *medical* emergencies involving life, limb, or eyesight, CALL 911 immediately.

At your home base:

- If your active-duty spouse is with you, he/she should first contact the First Sergeant. After duty hours, contact the First Sergeant on his/her cell phone or through the Base Command Post (it's important to have these on your key numbers contact list).
- If your active-duty spouse is TDY or deployed, you may still contact the First Sergeant. The First Sergeant can give you assistance and advice on the best way to handle the emergency.
- Visit or call your local AFAS; offices are located at all Air Force Bases/installations worldwide in the A&FRC. In emergency situations (emergency travel), AFAS can be reached 24/7 through the base Command Post.

Away from your home base, but near another Air Force Base:

- You may receive assistance at any Air Force Base. Again, the AFAS is located in the A&FRC.

Away from your home base, but NOT near another Air Force Base:

- AFAS has reciprocal agreements that allow you to receive assistance through these other agencies:

Army Emergency Relief (located at Army installations, worldwide)
Coast Guard Aid Society (located at Coast Guard installations, worldwide)
Navy - Marine Corps Relief Society (located at Navy installations, worldwide)
American Red Cross Chapters (located throughout the United States)

For the active-duty member to be allowed to take emergency leave because of a family emergency, the ARC often has to confirm the nature of the emergency. If your family calls you about an emergency, ask them to contact their local chapter of the ARC. Their local chapter will transmit a message to the closest ARC chapter to your base (sometimes located on base) describing the nature of the emergency.

Emergency leave for the active-duty member may be granted for an emergency involving immediate family members. The unit First Sergeant or Commander may allow emergency leave in other cases, depending upon the circumstances.

Please note, the Air Force will not pay for travel for personal emergencies. Many overseas bases have policies to help reduce the cost of returning to the CONUS, but there are still costs to the family. AFAS can give loans to help pay for emergency travel. Whenever possible, it is wise for Air Force families to have an emergency savings fund.

My Vital Phone Numbers, Dates, and Other Information

My Family:	Birth Date/Location:	Social Security Number:
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

My Address:

_____
_____
_____
_____

My Spouse's Deployed Address/Phone:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Emergency Numbers:

Fire_____
Emergency Medical Services_____

Police/Sheriff_____
Poison Control Center_____

Make a copy of this list, and post one by each phone in your home.

Military Information

Member's rank _____
Date of enlistment_____
Unit _____
Unit location/phone number_____
Commander name/phone number_____

Other Important Numbers/E-mail/Web Sites:

Spouse/Family Support Group_____

Family Support Center _____

Other_____

Keep important documents in one place for easy and quick access: birth certificates; adoption papers; naturalization papers; marriage certificate; divorce decree; DD Form 214; retirement orders; will; information on bank accounts/insurance policies/mortgage

Spouses Clubs

Spouses Clubs were chartered to foster a spirit of friendship, moral support, and fun through cultural and social activities among its members, and to enhance the quality of life for the community through selfless service to others.

Most Air Forces bases have an Enlisted Spouses Club (ESC) and an Officers Spouses Club (OSC), both non-profit organizations. At monthly programs and special activities, new spouses have a wonderful avenue to meet new people, make new friends and learn about their new community.

Spouses Clubs offer opportunities to make a difference for the military and civilian communities through volunteering in different club positions and with sponsored activities and charitable events. Spouses Clubs award educational scholarships and make charitable contributions to both military and civilian causes. Some Spouses Clubs manage base Thrift Shops, whose proceeds go toward charitable services.

Get involved – your Base Spouse Club needs you! Volunteer and share your experiences!

To learn more, visit your base's Spouse Club on-line and on Facebook!

Military Pay and Allowances

Air Force members receive different types of pay and allowances, which are determined by rank, years of service, specific duties and skills, base location, and whether or not there are family dependents. Refer to www.defensetravel.dod.mil for current rates, as applicable.

✓ Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit is the electronic transfer of pay to a bank account. It is the fastest and safest way to get your money. All Air Force members are required to have Direct Deposit.

✓ Types of Pay

There are several categories of pay and this can become complicated. Some pay is taxable and some is not. Not all of the details on types of pay are given below; for more information, contact the Base Finance Office.

- **Basic Pay.** Every Air Force member receives basic pay, which is usually the largest portion of pay. The amount of basic pay is determined by rank/pay grade and length of time in the Air Force. Basic pay is taxable income. Marriage status does not affect this type of pay.

- **Special and Incentive Pay and Bonuses**. Air Force members receive special pay when they serve under hazardous conditions, and for other kinds of duty or needed skills. Bonuses can be awarded for enlistment or reenlistment, especially to recruits or members with critical skills. Examples are:

  - *Hostile fire/imminent danger pay* is for service within an officially designated hostile fire/imminent danger zone area. Effective 1 Feb 2012, the Air Force member will now receive imminent danger pay only for days they actually spend in hazardous areas at a rate of $225/month.

  - *Hazardous duty incentive pay* is given for service that involves particular dangers, including handling fuel and toxic chemicals, and parachute jumping.

  - *Aviation career incentive pay (Flight Pay)* includes extra pay and bonuses that can be given to aviators and aircrew members.

  - *Hardship duty pay* compensates service in areas of assignment with extraordinary arduous quality-of-life conditions; payable at $50, $100, or $150 per month depending on location.

  - *Voluntary/involuntary separation pay* helps with transition from active duty.

  - *Enlistment and reenlistment bonuses* may be paid for critical skills, and are used to encourage recruitment and retention of Air Force members.

✓ Types of Allowances

- **Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS).** BAS is a non-taxable allowance to help offset costs for an Air Force member's food. BAS is the same whether or not you have dependents, as it is not intended to offset costs of meals for family members. All officers receive a set BAS. Enlisted members receive full BAS, but pay for their meals (including those government-provided).

  Because BAS is intended to provide meals for the Air Force member, its level is linked to the price of food. Therefore, each year BAS is adjusted based upon the increase of the price of food as measured by the USDA food cost index.

  2014 BAS rates are: Enlisted $357.55/month; officers $246.24/month.

- **Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH).** BAH is a non-taxable allowance for housing. It is authorized to assist members by defraying housing costs when not assigned government quarters. The amount of BAH is determined by rank/grade, dependency/family status, and location. Air Force members with dependents receive a higher allowance. This allowance partially compensates Air Force members for their housing expenses if they live in civilian communities. A service member with a family who lives in government family-type quarters is not entitled to BAH. A service member without a family who lives in the dorms receives partial BAH.

  Beginning with the 2012 BAH rates, the Department of Defense will publish the average percentage breakdown between rent, utilities and renters insurance for each Military Housing Area. This additional information will assist Air Force members with making informed housing choices when relocating to a new area.

- **Clothing Allowance** is a non-taxable allowance**.** Enlisted Air Force members are issued uniforms when first inducted into the Air Force. They also receive a replacement clothing maintenance allowance each year after that. This is always in an end-of-month paycheck, usually the month of the enlistment anniversary.

  Officers receive an initial allowance to purchase military clothing and do not receive a replacement clothing allowance.

  For certain duty assignments, officers and enlisted members may receive an allowance for civilian clothing.

- **Family Separation Allowance (FSA)** is non-taxable allowance paid when Air Force members are separated from their dependents because of official duty assignments to help pay for maintaining two residences. It begins when the active duty member is separated from his/her family for more than 30 days, and is paid as a monthly allotment of $250 (pro-rated for periods less than a month).

- **Dislocation Allowance (DLA)** is non-taxable allowance paid to partially reimburse an Air Force member for expenses incurred in relocating the household on a PCS, ordered for the Government's convenience, or incident to evacuation. The amount is determined by the Air Force member's rank/grade and dependency status. DLA can be paid in advance; if not, then request DLA upon arrival at the new base.

- **Cost of Living Allowances (COLA)** is a taxable allowance paid to Air Force members to help offset the effects of higher cost areas in the CONUS since the basic pay tables do not vary based on location. COLA indexes for living costs are set for all areas of the United States and adjusted annually. COLA may vary based on your current rank/pay grade, time in service, and family/dependent status, and is based on the zip code of your duty station and not your home address. Even if the Air Force member is assigned for a tour of duty outside CONUS, the dependent family member may be eligible to continue to receive the COLA.

