

Family Care Plan Handout



**Pittsburgh IAP/ARS
2475 Defense Ave
Brought to You by Your Family Support Office**

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Chapter 1

Family Care Responsibilities

1 -1. Terms Explained:

a. Member. For the purpose of this program, member refers to any person, commissioned or enlisted, in an active, reserve, or air National Guard component.

b. Single Member Sponsor. An Air Force member who has no spouse but who has dependent(s) that is incapable of self care. Dependent(s) must physically reside in the household with the member.

c. Military Couple with Dependents. Service members married to each other that are jointly responsible for care of dependent(s) that are incapable of self care. Dependent(s) must physically reside in the household with the member.

d. Dependent. For the purpose of this program, any person who bears any of the following relationships to the member:

(1) An unmarried child under 19 years of age.

(2) A dependent 19 years of age or older incapable of self-care.

(3) A parent of another person related by blood or marriage who depends on the member or members for over half of his or her support, is incapable of self-care, and resides in the household with the member or members.

e. Household. This is a principal of abode of the military sponsor, usually located at or within the vicinity of the permanent duty station.

f. Worldwide Available. Ready for the immediate performance of the full scope of military duties including, but not limited to unaccompanied tours, temporary tour of duty (TDY) to include short notice or no-notice deployment, alerts, recalls, extended duty hours, shift work, and similar military obligations.

g. Local Area. This will be defined by the member's Wing Commander based on mission requirements; that is, response time to recalls, response to deployment requirements, and so forth.

i. Separated. The status of a married member who is legally separated from his or her spouse under a court order or other legally recognized decree, or customarily resides apart from his or her spouse.

j. Single Parent. A member who has no spouse or who is separated or otherwise apart from his or her spouse, but has physical custody of or financial responsibility for family member(s).

k. Stepparent. A member married to another military member who is the parent or legal guardian of one or more family members who reside in the household of the military couple.

l. Ready Reserve. Military members of the Air National Guard and Reserve organized in units, or as individuals, liable for recall to active duty to augment the active components in time of war or national emergency. The Ready Reserve consists of two major subdivisions, the Selected Reserve and the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). The Selected Reserve and IRR are liable for active duty as prescribed by law. (Title 10, U.S.C. Sections 268, 672 and 6730)

1-2. Relationship of Family Care to the Performance of Military Duties. All Air Force members with family members must take the initiative to use all available military and civilian resources at their disposal to make sure family members receive adequate care, support, and supervision in a manner compatible with the member's military duties. Unless specifically exempted by AFI 36-2908 Family Care Responsibilities, or other directive, all members of the Air Force must be worldwide available at all times.

1-3. Who is required to certify Worldwide Availability Using AF Form 357?

a. Members whose civilian spouse is not capable of providing care for dependents or for themselves. Examples of situations where a commander can require a member to document dependent care arrangements include; a spouse with limited English language ability, spouse's illness or absence from the local area, or marital separation.

b. Single military sponsors and dual military couples with dependents.

c. Stepparents who have not adopted the children residing in their household may have legal obligation to provide care for those children. However, there may be times when the presence of these stepchildren, together with the absence of the spouse, may preclude the stepparent from performing the full range of their duties unless the family care arrangements, as specified on the AF Form 357 of natural or adoptive parent, are implemented. To make sure the stepparent is available, these members must complete item 19 of the spouse's AF Form 357 certifying that the presence of the stepchild in the household will not preclude the member from completing their military duties.

1-4. Short-Term Deferments. Short-term (90 days) temporary accommodations are allowed to permit the establishment of a family care program by newly assigned single parents or dual military couples with family members, or those who have recently become single parents. Thereafter, single parents and both members of a dual military couple are expected to be worldwide available and participate equitably in all unit activities (for example: recalls, shift work, alerts, exercises, and deployments). Supervisors will not make modifications on a long-term or permanent basis to accommodate (of "work around") unique family care arrangements of members.

