

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 7, 2005

Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) announces reductions in civilian force in Gulfport, MS

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME, WASHINGTON, DC: The AFRH Chief Operating Officer announced today that certain positions located in its Gulfport, MS, facility would be subject to Reduction in Force procedures with an effective date of February 18, 2006. Due to the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, 350 plus veteran residents who resided at the Gulfport Home were evacuated from the Gulfport facility within 24 hours of the storm and transported to their sister facility in Washington, DC. Since September 1, 2005, the Washington facility has been providing shelter, food, medical and support services to the Gulfport residents. This arrangement could last approximately 18 months, provided funding is received from Congress. The Home has a fiduciary responsibility to the residents of the Home to protect the AFRH Trust Fund that directly supports them which lead to the decision to conduct a RIF and terminate Administrative Leave to AFRH Gulfport employees. By February 18, 2006, the RIF effective date, most AFRH Gulfport employees will have been authorized over 5 months of paid Administrative Leave.

The AFRH has requested Voluntary Early Retirement Authority from the Office of Personnel Management which will allow eligible employees to voluntarily retire with less than the standard number of years. Effective February 18, 2006, affected employees will also qualify for severance and unemployment compensation. The AFRH has arranged for a series of training events that will help RIF'd employees transition into new jobs. RIF notices will allow affected employees preference over non-RIF Federal job seekers. As a result of Hurricane Katrina, the AFRH will also be creating a number of positions within the Agency, mostly at the Gulfport facility. Interested Gulfport RIF'd employees are encouraged to apply for these jobs. All employees affected by the RIF notification will qualify for the Interagency Career Assistance Program and, most importantly, AFRH Gulfport employees will have return rights to the Gulfport facility.

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