- **Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA)** is a non-taxable allowance paid to Air Force members assigned overseas and authorized to live off-base to help offset the higher cost of housing. OHA can change based on the current rate of exchange and is reviewed at least every six months. It also includes an allowance for utilities; this amount is based on surveys from military in the area, regardless of rank/pay grade.

- **Overseas Cost of Living Allowance (OCOLA)** is non-taxable allowance paid to Air Force members assigned overseas to offset higher costs of living for such items as food, clothing, and transportation. It is calculated by comparing the prices of goods and services overseas with average prices for equivalent goods and services in CONUS. The result of this comparison is an index that reflects a cost of living. If prices in CONUS are rising at a greater rate than those overseas, COLA will decrease. If prices overseas are rising at a greater rate than those in CONUS, COLA will increase. Similarly, if overseas prices rise or fall at the same rate as CONUS prices, COLA will stay the same. Nearly 600 locations overseas currently have costs of living that exceed national military averages.

✓ Pay Withholding or Deductions

- **Federal Income Tax.** Air Force members pay Federal income taxes on their basic pay, proficiency pay, and other special pay, and the appropriate amount is automatically withheld from each paycheck. Generally, allowances are tax-exempt.

- **State Income Tax**. Air Force members pay state income tax only to the state of their legal residence, regardless of where they are stationed. For most states, the appropriate amount is automatically withheld from each paycheck. Non-military income is taxable in the state in which it is earned. Because state laws are varied and complicated, the Legal Office should be consulted for specific questions.

- **Social Security Tax.** Only basic pay is taxable for Social Security and the appropriate amount is automatically withheld from each paycheck.

- **Medicare Tax.** Only basic pay is taxable for Medicare and the appropriate amount is automatically withheld from each paycheck.

- **Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).** You can contribute up to 7 percent of your basic pay each pay period to your TSP account. If you contribute to the TSP from your basic pay, you may also contribute from one to 100 percent of any incentive pay or special pay (including bonus pay). For more information about TSP, reference the "Thrift Savings Plan" section that follows.

- **Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) or Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI)** premium payment may also be deducted from your pay and will be reflected on the LES.

✓ Allotments

- To help Air Force members responsibly take care of their financial responsibilities, the Air Force allows them to make allotments. Allotments are portions of pay the Air Force member chooses to be sent to specific places and to specific people/institutions for investment purposes, family support, and debts.

- For instance, allotments can be made to provide support for family members, buy U.S. Savings Bonds, make charitable contributions, and pay for life insurance.

✓ Garnishment of Wages

- The Federal law now allows garnishment of military wages to pay for child support or alimony. In other words, military pay is subject to the legal process. Once there is a court order directing an Air Force member to pay child support or alimony, the military can withhold part of his/her salary to cover these payments. Local laws will be followed to decide how much money, if any, will be withheld.

  - ➢ The Legal office can offer advice, but cannot represent Air Force personnel in a pay garnishment situation.

  - ➢ Air Force members can avoid being taken to court and having their wages garnished by being sure they have met their moral and legal obligations.

- On occasion, the Air Force member may be erroneously overpaid in pay or allowances; the Finance office can garnish the member's wages to re-pay the amount overpaid.

✓ Payment While Away

- The Air Force requires that the Air Force member's pay be sent automatically to a checking or savings account.

- Arrangements can be made to have the bank transfer money to a checking or savings account and make electronic transfers to pay bills for rent, utilities, etc.

- If the Air Force member is married, establish a joint checking account so the spouse can pay bills and provide for the household.

- If the Air Force member will deploy, remember to get a ***specific power of attorney*** for the spouse through the Legal office. The spouse can then receive an LES and have pay questions answered, without distracting the deployed member. *Finance cannot help the spouse without a specific power of attorney if the member is not present!*

- It's recommended to establish a separate deployment checking account for the Air Force member to have funds transferred to take care of incidental expenses while deployed.

NOTE: Problems with military pay happen from time to time particularly during relocation and deployment. It's important to always check your LES for any overpayments as well as underpayments. With an overpayment, the Air Force will often recover the full amount from the member's next paycheck without notice. So to emphasize again, visit your Finance office immediately when a pay discrepancy is identified.

If you need financial counseling to better manage your checkbook or spending, visit the Airman and Family Readiness Center. They can help you with a financial plan before the situation gets out of control!

Leave and Earnings Statement (LES)

The Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) is the "cornerstone to financial planning." It is very important that the Air Force member (and spouse, if applicable) be familiar with all parts of the LES.

Each month, Air Force members receive an LES showing their pay for the *preceding month* and any changes that will affect their pay for the current month.

When the member has been overpaid, the Air Force will typically recover the overpayment in the next pay cycle, and provide the member with a notice on the Net Pay Advice Form.

The LES parts are:

- ✓ **Entitlements**: Pay is based on rank and length of service. Earnings include basic pay, basic allowances, and incentive or special pay.

- ✓ **Deductions**: These include allotments and taxes. As for all citizens, money is withheld each month for the payment of federal and state taxes (where applicable). The amount of tax paid by an individual is based on the total pay for the year and the number of exemptions claimed. BAS and BAH are not taxable.

- ✓ **Allotments**: Portions of pay set aside for financial institutions, family, and debts.

- ✓ **Summary**: The End-of-Month (EOM) pay is the take-home pay – the difference between earnings and deductions.

- ✓ **Personnel and pay information**: Includes summaries of pay information for the calendar year.

- ✓ **Remarks**: *IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO READ THIS SECTION!* Any changes in pay (entitlements, deductions, allotments), leave status or local base information are noted here.

Explanation of LES Components:

LES

DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE MILITARY LEAVE AND EARNINGS STATEMENT

ID	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MI)	SOC. SEC. NO.	GRADE	PAY DATE	YRS SVC	ETS	BRANCH	ADSN/DSSN	PERIOD COVERED
	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX 1	999-99-9999 2	E7 3	780102 4	20 5	990831 6	AF 7	8	1-31 JUL 98 9

ENTITLEMENTS 10		DEDUCTIONS 12		ALLOTMENTS 14		SUMMARY	
TYPE	AMOUNT	TYPE	AMOUNT	TYPE	AMOUNT	+ AMT FWD	.00 16
A BASE PAY	2394.30	FEDERAL TAXES	278.45	COMB FED CAMPAIGN	10.00	+ TOT ENT	3,379.76 17
B BAS	230.33	FICA-SOC SECURITY	148.45	DISCRETIONARY ALT	194.00		
C BAH	755.13	FICA-MEDICARE	34.72	AFAF ALLOT	3.00		
D		SGLI FOR 200,000	17.00				
E		AFRH	.50				
F		DENTAL	7.64				
G		MID-MONTH-PAY	1344.55				
H							
I							
J							
K							
L							
M							
N							
O							
						- TOT DED 18	1,831.31
						- TOT ALT 19	207.00
						= NET AMT 20	1,341.45
						- CR FWD 21	.00
						= EOM PAY 22	1,341.45
TOTAL	3379.76 11		1831.31 13		207.00 15		

LEAVE	BF BAL	ERND	USED	CR BAL	ETS BAL	LV LOST	LV PAID	USE/LOSE	FED TAXES	WAGE PERIOD	WAGE YTD	M/S	EX	ADD'L TAX	TAX YTD
	46 23	26.0 24	12 25	56.0 26	93.5 27	.0 28	30.0 29	6.0 30		2394.30 31	10 32	M 33	0 3 4	.00 35	1949.16 36

FICA TAXES	WAGE PERIOD	SOC WAGE YTD	SOC TAX YTD	MED WAGE YTD	MED TAX YTD	STATE TAXES	ST TX	WAGE PERIOD	WAGE YTD	M/S	EX	TAX YTD
	2394.30 37	16769.10 38	1039.13 39	16769.10 40	243.02 41		42	.00 43	.00 44	m 45	01 4 6	.00 47

PAY DATA	BAH TYPE	BAH DEPN	BAH ZIP	RENT AMT	SHARE	STAT	JFTR	DEPNS	2D JFTR	BAS TYPE	CHARITY YTD	TPC	PACIDN
	W/DEP 48	SPOUSE 49	78150 50	944.10 51	1 52	h 53	54	0 55	56	REGULAR 57	91.00 58	59	60

REMARKS: YTD ENTITLE 23909.17 61 YTD DEDUCT 3407.32 62

63

BANK SECURITY SERV FED CR UN
ACCT # 98765432-10

64

BAH BASED ON W/DEP, ZIP 78150

65

DFAS Form 702, MAY 92 DFAS Form 702, MAY 92

(See next two pages for explanation of numbered blocks)

