

April 24, 2020, 12:57 p.m. | 4 minute read | 26,822 views

Preparing Your Family Care Plan

Whether it's a deployment or training, sometimes your military career obligates you to leave your family and loved ones for an extended period of time. While being away from home is never easy, creating a family care plan can give you some peace of mind while you're gone.

Designed to provide caregivers with all the necessary information to keep the household running smoothly in your absence, family care plans typically include details about child care, school, medical care, family activities and all necessary contacts.

Key information to include in your military family care plan

You and your designated caregiver should work together on this document to make sure it includes all necessary information, such as:

- **Child care guidance:** expectations and schedules for child care, school and extracurricular activities
- **Medical care information:** medications, allergies and doctor's appointments
- **Parenting responsibilities and challenges:** guidance on food preferences and restrictions, bedtime, discipline, religious observances and activities, social and leisure activities, safety precautions, allowances and spending, and other issues
- **Contact information:** phone numbers, emails, and addresses for friends and relatives, health care and other service providers and community resources
- **Important documents:** Updated copies of your will, life insurance policies, birth certificates and beneficiary information
- **Finances:** information on how family finances will be managed
- **Alternate caregiver** Name and contact information of an alternate caregiver.

Make sure you also communicate this plan with your children if they are old enough.

Legal assistance offices can help with other important documents

You have access to free legal support through your installation's legal assistance office for a wide range of circumstances, including support with drafting these other important documents:

- **Power of attorney:** This legal document authorizes your caregiver to make parenting decisions on your behalf for a specified period of time, including decisions related to medical care. This document is required in your family care plan.
- **Military ID cards:** Make sure each family member age 10 or older is registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System and has a current ID card. Your caregivers don't get their own ID cards while caring for your family.
- **Agent letter of authorization:** Caregivers can access on-installation facilities to support your family members in their care, but they must have a letter of authorization signed by the commanding officer of the installation. You can request this letter through the ID card office at your installation.

Military resources for your caregiver

Lastly, inform your caregiver about these military resources that are available while you are gone:

- Military and Family Support Centers, which provide non-medical counseling and life-skills development, are found on most military installations. Visit [MilitaryINSTALLATIONS](#).
- Military OneSource provides assistance 24/7 and will direct you to a number of other resources. Call 800-342-9647, or [view overseas calling options](#).
- The commissary and exchanges offer everything from groceries to electronics at reduced prices. Make sure the caregiver has an agent letter of authorization and a family member's ID card.
- The Morale, Welfare and Recreation Program on your installation offers activities and after-school care for children and teens.
- [Military Kids Connect](#) is an online site that helps children and teens communicate and cope with deployment.

While a family care plan can't ensure everything will go perfectly while you're away, it can give you peace of mind that your caretaker has all the right information to make prudent decisions in your absence and run the household in a responsible manner. Reach out to Military OneSource for additional help or any other assistance.

TAGS:

child care

deployment