

Get The ORFP Advantage!

The California National Guard's Operation Ready Families Program offers a variety of programs to assist the guardmember and their family before, during and after deployment:

- Operation "We Care" Meetings
- Special Benevolence Offers
- Volunteer Education Courses
- Marriage Enrichment Seminars
- Youth Camp

We also offer educational articles on:

- Managing Combat Stress
- Understanding Military Benefits
- Coming Home

...And Much More!

Visit our website!

www.calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies

Mission First! Family Always!

Operation Ready Families Program
Family Assistance Network
California National Guard
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**Operation Ready Families Program
Family Assistance Network
California National Guard**

A Commander's Guide to an Effective Program



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A Commander's Guide to an Effective Program



Families affect unit readiness and retention in a most profound way. Knowledgeable, supportive, and self-reliant families ensure that when the time comes to drill, attend training, or deploy, the Guard member will be able to safely accomplish the mission at hand instead of concentrating on family issues at home. By making families a part of the unit they are more supportive of the unit mission and their Guardmember's continue involvement in the California National Guard.

It is vital that each California National Guard unit establish a proactive program of support for families that ensures spouses, parents, significant others, children, and others are part of the "Total Guard Family". A viable Operation Ready Families Program in a California National Guard unit includes the following elements:

Command Support

It is essential that the commander (no matter what level of command) express his /her support for including families in the mission of the unit. This support is shown by:

- Writing and effectively disseminating command guidelines officially outlining the command philosophy

on family readiness as well as the local resources available to unit families. As a minimum, the guidelines will be posted on the unit bulletin board and distributed to each unit member with clear instructions to share the information with their families.

- Expecting unit staff and NCOs to proactively deal with family issues. Commanders may include Family Program accountability on evaluation reports.
- Actively sponsoring and supporting the unit Operation Ready Families Team (Family Assistance Officer and Family Volunteer Leader) and its activities.

An Assigned Unit Military Point of Contact for Family Readiness

This is the military member of the unit Operation Ready Families Team. He/She is the command liaison, ensuring that information and family issues raised either from the military chain of command or the family chain of concern are addressed appropriately. This individual should be someone who is empathetic to the difficulties and stresses families' experience. For more information about this assignment, please refer to AF 600-20 and the RC Unit Commander's Handbook of FORMDEPS.

Family Inclusion in the Unit Sponsorship Program

One of the most important duties of the unit Family Assistance Officer and the Operation Ready Families Team is to ensure that new unit families receive information about the unit, its mission, and its Operation Ready Families Program.

Continuous, Reliable Information to Unit Family Members

The best way to provide this information is to dedicate a section of the unit newsletter to family information or produce a monthly or quarterly unit Operation Ready Families newsletter

Development of the Unit Operation Ready Families Team

It is unrealistic to expect that 100% of unit family members will volunteer to be actively involved in an on-going Operation Ready Families Team. A viable unit Operation Ready Families Program includes a core group of 2-10 family members/significant others that will consistently work with the family assistance officer to develop programs and activities that establish family readiness and communication. Team meeting frequency depends on the unique needs of the unit. A Team for one unit may meet monthly, while a Team for another may come together quarterly or even semiannually.

The State Operation Ready Families office has resources to assist units in evaluating their Ready Families Program. For further information on establishing a unit Operation Ready Families Team, or enhancing the readiness of your unit's families, call the State Operation Ready Families Coordinator, Steve Read at (916) 854-3252.

Point of Contact:

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