Block 1	Member's name.
Block 2	Member's SSAN.
Block 3	Member's rank/grade.
Block 4	Pay date (date of enlistment).
Block 5	Years of service.
Block 6	Estimated date of separation.
Block 7	Branch of service.
Block 8	Member's station of assignment identification code.
Block 9	Period covered by pay statement.
Block 10	Member's total entitlements identified by type.
Block 11	Total entitlements before deductions.
Block 12	All mandatory deductions identified by type.
Block 13	Total deductions.
Block 14	Member's elected deductions identified by type.
Block 15	Total allotments/deductions.
Block 16	Amount due member from previous pay.
Block 17	Total pay entitlements.
Block 18	Total amount of mandatory deductions.
Block 19	Total elected deductions/allotments.
Block 20	Total due member this pay period.
Block 21	Amount carried forward.
Block 22	Actual amount to be deposited.
Block 23	Number of leave days brought forward from previous fiscal year.
Block 24	Number of leave days earned in current fiscal year.
Block 25	Number of leave days used in current fiscal year.
Block 26	Current leave balance.
Block 27	Leave through estimated time of separation.
Block 28	Leave lost from prior fiscal year.
Block 29	Number of leave days sold.
Block 30	Number of leave days that must be used before the end of the fiscal year.
Block 31	Amount of taxable wages for the current month.
Block 32	Total taxable wages year to date.
Block 33	Marital status for federal tax purposes.
Block 34	Number of exemptions for federal tax purposes.
Block 35	Additional federal tax withholdings.
Block 36	Total amount of taxes deducted year to date.
Block 37	Amount of taxable wages for the current month.
Block 38	Total taxable Social Security wages year to date.
Block 39	Amount of Social Security taxes paid.
Block 40	Total taxable wages for Medicare year to date.
Block 41	Amount of Medicare taxes paid year to date.
Block 42	State of legal residency identification code.
Block 43	Taxable wages subject to state tax in current month.
Block 44	Taxable wages subject to state taxes year to date.
Block 45	Marital status for state tax withholdings.
Block 46	Number of exemptions used in computing state tax.
Block 47	Amount of state tax paid year to date.
Block 48	BAH rate (with or without dependents).
Block 49	Dependent identification.
Block 50	Zip code of residence for BAH purposes.
Block 51	Amount of rent paid each month.
Block 52	Number of people who reside at your residence.
Block 53	Homeowner or renter status.

Block 54	Oversees country code for COLA.
Block 55	Number of dependents for COLA.
Block 56	Oversees country code for dependents.
Block 57	Ration type.
Block 58	Charitable deductions year to date.
Block 59	Army country code.
Block 60	Pass code for Army deployment.
Block 61	Year to date gross entitlements (if all taxable).
Block 62	Year to date taxable deductions (if all taxable).
Block 63	Any comments from DFAS-DE on entitlement changes; also used for local comments.
Block 64	Identification of bank for Sure Pay deposit and account number.
Block 65	Information on BAH and basis for entitlement.

The most common problems with pay can be prevented through checking these LES areas:

- ETS – shows the date the member is scheduled to separate. The pay system cuts off pay as of the separation date noted here. If there is a discrepancy between this date and the personnel data system, please visit the Finance office immediately. The Remarks section will notify of upcoming separation.

- Rank/Grade – this equates to the pay amount. If the rank is too low, pay will be shorted; if it is too high, pay will be excess and overpayment will be recovered in the next paycheck.

Military pay tips:

- View the LES online at: https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx
- Check rank/pay grade and years in service against the base pay shown on the current pay chart. Make sure Air Force member's basic pay is computed correctly.
- Check your personnel record at http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/
- If there is an error on the LES or personnel record, visit the Finance office and/or the Military Personnel Flight. You may also contact DFAS at 1-888-332-7411 or the AFPC Call Center at 1-800-525-0102

Pay Charts

Pay charts may be located at DFAS http://www.dfas.mil/militarypay.html or AFPC http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil under Personal Benefits. Information can also be found about retirement, survivor benefits, and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a Federal Government-sponsored retirement savings and investment plan. Congress established the TSP in the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986. The purpose of TSP is to provide retirement income. On October 30, 2000, President Clinton signed the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2001 (Public Law 106-398). One provision of the law extended participation to

members of the Armed Forces in the TSP. Service members were first able to enroll in TSP during a special open season from October 9, 2001 to January 31, 2002.

TSP is a **defined contribution** plan. The retirement income that military members receive from their TSP account will depend on how much they contributed to the account during their working years, and the earnings on those contributions. TSP offers the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under the so-called "401K" plans.

✓ **What are the major features of the TSP?**

The military member may elect to contribute any percentage (1 to 100) of basic pay; however, the annual dollar total cannot exceed the Internal Revenue Code limit, which was $15,000 for 2006. If the member contributes to the TSP from basic pay, one to 100 percent of any incentive pay or special pay (to include bonus pay) received may also be contributed up to the limits established by the Internal Revenue Code.

✓ **What are the spouse rights under the TSP?**

The law gives certain rights to the spouse (including a separated spouse). TSP must take these rights into consideration when the military member withdraws or borrows from their account.

TSP will take action to prosecute any participant who denies (or tries to deny) his/her spouse these rights by, for example, forging the spouse's signature.

- **Borrowing from TSP account.** The married military member must obtain the consent of the spouse before receiving a TSP loan. The spouse's consent does not make him or her a co-signer of the loan or obligate the spouse to repay it.

- **Making an in-service withdrawal.** The military member must obtain the spouse's consent to an in-service withdrawal, regardless of the amount, before withdrawal can be approved.

- **Making a withdrawal after separation from military service.** After the military member separates, the spouse rights provisions apply only if the account is more than $3500. For a married military member, the spouse is entitled to a joint and survivor annuity with 50 percent survivor benefit, level payments, and no cash refund feature.
  If the military member chooses a withdrawal method other than the prescribed survivor annuity, the spouse must waive the right to that annuity. If the military member does not elect the prescribed annuity, or does not obtain the spouse's waiver by the date required to make an election, then TSP is required to purchase the prescribed joint and survivor annuity for the military member and spouse with the TSP account. When the military member does not provide the necessary information for TSP to purchase an annuity, the account will be declared abandoned.

✓ **Are there any exceptions to the spouse rights requirements?**

Under certain circumstances, an exception may be granted to the spouse rights requirements. To apply for an exception, complete Form TSP-U-16, Exception to Spousal Requirements, and submit it with the required documentation to the TSP Service Office at the address on the form. Get Form TSP-U-16 from the TSP Web site or from the base TSP representative. The following chart summarizes the TSP spousal requirements and exceptions.

Spouses' Rights		
Activity	**Requirement**	**Exceptions**
Loan	Spouse must give written consent to the loan.	Whereabouts unknown or exceptional circumstances.
In-Service Withdrawal	Spouse must give written consent to the withdrawal.	Whereabouts unknown or exceptional circumstances.
Post-Employment Withdrawal*	Spouse is entitled to a joint life annuity with 50% survivor benefit, level payments, and no cash refund feature unless he or she waives this right.	Whereabouts unknown or exceptional circumstances.

* Spouses' rights apply only to accounts of more than $3,500.

✓ **How does a court order affect the TSP account?**

In addition to the above spouse rights provisions, the TSP account is subject to certain matrimonial court orders. These are court decrees of divorce, annulment, or legal separation, or the terms of court-approved property settlements incident to any court decree of divorce, annulment, or legal separation. To be considered qualifying and enforceable against the TSP, the order must meet the requirements stated in Board regulations (5 C.F.R. Part 1653). The account is also subject to the enforcement of legal obligations to make alimony and child support payments, and to satisfy judgments against the military member for child abuse.

If the TSP receives a document that purports to be a qualifying order or legal process for the enforcement of back payment of alimony or child support, the account will be frozen for loans and withdrawals. To authorize payment from the account, a qualifying court order must clearly identify the TSP account and must describe the award to the spouse, former spouse, or other party in such a way that the amount of the award can be definitively calculated. If the military member has two TSP accounts, the court order must clearly identify the account to which the order/award applies.

✓ **What are the TSP investment funds?**

Once military members are enrolled in TSP, they can elect to divide the TSP contribution among five different investment funds, as described below.

