Knights of the Armor Force

**Beatrice Patton Room**

**Family Readiness Checklist**

Once a unit has deployed, it is too late to realize you need your spouse’s signature or don’t know where things are or how important tasks are to be done. These problems can easily be avoided. The best solution is to be totally prepared.

By looking ahead and anticipating the likelihood of a deployment, you and your loved ones can adequately plan for this separation. Remember, once your soldier/airman is deployed, the responsibility for your family transfers directly to you. Ultimately, you are responsible for knowing your rights and privileges and what resources are available to you as a spouse.

\_\_\_\_ List of Unit Family Readiness Group (FRG) leaders and members.

**Automobile/Transportation**

\_\_\_\_ Get automobile key (and duplicates)

\_\_\_\_ Get garage key or fob (and duplicates) if applicable.

\_\_\_\_ Have oil changed, new oil and air filter installed, and car lubricated; know the mileage reading when the oil should be changed next?

\_\_\_\_ Make sure all fluid levels are up to normal (oil, transmission fluid, brake and steering fluid, water); know how to check and fill them yourself (if needed) and what gasoline to use.

\_\_\_\_ Make sure all vital equipment is in good condition and working order (including brakes, tires, battery, belts, hoses, headlights/high and low beams, tail lights, brake lights, turn signals).

\_\_\_\_ Review your insurance policy to make sure it provides adequate coverage (liability, medical, uninsured motorist, damage to your car and others); know the renewal date, cost of renewal, who to contact to renew the policy (name, address, and telephone number).

\_\_\_\_ If the vehicle(s) is/are financed, do you know the name and address of the loan company?

\_\_\_\_ Do you have the title papers or know its location?

\_\_\_\_ Do you have the vehicle's registration?

\_\_\_\_ Do you know the renewal date for the license plate?

\_\_\_\_ Do you know when to renew the vehicle inspection?

\_\_\_\_ Do you have a valid driver's license? When does it expire? If you are not licensed to drive, make arrangements to have transportation available. Learn what alternative transportation is available (on post, car pools, taxis, city buses or friends).

\_\_\_\_ Is the vehicle in good operating condition and do you know where to go for repairs? Learn where to go, who to see or call when you have problems with the automobile (routine maintenance, auto repair, tires, oil changes, and lubrication).

\_\_\_\_ Can you make emergency repairs on the vehicle if the situation arises (such as overheating, flat tire, dead battery)? Who do you call?

\_\_\_\_ If you have a trailer, motorcycle, motorized recreational vehicle, and or boat know where the registrations and insurance policies are for each.

Note: Consider purchasing a road service policy to provide assistance with flat tires, towing, stalled engine, being locked out of your car, and other emergencies; know what your policy covers, when it expires and has to be renewed, cost of renewal, who to contact to renew (name, address, and telephone number); know what to do if you do not have this coverage and one of these events happens.

\_\_\_\_ Look into the renewal of state and on-post vehicle registration (year, cost, where to go, what to do).

\_\_\_\_ Locate automotive papers (car registration, safety inspection, tire warranties, battery guarantee, insurance policy and certificate of insurance, road service card); know where they are, what they mean, how to use them.

\_\_\_\_ Prepare a list of automotive “do’s and don’ts” and hints on car care.

**Family Issues**

\_\_\_\_ Make sure your spouse’s unit has your name, address, and telephone number, along with the name, address, and telephone numbers of one or more people who will know where you are at all times (even if you travel or move).

\_\_\_\_ Get the name, address, and telephone number of your landlord, mortgage company, or government housing office.

\_\_\_\_ Get the names and telephone numbers of key members of your Family Readiness Group (FRG), your unit’s rear detachment commander and chaplain, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator.

\_\_\_\_ Make sure you have a military ID card for each member of your family.

\_\_\_\_ Get the keys to your house, safety deposit box, personal storage company.

\_\_\_\_ Know when ID cards expire, and have required forms signed by sponsor before departure.

**Make sure you have (if appropriate)**

\_\_\_\_ Marriage certificate

\_\_\_\_ Birth certificates

\_\_\_\_ Insurance policies (life, home, auto)

\_\_\_\_ Family social security numbers (including your children’s)

\_\_\_\_ Rental or lease papers (if appropriate)

\_\_\_\_ Deeds and/or mortgage papers (if appropriate)

\_\_\_\_ School registration papers (if appropriate)

\_\_\_\_ Proof of spouse’s military service documents

\_\_\_\_ Copies of your spouse’s orders and all amendments

\_\_\_\_ Shipping documents and/or household goods inventory

\_\_\_\_ Court orders for support and custody of legal dependents

\_\_\_\_ Unit mail card

\_\_\_\_ Copy of your most recent allotment request (if appropriate)

\_\_\_\_ Naturalization papers (if appropriate)—know the expiration date and prepare paperwork

\_\_\_\_ Divorce decree (if appropriate)

\_\_\_\_ Adoption papers (if appropriate)

\_\_\_\_ Death certificates (if appropriate)

**Financial**

\_\_\_\_ Obtain appropriate bank books, ATM cards, checkbooks, credit union papers or books, credit cards.

• Know the address of banks where you have money. Know the account numbers and types of accounts that you have.

• Know the location of the bankbooks (checking and savings).

• Determine if you need a safe deposit box, if so know where the key is.

\_\_\_\_ Make sure you can make deposits and withdrawals with only your signature. If the account shows an “and” between your spouse’s name and yours, it requires both signatures; an “or” ensures you can make deposits and withdrawals in the absence of your spouse. This can be changed only while the soldier is here.