1-5. Remedial Action. Prompt command action will be taken against members who, despite counseling and assistance, fail to make and maintain Family Care arrangements, thereby interfering with their worldwide availability and therefore subject to disciplinary action. A member not worldwide available because of a lack of Family Care arrangements is subject to disciplinary action. Failure to be worldwide available can be used as a basis for administrative discharge for airmen (AFI 36-3209) and for officers (AFI 36-3206).

Chapter 2

Developing Your Family Care Plan

2-1. Advance Planning. Advance planning is the key to Family Care arrangements.

a. Family Care plans must cover all reasonable practical situations, both short and long term, and must be sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide for a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to another individual during the absence of the military sponsor. The individual designated to assume responsibility may not be another military member because that member must also remain worldwide available. If this non-military person does not live in the local area, a non-military person in the local area must be designated to assume temporary custody until such time as the principal designee arrives to assume custody or the dependents are transported to the principal designee.

b. If you have dual (joint) custody of a dependent, you must ensure that your Family Care arrangements don't violate a divorce decree, separation agreement, or other legally binding agreement or order. In every such case, you should have your Family Care plan and all legal documents reviewed by the Staff Judge Advocate Office before finalizing any Family Care arrangements. Remember, Family Care arrangements that conflict with legally binding agreements or orders will not be certified as workable.

2-2. Selecting your Family Care Designee(s). This is **THE** most important phase of your Family Care planning! The individual you select should be a responsible, mature, emotionally stable, mobile, non-military person. When you find such a person, ask yourself these questions:

a. Is this person legally qualified to assume responsibility for my dependent(s)? Your designee must be an adult.

b. Does this person share my values? Your designee will be your child's surrogate parent. They'll be responsible for their care, supervision, and discipline, so you both need to be on the same wave length.

c. Is this the person I trust with my child's life? The individual you select will have both custody of your dependent(s) and medical power of attorney allowing them to act on your behalf. If your dependent becomes seriously ill or is injured, your designee may be compelled to make life and death decisions without consulting you. Ask yourself, "is this the person I want making those decisions?"

2-3. Types of Designees. You must have three Family Care designees. The types of designees are: short-term, long-term, and temporary. These designees have two things in common; they must be non-military adults and they must be able to fulfill their responsibilities without the help of another person (concurrent designees are not authorized). Here's an explanation of each designee's role.

a. Short-Term Designee. This person accepts custody of your dependents if you must report for duty for extended hours, recalls, or TDY. Here are some key points to remember about this designee:

(1) The person designated must live in the local area as defined in paragraph 1 -
li.

(2) The number of days your designee assumes temporary custody of your dependents is limited only by your agreement, but it should not normally be less than 3 days. This allows your short-term designee adequate time to contact your long-term designee and make final travel arrangements if an immediate transfer of Family Care responsibilities is needed.

(3) Your short-term designee assumes custody of your dependents as indicated by your plan if it must be implemented in your absence. Also, let your day care provider know who your designee is and under what circumstances they're authorized to pick up your dependent(s).

(4) As the key player in your Family Care plan, the short-term designee needs to know the name, address, and phone number of any other designee, as well as a way to positively identify them. In fact, it's a good idea to introduce you designees to each other, if only by phone. Familiarity will relieve some of the stress involved in carrying out your plan and should make things go more smoothly.

b. Long-Term Designee. This individual accepts custody of your dependent(s) if you're deployed TDY for duration to exceed the responsibilities of the Short-Term designee. There's no requirement that this person reside in the local area. (If this person does live in the local area and is willing to assume both short and long-term Family Care responsibilities, you don't need another designee.) Here are some key points to remember about your long-term designee:

(1) You need to make sure this person has access to the religious, educational, and medical facilities required to support the needs of your dependent(s). This is an overriding consideration if you have a physically or emotionally handicapped dependent.