- **Government Securities Investment "G" Fund**

  This fund is known for being the safest or least risky investment of the five funds since the only way it will lose money is by some catastrophic event, e.g., if the federal government defaults on its loans. With low risk, usually comes a lower interest rate or rate of return. The G Fund invests in specially issued short-term, non-marketable U.S. Treasury securities.

- **The Fixed Income Index Investment "F" Fund**

  Essentially, the F Fund is higher risk than the G Fund, but is still considered a low-risk investment because it is spread over many generally stable investments. Even if a corporation were to declare bankruptcy, the loss would be minimal. Depositing into the F Fund is an investment in the Barclays U.S. Debt Index Fund, which tracks the bond-market. A mathematical model determines the amount in which this fund distributes investor's money amongst the various types of U.S. government, mortgage-backed, corporate and foreign government sector securities.

- **The Common Stock Index Investment "C" Fund**

  Investing in this fund puts members in the thick of the "Standard & Poor's 500" companies. Through the Barclays Equity Index Fund, investors hold common stocks of all the companies within the S&P 500 index. C Fund invests in 500 of the largest companies in the U.S. and are considered the least risky as stock investing goes.

- **The International Stock Index Investment "I" Fund**

  Tracking the returns of the Morgan Stanley Capital International (Europe, Australia, and Far East) stock index, this fund provides coverage of stock markets in the 21 countries the index represents; this includes 915 companies, 23 industry groups within 10 economic sectors. Simply stated, it grows as the world market grows.

- **The Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment "S" Fund**

While the S&P tracks 500 of the largest companies, this fund does just the opposite, with diversity being the key. It tracks small- and medium-sized companies through the Wilshire 4500 index (the Wilshire 5000 minus the 500 companies in the S&P). Its medium is the Barclays Extended Market Index Fund, which buys stocks of those companies within the index that have market values more than $1 billion. For more information on TSP, visit http://www.tsp.gov/index.html.

Protocol

Many times during the Air Force member's career you will be invited to attend all sorts of ceremonies, from promotions and changes of command, to formal dinners and retirement functions. Knowing a little about Protocol can make you feel more comfortable and confident. Protocol is nothing to be afraid of or worried about. To quote from the Protocol Primer, "Protocol is an adherence to customs, tempered with a touch of common sense, good manners, and a concern for others." As an Air Force spouse, it is important to know the Protocol of the military world, which is a combination of tradition, etiquette, and courtesy.

✓ Dress code

The invitation will indicate the type of attire. When in doubt, call the host of the event and ask what the appropriate dress will be. What the military member is required to wear to an event can also be a good indication what sort of civilian clothing would be appropriate.

- **Very Casual**
  - Corresponds with type of function (BBQ, hayride, sporting event, etc.). Usually jeans or shorts, t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.
  - For this type of event, the member will also probably wear civilian clothing.
- **Casual**
  - Corresponds to what would ordinarily be worn to work on a day-to-day basis. Ladies - slacks, simple dress, skirt and blouse. Men – open collar shirt, khakis.
  - Air Force members wear the "duty uniform," usually ABUs, the light blue shirt with or without tie, or flight suit, depending on duty section.
  - At civilian casual functions, dress for men will normally be a short or long-sleeved open-neck shirt, perhaps a sweater or sports coat, but no tie. For ladies, a casual dress, slacks and blouse, and long or short skirt are appropriate.
- **Sport Coat and Tie**
  - Next step up the ladder towards more formal attire and would be appropriate for some icebreakers or dinner at the Commander's quarters. Ladies – church dress or dressy slacks outfit. Men – sports jacket, slacks and tie.
  - When the invitation specifies "sport coat and tie," the Air Force member would typically wear civilian clothing vice uniform.

- **Business Suit/Informal**

  - Most closely corresponds to "informal." Ladies – business suit, or dressy, street-length or Sunday dress (very similar to the Sport Coat and Tie dress code). Men – dark (subdued) suit and tie.

  - Air Force member's "business suit" is the Service Dress Blues. Service Dress is most often worn to promotion and retirement ceremonies, changes of command, parades, pass and reviews, and official visits of VIPs and dignitaries.

- **Semi-Formal**

  - A slight step down from formal attire. Ladies – cocktail dress or dressy cocktail pants outfit. Men – dark distinguished business suit.

  - Mess Dress uniform for Air Force member.

- **Formal**

  - Known as "black tie." For the Air Force member, this is the Mess Dress equivalent and is appropriate attire for functions like the Dining-In/Out, PME graduations, annual award dinners, military weddings (as a participant), and various civilian "black tie" affairs, like charity galas or holiday balls.

  - Civilian equivalent to the Mess Dress uniform for men is a black tuxedo with black bow tie. Ladies – long or short evening dress.

✓ Types of Ceremonies and Events

There are a variety of Air Force ceremonies and events. If the invitation has an RSVP or "Please respond," you should reply within two days of receiving the invitation, or by the "respond by" date if one is indicated. Children are typically not invited to a function unless specified. The following is a brief description of the most common ceremonies/events.

- **Awards and Decorations**

The Air Force presents many levels of awards in recognition of service or achievement. The Commander's timely presentation of the appropriate decoration at a "public" ceremony greatly enhances the value of the award to the recipient and is a plus for the entire unit. Award/Decoration ceremonies range from formal reviews to presentations at Commander's Call and much smaller informal office ceremonies, depending largely on the recipient's desires. The basic elements of this ceremony include the reading of the official orders and the presentation of the award or decoration. Dress for these events ranges from casual to business suit/informal. Spouses and family members are invited and encouraged to attend.

- **Receiving Lines**

The word reception means the act of receiving or greeting. A receiving line is a practical and efficient way to accomplish this greeting. In the Air Force, receiving lines are frequently used to greet a new Commander and spouse after a change of command ceremony; at Commander's receptions honoring civic leaders and visiting DVs; and at traditional holiday receptions. An announcer leads the receiving line to introduce guests to the host or Commander. The Commander's aide or protocol officer may act in this capacity.

- No eating, drinking, or smoking in the receiving line.
- When going through the line, give the announcer last name and rank, i.e., Major and Mrs. Smith, official title (Mayor and Mrs. Tom Jones), or Mr. and Mrs. Brown.
- The man precedes the lady in the line at *official* functions; ladies first all others.
- Never engage in extended conversation in a receiving line to preclude delay.

- **Formal Military Dinners**

Formal military dinners are a tradition in all branches of the Armed Forces. The Dining-In and Dining-Out represent the most formal aspects of Air Force social life. A Dining-In or Dining-Out is designed so that Air Force members can celebrate formally as unit but also enjoy frivolity with various forms of skits and entertainment interspersed.

There are "Rules of the Mess," which are printed in the formal program. The rules are designed to conform to tradition and promote levity. Violators of these rules are subject to the mischievousness of Mister/Madam Vice President of the Mess. Assigned "penalties" are humorous and carried out at the Mess.

- The Dining-*In* is a formal dinner for Air Force members of a wing or a squadron. The "Combat Dining-In" is far less formal because of the dress requirements and more informal atmosphere. The Dining-In is reserved for military members only; however, civilians may be included when they work in the unit.
- The Dining-*Out* is a formal dinner similar to the Dining-In but includes spouses and guests, as does the "Combat Dining-Out."
- Dress is clearly stated on the invitation. Officers wear the mess dress uniform. Enlisted wear mess dress or semi-formal dress uniform (service dress with white shirt and bow tie). Male civilians wear appropriate black tie. Ladies may wear long or short evening dresses.

- **Promotions**

The promotion ceremony is important to the fabric of the Air Force, as it recognizes Air Force members for their selection to serve in the next higher rank/grade and, with that, to

accept the increased responsibility that goes with that exciting achievement. The basic elements of this ceremony are similar to that of the Awards and Decorations, with the reading of the official orders and the pinning of the new rank/insignia. Dress for these events ranges from casual to business suit/informal. Spouses and family members are invited to participate in the promotion ceremony with the "pin-on." Dress for these events ranges from casual to business suit/informal.

- **Changes of Command**

The change of command ceremony is a clear, legal, and symbolic passing of authority and responsibility from one Commander to the next. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the new Commander and spouse will typically host a reception immediately afterwards, which may include a receiving line. By tradition, the out-going Commander and spouse seldom attend this reception as a courtesy. Dress for a change of command is usually business suit/informal, but may also be casual.