\_\_\_\_ Keep a list of automatic deposits and withdrawals or payments made to financial accounts (paycheck, insurance, loan, or bill payments).

\_\_\_\_ Have your spouse apply for a Class EE Savings Bond allotment (if desired and appropriate), and keep a copy of the signed application.

\_\_\_\_ Know who to contact in case of a pay problem.

**Other Financial Questions**

\_\_\_\_ Will you have money available to you on a continuing basis during your soldier/airmen's absence?

\_\_\_\_ Has your soldier initiated an allotment to be sent to you or directly to the bank monthly?

\_\_\_\_ Will the allotment provide you with enough money to buy all the necessities needed to maintain a household?

\_\_\_\_ Do you know all payments that must be made? To whom they must be made? And when?

**Important Documents**

\_\_\_\_ Get a Power of Attorney, unit mail card, and military ID card if you will have to pick up your spouse’s paycheck and/or mail from the unit.

\_\_\_\_ Prepare a list of outstanding payments, loans, and other obligations with due dates, amount owed, who to pay, contact person, address and telephone numbers.

\_\_\_\_ Prepare a list of investments such as securities or bonds with their value, contact person’s name, address and telephone number; know how to cash these in an emergency.

\_\_\_\_ Get copies of the past five years’ state and federal income tax returns and everything needed for the next filing, including due dates and who to contact for assistance in preparing the.

\_\_\_\_ Prepare a list of military and community organizations that offer financial advice, counseling, information, and assistance

**IMPORTANT DOCUMENT FILE**

It is very important for the military family to keep copies of important documents and other valuable information in a safe place. It is equally important that the wife and husband jointly organize this file so that each knows how and where to find the documents when they are needed. You may wish to purchase a file box to keep important papers in so they are readily available and easy to up-date.

At a minimum, the following documents should be included:

• Marriage certificate.

• Birth Certificates for all family members.

• Citizenship papers, if any.

• Adoption papers, if any.

• Passports, if any.

• List of Social Security Numbers of family members.

• Shot records (up-to-date) for all family members.

• Powers of attorney, if any.

• Wills.

• Insurance policies (both government and civilian)-with a list of companies, policy numbers, types of insurance coverage, addresses and phone numbers of agents or companies.

• Vehicle title(s).

• List of all credit cards and account numbers. Photo copy of the back of the credits cards showing the card company’s contact phone numbers in case the cards are lost or stolen.

• List of all bonds and stocks and where certificates are located.

• Court orders relating to divorce, child support, custody, alimony or property division, if any.

• Real estate documents-leases, deeds, mortgages and promissory notes, closing papers.

• Copies of any sales or installment contracts and finance agreements.

• List of bank accounts with types of accounts and account numbers.

• Armed Forces identification cards for all family members 10 years of age or older.

• Nine (9) copies of your spouse's deployment orders

• Current addresses and telephone numbers of all members of immediate families of both you and your spouse. [Immediate family includes father, mother, children, brother(s), and sister(s). You should have all other important telephone numbers you may need in case of emergency.]

• Notify your child(ren)’s school that a family member is deployed and that your child may need the school staff’s support.

**Legal**

\_\_\_\_ Get the name, address, and telephone number of your military or private attorney or legal advisor.

\_\_\_\_ Get a Power of Attorney (general or limited) if you will need to sign documents or act on your spouse’s behalf during the deployment.

\_\_\_\_ Make sure your will and your spouse’s will are up to date and valid.

\_\_\_\_ Get copies of all insurance policies, and find out what is covered and to what extent; get contact person’s name, address, and telephone number; ask whether you need a Power of Attorney to file a claim during your spouse’s deployment.

\_\_\_\_ Secure a list of military and community organizations that offer legal advice, counseling, information, and assistance.

**Medical**

\_\_\_\_ Make sure you have family medical cards for you and your children. Do you know where the medical and dental records are kept?

\_\_\_\_ Make sure you have family shot records for you and your children. Are the immunizations up-to-date?

\_\_\_\_ Make sure current prescriptions for medicine and glasses or contact lenses are available.

\_\_\_\_ Get a list of military, community, state, and federal organizations that offer medical, mental or emotional, dental, and optical assistance.

\_\_\_\_ Do you know how to get medical assistance if it is needed? Who lives nearby that you can call if you need help?

\_\_\_\_ Do you have one or more reliable sitters for absences or emergencies?

\_\_\_\_ Who will help take care of aging parents while your spouse is gone?

\_\_\_\_ Request a military or local police crime prevention survey for your home

**Security/Safety**

\_\_\_\_ Add a door “peephole” or door surveillance app to your cell phone to at least your front door and ensure you have adequate locks to all of your doors and windows.

\_\_\_\_ Place your family’s name on the Military Police Quarters Checklist (or notify the local police if you live in a civilian community) if your family will be away from home for an extended period.

\_\_\_\_ Install a smoke detector (or check existing detectors) in key areas of your residence (kitchen, bedroom, living room, shop/garage).

\_\_\_\_ Install a fire extinguisher (or inspect existing extinguisher) in key areas of your residence (also recommended for your automobile)

\_\_\_\_ Discuss with your family alternate exits they can use to leave your home from each room in case of a fire or other emergency

\_\_\_\_ Get a list of military and community organizations that offer security/safety advice, counseling, information, and assistance.

Provided Courtesy of the Knights of the Armor Force