(2) If you have school age children, your designee needs to know the school's name and address, and what documents are needed to acquire transcripts.

c. Alternate Designee. You must appoint either an alternate long term designee. When appointing an alternate designee, remember the individual accepts Family Care responsibilities for the same period as the person they're appointed to replace.

2-4. Powers of Attorney. You must execute a power of attorney (or other sufficient document) for any designee to authorize medical care for the dependent(s) covered by your plan. Authorization to enroll your dependents in school must be included if you have school age children. A power of attorney to act "In Loco Parentis" is encouraged, and may be required in

some states, for the primary long-term designee to exercise the desired degree of parental care and control See the Staff Judge Advocate Office for more information on powers of attorney.

2-5. Transportation Arrangements. You must make arrangements for your dependent(s) to be transported to your short and long term designees. Each designee needs to know whether your dependent(s) will be sent to them or if they'll be expected to pick them up. To avoid confusion later, let each designee know who is responsible for making final transportation arrangements when Family Care responsibilities are transferred from the short-term designee to the long term designee.

2-6. Financial Arrangements. You must make arrangements for each designee to have access to adequate funds for support of your dependent(s) during your absence. That is, enough money for your dependent's food, clothing, lodging, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. The amount of money you make available to each designee depends on the number of dependents, their needs, and the period of time the designee will have custody. Examples of disbursement plans include a joint bank account with your designee and a Class "X" allotment to be paid to your designee upon your departure. When selecting a disbursement plan, consider how quickly the money must be made available to the designee to meet your support obligations. For example, a payroll allotment may work fine for your long-term designee simply because it takes 30 days for the first allotment check to be issued.

2-7. Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). You must enroll your dependent(s) in DEERS to prove your eligibility for medical and dental care. (The military sponsor is the only person who can enroll a dependent in DEERS.) DEERS is a computer-based enrollment eligibility system that allows military medical facilities, the TRICARE Health Plan, and the TRICARE Dental Plan to verify an individual's entitlement to health care. Routine (not emergency) medical care will be denied by military facilities if the dependent is not enrolled in DEERS. Also, TRICARE claims will be denied. You can verify DEERS enrollment at the MPF Customer Service, ext. 8526. If your dependent(s) are not enrolled in DEERS, you must enroll them. Here's what you'll need:

- a. Spouse - marriage certificate
- b. Natural child - birth certificate

- c. Adopted child - birth certificate and adoption decree

- d. Stepchild - birth certificate and marriage certificate

- e. Parent - dependency determination letter from the Accounting and Finance Office.

2-8. TRICARE Health Plan. You need to familiarize each designee with TRICARE. TRICARE is health care program designed to bring the cost of military health care under control while meeting the essential needs of the beneficiary population. Your designee(s) needs to know what TRICARE option you have chosen, who's covered, what's covered, where to get care, how much it will cost, how to file a claim, and how to appeal adverse decisions. Information on the

TRICARE program is available from Health Net, 333 Rouser Road, Bldg 4, and Suite 101 or by calling 1-877-TRICARE.

2-9. TRICARE Dental Program. You need to familiarize each designee with this program operated by United Concordia, enrollees should be aware of the benefits by reviewing the United Concordia Dental Program Benefit Book, available through Health Net.

2-10 ID Cards. You must obtain Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege (USIP) cards for all eligible dependents. Commonly called dependent IDs these cards are issued to those individuals entitled to specific military benefits and privileges. Dependents 10 years of age and older must have ID cards. Children under age 10 of single parents and military couples may be issued ID cards when there is a genuine need.

2-11. Base Exchange and Commissary Privileges. Although not mandatory, you may request authorization for your designee to use the Base Exchange (BX) and commissary in support of your dependents. Installation commanders establish local procedures on how designees gain access to the base to use these facilities, if authorized. Contact the First Sergeant for assistance in preparing the required paperwork. Note: there is no commissary located on base, the nearest is at the Army Reserve In Oakdale, PA.