- **Retirements**

Recognition of Air Force members who are retiring from a career of long, faithful, and honorable service is one of the oldest traditions of military service. Each retiree should leave the service with a tangible expression of appreciation for his/her contribution to the Air Force, and with the assurance that they will continue to be a member of the Air Force family in retirement. The retiree's spouse is also honored in the ceremony for his/her dedication to the Air Force and Nation. While the retiree's children/family are invited, guests' children are typically not invited to this formal event, unless the retiree specifically includes them. Dress is business suit/informal.

- **Other events**

You may be invited to a variety of other events and gatherings, such as teas, coffees, Reveille and Retreat, activation and inactivation of units, and ribbon cutting ceremonies. If stationed at a joint base, you may be invited to events specific to that Service(s). Don't hesitate to go, as it's important to learn about traditions from all of the Armed Forces. For questions, contact the hosting unit.

✓ Honors to the Flag

- During the National Anthem, face flag or music and put right hand over heart (both indoors and outdoors).

- Retreat is usually sounded with the National Anthem at the end of the duty day. Civilians should face the flag or in the direction of the flag and place right hand over heart. If driving a vehicle, come to a complete stop with your flashers on until the playing of the National Anthem is complete and the flag is lowered and secured.

✓ Helpful Hints

- Always stand (and sing!) for the Air Force song, which is typically played at the conclusion of an official function.

- Always RSVP "yes" or "no" by the requested date on an invitation, or sooner.

- When invited to a dinner or gathering at someone's private residence, be on time or slightly (5 minutes) late, but NEVER arrive early. If you are going to be more than 10 minutes late, call host/hostess to let them know.

- It's courteous to bring an inexpensive but thoughtful host/hostess gift to the function, but *not at all* required.

- Always try to greet your host/hostess upon arriving to an event and then thank them before departing.

- Remember to send a written thank-you note (vice e-mail) to host/hostess within 7 days.

- Civilian Nametags – wear on the right side, which corresponds to extending your right hand for a handshake and following the line of sight to the nametag.

Air Force Rank and Insignia

✓ Commissioned Officers

An Air Force officer receives his/her commission through one of three primary sources: Air Force Academy, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, or Officer Training School. A commissioned officer's primary job is to "lead Airmen and manages resources;" the level of responsibility and experience increases with each rank promotion.

Officer ranks/grades of Second Lieutenant through Captain are called "Company Grade;" Major through Colonel "Field Grade;" and Brigadier General through General "General Officer or Flag Officer."

USAF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND GENERAL SCHEDULE/SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE CIVILIANS

Military Grade	Military Rank	Civilian Grades
O-10	General (Gen)	Senior Executive Service (SES) Level 1-6
O-9	Lieutenant General (Lt Gen)	
O-8	Major General (Maj Gen)	
O-7	Brigadier General (Brig Gen)	
O-6	Colonel (Col)	GS-15
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col)	General Schedule (GS) Levels 1-14
O-4	Major (Maj)	
O-3	Captain (Capt)	
O-2	First Lieutenant (1Lt)	
O-1	Second Lieutenant (2Lt)	

Company Grade

Second Lieutenant
2Lt, O-1

First Lieutenant
1Lt, O-2

Captain
Capt, O-3

Field Grade

Major
Maj, O-4

Lieutenant Colonel
Lt Col, O-5

Colonel
Col, O-6

General/Flag

Brigadier General
Brig Gen, O-7

Major General
Maj Gen, O-8

Lieutenant General
Lt Gen, O-9

General
Gen, O-10

✓ Enlisted

The Enlisted force is a diverse corps of functionally and operationally specialized Airmen and consists of three tiers: Airman – Airman Basic, Airman First Class, and Senior Airman; Non-Commissioned Officer or NCO – Staff Sergeant and Technical Sergeant; Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SrNCO) – Master Sergeant, Senior Master Sergeant, and Chief Master Sergeant. NCOs are the backbone of the Air Force. They are responsible for training and developing the Airmen they supervise. As Airmen advance through the ranks, they have increased levels of training, education, leadership and managerial duties.

USAF ENLISTED PERSONNEL AND WAGE GRADE CIVILIANS

Military Grade	Military Rank	Civilian Grades
E-9	Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt)	Wage Supervisor (WS) Levels 1-17 Wage Leader (WL) Levels 1-15 Wage Grade (WG) Levels 1-15
E-8	Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt)	
E-7	Master Sergeant (MSgt)	
E-6	Technical Sergeant (TSgt)	
E-5	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	
E-4	Senior Airman (SrA)	
E-3	Airman First Class (A1C)	
E-2	Airman (Amn)	
E-1	Airman Basic (AB)	

(Has no rank insignia)
Airman Basic, AB, E-1

Airman, Amn, E-2

Airman First Class
A1C, E-3

Senior Airman
SrA, E-4

Staff Sergeant
SSgt, E-5

Technical Sergeant
TSgt, E-6

Master Sergeant, MSgt, E-7

First Sergeant, 1st Sgt, MSgt, E-7

Senior Master Sergeant, SMSgt, E-8

First Sergeant, 1st Sgt, SMSgt, E-8

Chief Master Sergeant, CMSgt, E-9

First Sergeant, 1st Sgt, CMSgt, E-9

Command Chief Master Sergeant
CCM, E-9

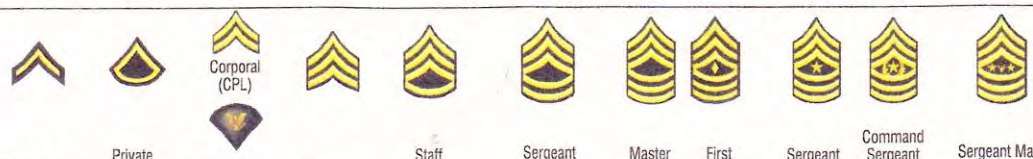
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force
CMSAF, E-9

Insignia of the U.S. Armed Forces — Enlisted

AIR FORCE

No Insignia												
Airman Basic (AB)	Airman (AMN)	Airman First Class (A1C)	Senior Airman (SrA)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	Technical Sergeant (TSgt)	Master Sergeant (MSgt)	First Sergeant (E-7)	Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt)	First Sergeant (E-8)	Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt)	First Sergeant (E-9)	Command Chief Master Sergeant (CCM)	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF)

ARMY



No Insignia											
Private E-1 (PV1)	Private E-2 (PV2)	Private First Class (PFC)	Corporal (CPL) / Specialist (SPC)	Sergeant (SGT)	Staff Sergeant (SSGT)	Sergeant First Class (SFC)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1SG)	Sergeant Major (SGM)	Command Sergeant Major (CSM)	Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)

MARINES

No Insignia											
Private (Pvt)	Private First Class (PFC)	Lance Corporal (LCpl)	Corporal (Cpl)	Sergeant (Sgt)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt)	Master Sergeant (MSgt)	First Sergeant (1stSG)	Master Gunnery Sergeant (MGySgt)	Sergeant Major (SgtMaj)	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SgtMajMC)

NAVY

No Insignia										
Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (SN)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Force or Fleet Command Master Chief Petty Officer (FORMC) (FLTMC)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON)

COAST GUARD

Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (SN)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Command Master Chief (CMC)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPO-CG)

Warrant

ARMY

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)

NAVY

W-2	W-3	W-4	W-5
Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-4)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-5)

MARINES

W-1	W-2	W-3	W-4	W-5
Warrant Officer (WO)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO4)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO5)

COAST GUARD

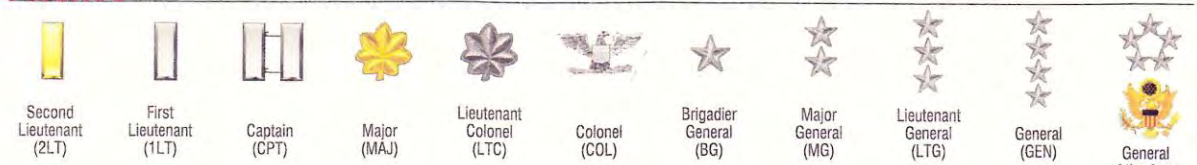
W-2	W-3	W-4
Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-2)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-3)	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO-4)

Officers

AIR FORCE

Second Lieutenant (2d Lt) | First Lieutenant (1st Lt) | Captain (Capt) | Major (Maj) | Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col) | Colonel (Col) | Brigadier General (Brig Gen) | Major General (Maj Gen) | Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) | General (Gen)

ARMY



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)

MARINES

Second Lieutenant (2nd Lt) | First Lieutenant (1st Lt) | Captain (Capt) | Major (Maj) | Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col) | Colonel (Col) | Brigadier General (Brig Gen) | Major General (Maj Gen) | Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) | General (Gen)

NAVY

Ensign (ENS) | Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG) | Lieutenant (LT) | Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) | Commander (CDR) | Captain (CAPT) | Rear Admiral Lower Half (RADM)(L) | Rear Admiral Upper Half (RADM)(U) | Vice Admiral (VADM) | Admiral (ADM) | Fleet Admiral (FADM)

COAST GUARD

Ensign (ENS) | Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG) | Lieutenant (LT) | Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) | Commander (CDR) | Captain (CAPT) | Rear Admiral Lower Half (RADM)(L) | Rear Admiral Upper Half (RADM)(U) | Vice Admiral (VADM) | Admiral (ADM)

* Extracted from “Life in the Air Force” Booklet

TRICARE Benefits

TRICARE is the Department of Defense's military health-care plan, for active-duty and retired military personnel. There are three plan options: Prime, Extra, and Standard.

✓ TRICARE Health Plan Options

- **TRICARE Prime (managed health care option)**: lowest cost option (no deductibles or cost shares apply). With Prime, you have to choose your health-care provider from a pre-approved network of providers. Air Force members are required to enroll in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote upon activation on federal Title 10 or Title 32 orders. TRICARE Prime Remote is offered for those who live and work more than 50 miles (or about a one-hour drive) from the nearest Military Treatment Facility.

- **TRICARE Extra (preferred provider network option):** annual deductible and cost shares apply. Beneficiaries may choose a TRICARE health care provider from a network of civilian health-care providers.

- **TRICARE Standard (fee-for-service option):** most expensive option with annual deductible and larger cost shares. Beneficiaries may choose TRICARE-certified civilian provider. May be combined as a secondary payer with other health insurance.

All plans also offer: pharmacy benefits; emergency care; nurse advisors; regional service centers staffed by health-care professionals; and a catastrophic cap (a limit on the amount you have to pay for medical care in a year).

TRICARE is administered by three Regional Support Contractors within CONUS and a TRICARE Overseas Program.

TRICARE North: Health Net Federal Services, Inc., 1-877-874-2273
www.healthnetfederalservices.com
North Region: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina.

TRICARE South: Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc., 1-800-444-5445
www.humanamilitary.com
South Region: South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, excluding southwest corner.

TRICARE West: TriWest Healthcare Alliance, Inc., 1-888-874-9378
www.triwest.com
West Region: New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and southwest corner of Texas, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Hawaii, California, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska.

TRICARE Overseas: All overseas areas toll-free, 1-888-777-8343

To learn more about TRICARE, visit www.tricare.mil or your base TRICARE Service Center.

✓ TRICARE Dental Program

The TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) is available to family members of all active-duty Air Force members and to Air National Guard/Reserve members and their families. It is a voluntary program and administered through United Concordia.

- *Active-duty*: to be eligible for the TDP, the Air Force member must have at least 12 months remaining on his/her service commitment at time of enrollment and 12-month lock-in from date of enrollment. Family members – spouses and unmarried children (including stepchildren and adopted children) under the age of 21 – are eligible. Unmarried children may be eligible through the end of the month they turn 23 if enrolled full-time at an accredited college/university or are more than 50% dependent on the Air Force member for financial support.

  Family Members of Active Duty Service Members

- *Air National Guard/Reserve* members are only eligible for enrollment when they are not on active duty. Their family members are eligible for enrollment when properly enrolled in DEERS, even if their sponsor does not enroll. The plan offers continuous dental coverage throughout the Air National Guard/Reserve sponsor's changing status—from inactive to active and back again.

  National Guard/Reserve Service Members and Their Families

The following individuals are **not** eligible to enroll in TDP:

- Active-duty Air Force members

- National Guard/Reserve members called or ordered to active duty for more than 30 consecutive days
- Retired service members and their families
- Former spouses
- Parents and parents-in-law
- Disabled veterans

United Concordia verifies member eligibility in TDP using the DEERS. It is extremely important that DEERS be up-to-date on each family member. If eligibility cannot be confirmed, enrollment may be denied.

If you reside in the CONUS service area, you will receive your greatest value by visiting TDP participating dentists. Participating dentists will complete/submit claims on your behalf and accept payment directly from United Concordia.

For more specific details, consult the Tricare Dental Program Benefits Booklet at www.tricaredentalprogram.com or call 1-800-866-8499.

✓ TRICARE Pharmacy Program

TRICARE also provides a pharmacy benefit to all eligible Air Force members, retirees, and family members, including beneficiaries, age 65 and older. The TRICARE Pharmacy Program, administered by Express Scripts Inc., offers money-saving options when filling prescriptions. No enrollment is required.

For more information, contact Express Scripts, 1-866-363-8779 or www.express-scripts.com.

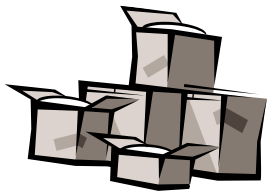
It's Time to PCS

✓ "Packing Out" Survival Tips

- Packers will pack anything not nailed down. If you don't want the trash in your trashcan shipped to your new base, be sure to empty it before the packers come!

- Set aside/lock in a separate room or closet the items you DON'T want the packers to touch and mark as DO NOT PACK. Examples:

  - All valuables
  - Military member's records that need to be hand-carried.
  - Important documents – passports, wills, etc.
  - Pet food and water bowl(s), leashes, litter, etc.
  - Medication
  - Newcomer's welcome packet for new base.



- The movers must seal everything in crates before they leave your house. Do not let them take *un-crated* boxes and tell you they will crate them at the warehouse! You should witness them seal the crates with the seal numbers on the paperwork.

- Have your own inventory of all your items, and list the serial numbers for those things that have them. Take pictures of all of your belongings so you have their current conditions. For electronics, photograph them operating in the "on" position. For items that are high value but you would not have receipts for (such as wedding china), you may also submit a letter from a third party (such as a friend or relative) certifying that these items were in your possession and they saw them in your house. The reason for doing this is because boxes will not be labeled "12 place settings of Noritake China, Gold Ring Pattern with 5 piece serving set." They are more likely to be labeled "china" or "dishes."

- The packers will assess the condition of items and note it on the inventory. For example – the couch cushion is torn at seam or dresser is chipped on right rear corner. However, they may annotate "scratched" for an item that is nearly new. If you do not agree with the packer's assessment of the condition of an item, have them correct it and take a photo of the item to preclude any future issue. In addition, call the local Traffic Management Office and ask them to send an inspector out if you have any concerns or feel uneasy with the pack-out.

- It can be difficult to keep an eye on all that's going on when the movers are packing. The active duty member is released from duty for moving day; make sure he/she requests the day(s) off with the supervisory chain in plenty of time. You can also ask for help from friends as extra sets of eyes. Use the "Child Care for PCS" program if you have young children. Packing up is a hectic time; if you know your kids are safe and well cared for, you have one less worry on moving day!

- Do NOT pack battery-powered items with batteries, no matter what shipment they're in. Pack the batteries separately or buy new batteries at the new location. This is a safety precaution.

- Moving Overseas?

  - Pets. Contact your base Veterinary Treatment Facility as soon as possible for required exams, vaccinations, paperwork, etc. and TMO for shipping options.

  - If you're moving overseas, be aware of the country's voltage and cycle differences, and the different sized plugs. You can run your American clock radio off a transformer, but if there is no adjustment for the cycles, the clock won't keep the correct time! The same is true for microwaves and other electric items with timers, like coffee makers. American (and Canadian) voltage is 110/120 volt, 60 cycles; nearly everywhere else is 220/240 volt, 50 cycles. Newer electronic items are dual voltage and automatically adjust the cycles, but older items may not. Check the technical information on the back of your electric item!

  - Adapter plugs differ according to the country you're in. Even though England and Germany have the same voltage and cycles, the size of the plugs are different. Don't try to buy any adapter plugs until you get to your new location.

  - You can take your lamps overseas, but don't bring the bulbs. Buy new light bulbs for the correct voltage, and adapter plugs, at your overseas location. You do NOT need to use a transformer for a lamp! FYI – if you're living off base and pay for your electric, transformers pull a lot of electricity when "on," even if you're not using the appliance that's plugged into them!