2-12. Virtual Record of Emergency Data Card (VRED). It is vital that your VRED be-up-to-date. This form not only tells the Air Force who to notify in case of an emergency involving you, it designates the beneficiaries of all unpaid pay and allowances in the event of your death. Your card is filed in your Unit Personnel Record Group (UPRG). To update this form, you must access the VMPF website at www.afpc.Randolph.af.mil

2-13. Wills. The decision of whether or not to have a will is one that should be discussed between the individual and an attorney. While a will is not required, having a will provides a way to ensure that the individual's wishes for the distribution of their assets after their death and who should act as guardian for their children will be carried out. Without a will these decisions will be left to the State Probate Court and may not be in accordance with the individual's wishes. The Base legal office provides assistance to military members and can assist with advice regarding this issue. In addition, individuals may wish to consult a private attorney or estate planner for assistance with complex property.

2-14. Important Documents to Have on Hand. Due to the highly personal and sensitive nature of the documents required supporting your Family Care plan (original powers of attorney, wills, financial arrangements, and so forth); these documents must be readily available for review upon request.

2-15. Documents required to be kept with the AF Form 357 in the Unit. You must have on file a current and completed AF Form 357, copies of your power(s) of attorney, and a family care plan worksheet. You may also attach any other documents or copies of documents that would enable the squadron to assist you in the event of a deployment.

Attachment 1
Developing Your Family Care Plan
(RECAP)

A1-1. **Goal.** Develop a plan that covers all reasonably practical short and long-term situations. Make sure it is sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide a smooth, rapid transfer of Family Care responsibilities to another non-military person. (See paragraph 2-1.a.)

a. If this non-military person does live in the local area, as defined in Paragraph 1-1h, designate a non-military person in the local area to assume temporary custody until your dependent(s) can be transferred to the principal designee.

b. If you have dual custody of a dependent, check with the Staff Judge Advocate Office to make sure your plan complies with the requirements of any legally binding agreement of order. (Paragraph 2-2)

A1-2. **Selecting Your Family Care Designee(s).** (See Paragraph 2-2)

a. Look for a responsible, mature, emotionally stable, and mobile, non military person.

b. Make sure the person is an adult. Look for someone who shares your values and who you can rely upon to make important decisions in your absence.

c. Make sure your short-term designee resides in the local area.

d. Make sure your long-term designee has access to the religious, educational and medical facilities required to support the needs of your dependent(s).

e. Optionally appoint an alternate short or long term designee, but not both.

A1-3. **Powers of Attorney.** Execute powers of attorney (or sufficient documents) for each designee to authorize medical care for your dependent(s). Include authorization to enroll your dependent(s) in school if you have school age children. The Staff Judge Advocate Office prepares powers of attorney for military personnel and dependents. (See Paragraph 2-4)

A1-4 **Transportation Arrangements.** Make arrangements for each designee to have access to enough money for dependent support. Choose a disbursement plan (allotment, joint bank account, etc.) based on the needs of your dependent(s), the need for timely support payments, and the period of time your designee will have custody of your dependent(s). The Comptroller and Finance Office, Military Pay Section, processes authorizations to start, stop, and change allotments for members. (Paragraph 2-5)

A1-5. **DEERS.** Make sure each dependent is enrolled in DEERS. Verify DEERS at the Customer Service Section. (See Paragraph 2-7)

A1-6. **TRICARE.** Familiarize each designee with TRICARE by sending them a copy of the TRICARE pamphlet. Get a copy from Health Net. (Paragraph 2-8)

A1-7. **TRICARE Dental Program.** TRICARE DENTAL enrollment is conducted at the MFS Customer Service Section. Obtain copies of handouts from Health Net (Paragraph 2-9)

A1-8. **ID Cards.** Make sure all eligible dependents have ID cards. You can get ID cards and applications at the MPF Customer Service Section. (See Paragraph 2-10)

A1-9. **Base Exchange and Commissary Privileges.** You can ask that your designee(s) have access to the BX and Commissary in support of your Family Care plan. See the First Sergeant for assistance. Note: There is no commissary at Pittsburgh IAP/ARS.(See Paragraph 2-11)