  - Your American telephone may or may not work in your new overseas location; if it does work, you might need a telephone adapter plug. Ask your sponsor or contact A&FRC on whether you should bring your American phone with you.

  - If you are going to buy electric items at your new overseas location, check out the Thrift Shop first. Many people will inexpensively sell locally purchased electric items, adapter plugs, transformers, extension cords, etc. in the Thrift Shop, because they can't use them in the States or in a different country.

- Don't forget the Loan Locker or Family Services at the A&FRC has essential household items you can borrow for free – dishes, pots and pans, irons and ironing boards, baby items, etc. Nearly all bases will have this service available, although items will vary. Ask your sponsor about availability of specific items – if you can borrow them, you won't need to pack them in your Unaccompanied Baggage!

- *"Child Care for PCS"* is a program sponsored by the Air Force Aid Society and vouchers can be obtained at the A&FRC. They will pay for 20 hours of childcare, per child, on both ends of a PCS move! *This must be used within 60 days of your move*.

Unaccompanied (Hold) Baggage: This shipment is sent when your new assignment is overseas and includes the items you will need immediately upon arrival. You could be living off this shipment for two months or more, depending on where your new assignment is. Hold Baggage is packed separately from your household goods (HHGs), and will be transported more quickly than HHGs. BEWARE: there is a weight limit for Hold Baggage. Check with TMO to find out what your limit is!

Remember the Loan Locker, but suggested Hold Baggage items are:

Clothing (consider climate of new location)
Bedding for each family member
Sleeping bags
Air mattresses
Shower curtain and hooks
Bath towels
Couple sets of curtains
Iron/ironing board
Travel alarm
Music; battery-powered radio
Electric frying pan
Most frequently used spices
Stove-to-table serving dishes
Flatware
Kitchen knives
Can opener, bottle opener
Plates/bowls/glasses/mugs (plastic is best!)
Spatula, serving spoons
Dish towels
Potholders
Extension cords
Coffee maker
Broom, dustpan
Vacuum cleaner
Couple of lamps
Phone
Cookbook/favorite recipes
Sewing kit with scissors
First aid kit
Basic household tool kit
Sporting gear appropriate for the season
A few "homey" items; family scrapbook, favorite pictures, etc.
Mixer
Food processor
Card table
Folding chairs
Hobby items, games and toys
Sewing machine
Infant and toddler equipment – playpen, stroller, etc.
Computer and other geek gigs

Accompanied Baggage: This includes your suitcases, carry-ons, children's backpacks, and so on – all the items you'll take on the plane and/or pack in the car. Depending on which airline you fly on, the number, size, and weight of suitcases and carry-ons may vary; once you get your tickets, verify what your limits are.

Passport (for overseas travel)
Important family documents; birth certificates; medical and school records
Address book
GPS, travel books
Newcomer's welcome package for new base
Medicines/prescription drugs with refills
Valuable jewelry
Camera equipment
Travel iron
Electric curlers, curling iron, hair dryer
Toiletries for all family members
Music/iPod
Travel alarm
Pocket knife
Games for car/plane travel
Games, toys, cuddlies to keep children occupied. Don't forget security blanket!
Seasonal clothing; umbrella, raincoat
Clothing; week's supply for each family member - will save on trips to the laundry
Military uniforms
Hobby and sports gear; jogging clothes, running shoes, swimsuits, etc.

Picnic gear; cooler, thermos, blanket (doubles as a tablecloth for on-the-road picnics)
Flashlight, matches or lighter
Toilet paper, paper towels, napkins
First aid kit

HHGs: This is the bulk of your shipment; includes all your furniture and everything that is not in your Unaccompanied and Accompanied Baggage. The "total weight allowance" the Air Force will pay to ship depends on the active-duty member's rank and the number of family members that are living with him/her, *and* where you will be stationed. Total weight includes the weight of the Unaccompanied Baggage, but not the weight of the Accompanied Baggage.

A good "guesstimate" for how much everything in your house weighs is to figure on 1000 pounds per room (not including bathrooms, unless you have furniture in there). Add extra if you are shipping a fridge, washer and/or dryer, or if you have a lot of books, or other heavy items. A motorcycle can also be shipped in HHGs – it's not counted as a shipped vehicle, but against the HHGs total weight (check with TMO for proper preparation before shipping)! Remember to tag "professional gear" (such as books, manuals, and equipment) that the military member and spouse use for their respective jobs, so it is not counted against the total weight.

The Open First Box: This is the last box(es) of your HHGs that is packed, but will be the first to open. Be sure this box is the last one on the truck or crate, so it will be the first one unloaded at your new location.

Cleaning supplies
Broom, mop, dustpan, sponge, light bulbs
Can opener
Flashlight, lighter
Hangers
Clock radio
Lamp
Phone
Coffee pot, filters
Toilet paper, paper towels, napkins
Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils
Pot, frying pan
Kitchen knives
Trash bags
Scissors, tape
Bed linens for the entire family
Bath towels
Extra sheets for temporary curtains
Hammer, screwdriver, nails
Extension cords
Soup, dry cereal, crackers, PB&J
Shampoo, soap

Housing Information

✓ PRIVATIZATION OF GOVERNMENT HOUSING

Housing privatization began in the mid-1990s with the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI), when Congress recognized that nearly half of the houses on Air Force installations were in dire need of renovations and repairs, and military funding could not cover the cost of renovating them or building new ones. Instead of budgeting billions of dollars for new houses and renovations, Congress incorporated MHPI into the 1996 National Defense Authorization Act. The initiative allows the Air Force to privatize the housing on all domestic Air Force installations. Housing privatization shifts the renovation, construction, operations and maintenance responsibilities of family housing to the private sector, whose expertise is to build and manage housing assets, allowing the Air Force to focus on the mission and its Airmen.

You can apply for privatized housing as soon as you have orders. Simply take a copy of your PCS orders into your local base Housing Office, and obtain an advanced application to complete. Your effective date of application for housing at the new base will be based on the date members depart their losing permanent duty station.

You may have to find temporary housing off base if there is a wait for privatized housing. If you reach the top of the privatized housing wait list before your lease or rental agreement expires, you will remain on the top of the list until such time as you can accept privatized housing without breaking your agreement. Because the wait list times change so often, and are different from base to base, call the Housing Management Office or the Privatized Housing Office at your new base for specific details and for current wait times.

As with most housing communities, there are rules and regulations to comply with when living in privatized housing. These rules may include where you can park, what days you can water your lawn, the maximum length you can let your grass grow before cutting it, and noise restrictions. The Privatized Housing Office will give you a booklet of these rules and regulations when you sign your lease. Read through the lease and booklet thoroughly and ask questions promptly. When you leave the base, you will have to be sure that your privatized housing passes a cleaning inspection. The standards for cleaning may vary somewhat from base to base, but generally you will be expected to do a very thorough cleaning job, including floors (wood, tiled, and carpeted), walls, and appliances. If there are any damages to the housing unit (for example, if the puppy chewed the door jambs), you will be expected to pay for repairs.

✓ BENEFITS OF HOUSING PRIVATIZATION

Housing privatization promotes a mutually beneficial relationship between the Air Force and the private sector. For the Air Force, it results in the construction of more housing built to market standards for less money than through the military construction process. Commercial construction is not only faster and less costly than military construction, but private-sector funds significantly stretch and leverage the Air Force's limited housing

funds. At the same time, developers and financiers are encouraged to participate since privatization opens the military construction market to a greater number of development firms and stimulates the economy through increased building activity.

Development benefits: more square footage than traditional military construction; quality construction; modern appliances, cabinetry and fixtures; lawn maintenance in some communities; garages and carports in most homes.

Community benefits: playgrounds; community centers; swimming pools; basketball/ tennis/volleyball courts; varied neighborhood activities.

Cost benefits: BAH covers all rent; utility allowance provided for efficient energy use; renter's insurance provided at most communities; convenient access to work and services.

For more information on Housing Privatization, visit
http://www.afcec.af.mil/housing/privatization/index.asp

OFF-BASE HOUSING

The base Housing Office maintains lists of apartments, house rentals, and homes that are for sale by owners. They may also have flyers of Realtor listings. It is not required to have your lease or rental agreement reviewed, but if you would like to, the Legal office can help.

For your protection, a military clause should be included in your lease, which states that the landlord will release you from the lease if you receive PCS orders, or if you are offered privatized housing. Be sure to also make a list of discrepancies when you move in and get it signed by the landlord. This may help you get your deposit back when you move.

Do You Know?

What are Orders?

Orders are the official documentation that authorize and specify dates and destinations for a PCS, TDY, or other travel for the Air Force member and/or family.

What is the difference between an Accompanied and Unaccompanied Tour?

An accompanied tour is when an active-duty member can take his/her family with them to an assignment that is usually at least 36 months. An unaccompanied tour is usually 12 to 24 months long and the active-duty member goes alone. This is also called a "remote tour."

What is Space A travel?

Space A stands for Space Available, and refers to "stand by" travel using official government flights. It has a priority system that assigns a category to each person standing by. Active duty members on orders have the highest priority. If you take Space A travel, you should have time to wait for available seats, or be prepared to take a commercial flight in the event you lose seats to someone with a higher priority.

For details on Space A travel, visit www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp.

What is the/a sponsor?

"Sponsor" can mean two things:

- The sponsor of a military family refers to the active-duty member. The sponsor's social security number is needed to gain access to many military privileges, such as medical care, base exchange, and commissary.
- A sponsor is an active-duty member assigned to help and welcome a fellow active-duty member and his/her family, if applicable, when they PCS to a new duty station.

As a spouse, may I attend deployment briefings?

You, as an Air Force spouse, are highly encouraged to attend the pre- and post-deployment, as well as reunion briefings held at the A&FRC to prepare and help with

What is a weight allowance?

The household goods (HHGs) weight allowance is the maximum weight that can be moved at government expense under the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JTR). Based on your rank/pay grade, this allowance includes the total weight of HHGs you ship, place in storage, and send as unaccompanied baggage. Contact your local TMO for more information.

Useful Web Sites

Please be aware that .mil and .gov websites may block access unless you are going to their website from another .gov or .mil computer. You can use the computers in the Resource Center of your base A&FRC if you encounter this problem.

Air Force Aid Society (AFAS)

www.afas.org

Air Force Community

www.afcommunity.af.mil

Airman Magazine

http://airman.dodlive.mil/

American Red Cross (ARC)

www.redcross.org/services/

Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES)

www.aafes.com

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)

www.dfas.mil

Department of Defense (DoD)

www.defenselink.mil

Life Insurance Program

www.insurance.va.gov

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

www.militarychild.org

Military Home Front

www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil

Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA)

www.militarystudent.org

MilitaryOneSource

www.militaryonesource.com

Military Youth on the Move (MYOM)

http://apps.militaryonesource.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=123:HOME2:0

My Pay

https://mypay.dfas.mil

National Military Family Association (NMFA)

www.militaryfamily.org

National Military Spouse Network (NMSN)

www.nationalmilitaryspousenetwork.org

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

http://www.tsp.gov

TRICARE

www.tricare.mil

TRICARE Dental

http://www.tricare.mil/dental/

Family Resources

(Addendum A: Updated Feb 2014)

Child Education

Can be found at: http://www.afpc.af.mil/lifeandcareer/childeducation.asp
Military children generally move six to nine times from kindergarten through 12th grade. Many children make multiple moves during the high school years alone, some even during their senior year. Students and parents face changes in academic standards, courses, access to programs, and graduation requirements. Programs for children with special needs, and the transfer and acceptance of records, vary greatly from state to state and even school to school. These frustrations, along with giving up friends and associates with whom a rapport has been established, cause further anxiety. There are various organizations and agencies that can assist both parents and students with the unique education challenges facing military families.

Military Child Education Coalition - http://www.militarychild.org
The Military Child Education Coalition is a nonprofit, worldwide organization that identifies the challenges facing the highly mobile military child, increases awareness of these challenges in military and educational communities, and initiates and implements programs to meet the challenges. MCEC's goal is to level the educational playing field for military children wherever they are located around the world and to serve as a model for all highly mobile children.

Tutor.com for U.S. Military Families - http://www.tutor.com/military
Funded by the DoD MWR Library Program, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, Army General Library Program, and Navy General Library Program. Get homework and studying help from a professional tutor any time you need it. **FREE for students in Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, National Guard and Reserve families.** Expert tutors are online 24/7 and available to help in more than 16 subjects, including test prep, proofreading, Math, Science, English and Social Studies.

Home School

Home School Legal Defense Association - http://www.hslda.org/
The Home School Legal Defense Association is a nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms. Their website offers an array of information to those seeking information about home schooling practices. It also provides a link to individual states' home schooling guidelines; a useful tool for relocating Airmen.

Non DoD School Programs (NDSP) and Home Schooling -
http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/
Parents electing to provide home-schooling instruction rather than enrolling their child in a local school must follow specific procedures and guidelines.

Educational Resources - http://www.ed.gov/
The Department of Education provides important information and resources regarding the federal and state educational guidelines of the 50 individual states.

College Bound

College-Bound Students - http://studentaid.ed.gov/redirects/college-gov
Contains information on the importance of attaining higher education and provides useful resources for parents and students.

College Directory - http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/
A useful directory of Colleges and Universities located throughout the United States.

Federal Student Aid - http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/
Those seeking federal financial aid for college are required to complete a FAFSA form. This website provides parents and students with the information needed to successfully apply for financial aid.

College and Beyond - http://www.gradschools.com/
Online source for graduate school information including a directory with comprehensive program listings categorized by curriculum and subdivided by geography.

DoDEA Education Partnerships - http://militaryk12partners.dodea.edu
The Educational Partnership Branch launched the website with Military K-12 Partners. The site focuses on providing information that directly relates to the work of educators and administrators in military-connected school systems.

Spouse Employment

Can be found at: http://www.afpc.af.mil/lifeandcareer/employment.asp
Today, more and more spouses seek the personal fulfillment of a full professional career. When this is coupled with the fact that many families need two incomes to maintain their quality of life, spouse employment and career development opportunities become crucial to recruitment and retention. The Air Force recognizes the changing nature of our society and is engaged in program planning to provide the best career opportunities for our military spouses.

Airman & Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) services have been developed to help meet the challenges spouses face in training for and finding suitable positions and, as they relocate, continuing and progressing in their chosen career fields.

- Classes and individual consultation on career planning and personal development, resume writing, interviewing skills and all other phases of the job search process
- Resource centers offer guided access to computers, laser printers, internet information on careers, jobs, and the development of job search skills, as well as local and long distance job listings in both public and private sectors

■Individual career counseling and planning as well as career assessments and interpretation are available by appointment at A&FRCs

USAJobs - http://www.usajobs.com/
This is the official job site of the U.S. government. It is your one-stop source for federal job listings and employment information.

Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) -
https://msepjobs.militaryonesource.mil/
The Presidential Study Directive-9 Report, Strengthening Our Military Families: Meeting America's Commitment, published January 25, 2011, highlighted the need for a unified Federal government approach to help develop career and education opportunities for military spouses. Among the target activities to accomplish this goal is increasing opportunities for military spouses to obtain private sector careers. As a result, the Department of Defense (DoD) leveraged the successful partnerships created under the Army Spouse Employment Partnership by expanding the program to Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force spouses. The expanded program -- the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) -- officially launched in June 2011 during a ceremony at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

MSEP is part of DoD's broader Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) initiative, which seeks to strengthen the education and career opportunities of military spouses by providing career exploration opportunities to help them understand their skills, interests, and goals; education and training to help them identify academic, licensing, or credentialing requirements that can help them reach their career goals; employment readiness assistance to optimize their self-marketing skills; and employment connections that help them find and maintain a rewarding career. MSEP, a targeted recruitment and employment solution, creates employment connections that provide companies with direct access to military spouses seeking career opportunities and spouses with direct access to employers who are actively recruiting. MSEP currently has 129 partners, who have hired over 27,000 military spouses.

Spouse Education & Career Opportunities - http://www.militaryonesource.mil/seco
Do you want a career that you can carry with you the next time you PCS? Whether you are just starting your education, trying to advance in your career, or looking for that next great career opportunity, the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program can help you search for information on portable careers, get you started on your education, finalize that perfect resume, or assist you with your career planning. Use these resources, tools, and articles to help you get started!

CareerOneStop - http://www.careeronestop.org/
This is a U.S. Department of Labor-sponsored Web site that offers career resources and workforce information to job seekers, students, businesses, and workforce professionals to foster talent development in a global economy. It includes: America's Career InfoNet and America's Service Locator.