A1-10. **Virtual Record of, Emergency Data Card (VRED).** Make sure your Emergency Data Card is up to date. Check its accuracy at the MPF Customer Service Section. Update your VRED at the in the VMPPF. (See Paragraph 2-12)

A1-11. **Wills.** You're encouraged to have a will with a guardianship provision. The Staff Judge Advocate Office will draw up your will. (See Paragraph 2-13)

A1-12. **Important Documents to Have on Hand.** The unit isn't authorized to keep original legal documents required to support your Family Care Plan. We will maintain copies of the documents provided to us. You need to keep files of these documents and make sure they're available for review upon request. (See Paragraph 2-14)

A1-13. **Documents Kept at Unit.** You must have on file a completed and current AF Form 357, copies of your power(s) of attorney, and a family care plan worksheet. (See Paragraph 2-15)

Attachment 2

Support Agencies

A2-1. **Accounting and Finance Office.** This office is primarily responsible for all pay matters, including dependent support allotments 412-474-8541.

A2-2. **Chaplain.** Aside from religious and community programs, the chaplains provide counseling services for all military and dependent personnel. They provide counseling in religious, marital, academic, and personal problems, to name a few 412-474-8204.

A2-3. **Military Personnel Flight.** The Customer Service Section prepares ID card applications, updates Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) forms and they conduct DEERS and TRICARE Dental Program enrollments.

A2-4. **Red Cross.** The Red Cross provides emergency assistance in communication between service members and their families. It is vital your designee knows to notify the local Red Cross of any emergency involving your dependents. This will greatly speed your notification and return home, if needed. In Pittsburgh call 412-263-3100

A2-5. **Family Support Office (FSO).** The Family Support Office serves as a focal point for all assistance programs and activities that influence Air Force members and their families, retirees, and DOD civilians. Services include one-step information and referral center, counseling, and referral assistance for families in crisis (marital, financial, child-related, relocation, etc.), spouse employment referral information, and various programs and courses to assist the family in developing and improving their family skills. Call 412-474-8544. The Air Force Aid Society can provide financial assistance for a wide range of emergency and other critical needs. This includes emergency financial aid to family members geographically separated from their military sponsor. All Air Force Aid assistance is approved at headquarters, but the FSO starts the process.

A2-6. **Security Police.** Pass and Registration Section. This section issues temporary base identification and passes and vehicle registration media 412-474-8567.

A2-7. **Staff Judge Advocate Office.** This office can provide legal assistance to all military personnel and dependents. Air Force lawyers cannot represent you in civilian courts or in civilian legal matters. BUT, they are available to provide legal advice on such matters. Services include the making of wills and powers of attorney, and information on laws of other states. The Legal Office is open on the "A" UTA each month.

A2-8 **TRICARE Service Center.** TRICARE is a health care program designed to bring the cost of military health care under control while meeting the essential needs of the beneficiary population. Information on the TRICARE program is available from the Health Benefits Advisor at Health Net, 333 Rouser Road, Bldg. 4, and Suite 101 or by calling 1-877-TRICARE.

Attachment 3
 Instructions for Completing AF Form 357
 (Family Care Certifications)

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>ITEM NUMBER</u>	<u>INSTRUCTIONS</u>
I	A	Member's certification.
	B	Military spouse certification.
II		Designee certification (statements in this section may be completed by as many as three different people or as few as one person.)
	5	Primary short term designee completes. The number of days for which the designee is accepting responsibility must be filled in. Designee must be in the local area. Concurrent designation of two primary short-term designees is not authorized.
	6	Completed by primary long-term designee. If designee changes, new AF Form 357 must be completed.
III	7	Appointment of an alternate designee is mandatory. Concurrent designation of two Alternate designees is not authorized.
III	8	Mandatory
IV		Not required in CONUS.
V	11	Completed by stepparent.