



**1. PAO CODE**  
L 8 8

**2. YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (For identification only)**  
1 0 0 1 0 9 9 9 9

**3. BRANCH OF SERVICE**  
 ARMY  
 AIR FORCE  
 NAVY  
 MARINE CORPS  
 COAST GUARD

**4. STATUS**  
 ACTIVE  
 RESERVE  
 NATIONAL GUARD  
 CIVILIAN

**5. RANK**  
SSGT

**9. EV**  
AW

**10. YOUR LIVING PARENTS, STEPPARENTS**  
LAST NAME

**6. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE USE ONLY**  
 PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
 222 TTS/PA  
 662 WASHINGTON ST., STE 444  
 TINKER AFB, OK 78241-5000

**7. PRIVACY STATEMENT**  
 Publication by civilian news media to recognize the achievements of Army and Air Force members. To prepare news stories and news releases for identification use only. Routine use only. Disclosure: Information may be disclosed to civilian news media denying the individual public recognition for personal achievement. If you have no objection to the information being released to public news release material can be produced, thus information is considered "Public Domain."

**8. SEX**  
M

**INITIAL, LAST NAME**

*(Citation Needed)*

# Hometown News Release Guidebook

# Welcome

## to your Hometown News program

*Where  
soldiers  
& airmen  
are the stars*



Welcome to *your* Hometown News program. Through the DD Form 2266, you as a public affairs professional can tremendously expand your media relations program with very little extra effort. This guide is designed to help explain the hometown news program — from providing tips to help fill out the form, to how hometown news releases are processed and marketed.

Whether you're starting up a hometown news program for the first time, dusting off a program that's been dormant for awhile, or simply fine-tuning an existing program, everyone should find elements of this guide useful.

Some of the areas you can expect to find in this guide include such things as story categories, the use of PAO codes, a step-by-step instruction on how to fill out the DD Form 2266, the use of photographs, the monthly report and a brief "tour" through the hometown news release process, from opening the mail to marketing the printed release.

Because this is *your* program, don't hesitate to let us know about ways to improve our products or the way we do business. Like any customer service organization, it's important to meet the customer's needs — and serving soldiers and airmen around the world is our number one priority.

# Categories

Story categories used to be chiseled in stone, with very little flexibility. Categories came and went depending on our workload. Story categories could literally change from week to week.

Today, our stock stories are being developed by those who understand their need the greatest -- you the public affairs professional. If you have a com-

mand-wide award, a special deployment or local events that you feel warrant coverage, simply attach a cover release or fact sheet with your DD Forms 2266 and we'll create a stock story for you. Simple as that. To give you an idea of some of the categories we currently have in our system, we've included a general list.

## Army

- Basic Training
- Promotions
- Exercises (attach a cover release with forms)
- Awards & Decorations
  - Achievement Medal
  - Army Commendation Medal
  - Meritorious Service Medal
  - Defense Meritorious Service Medal
  - Legion of Merit
  - Bronze Star
  - Silver Star
  - Soldier's Medal
  - Humanitarian Service Medal
  - Good Conduct Medal
  - Expert Infantry Badge
  - Expert Field Medical Badge
  - Combat Infantry Badge
  - All joint service awards
  - Soldier/NCO/Officer/Civilian of the Quarter and Year
- Arrivals and Appointments/Changes of Command
- Delayed Enlistment Program
- ROTC
  - Scholarships
  - Summer Camps
  - Commissioning
  - George C. Marshall Awards
- Advanced Training
  - All Advanced Individual Training Courses
  - Advanced NCO Courses
  - Basic NCO Courses
  - Primarily Leadership Development Courses
  - Airborne Training
  - Ranger and Special Forces Training
  - Command and General Staff College
  - Army War College
  - Sergeants Major Academy
- Reenlistment
- Sports Competitions (interservice or international)
- Educational Degrees (Associate Degree and higher)

## Air Force

- Basic Training
- Technical training (all AFSC-producing schools)
- Promotions/Commissionings
- Awards & Decorations
  - Air Force Achievement Medal
  - Air Force Commendation Medal
  - Meritorious Service Medal
  - Defense Meritorious Service Medal
  - Airman's Medal
  - Air Medal
  - Legion of Merit
  - All joint service awards
  - Bronze Star
  - Aerial Achievement Medal
  - Distinguished Flying Cross
  - Airman/NCO/Officer/Civilian of the Quarter and Year
  - Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
  - Suggestion Award
- Arrivals/Appointments/Assumption of Command
- Education
  - Community College of the Air Force Graduation
  - Awarding of Associate Degrees and higher
- Training
  - Squadron Officer School
  - Airman Leadership School
  - NCO Academy
  - Any advanced AFSC training school
  - Any advanced officer training
- ROTC
  - Scholarships
  - Summer Camps
  - Commissioning
- Reenlistment
- Retirement
- Sports Competitions (interservice or international)
- Exercises (attach a cover story with forms)

# The 'Form'

## How to fill out a DD Form 2266

A hometown news release is only as good as the form it's submitted on. It's like most anything -- the final product will only be as good as the raw material you have to work with. In this case, that 'raw material' is the DD Form 2266.

The following is a close-up look at each block of the DD Form 2266 and what to look for when putting together the 'perfect' form.

### PAO Code:

Submissions cannot be posted to your account without your code listed on each form.

HOMETOWN NEWS RELEASE INFORMATION									
1. PAO CODE			PRINT OR TYPE - SEND ORIGINAL ONLY				FOR RELEASE: PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE USE ONLY		
L	B	8					PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE 332 TTS/PA 4621 Washington St., STE. 444 Tinker AFB, OK 73241-3000		
2. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (Do not abbreviate - use only numbers and zeros)									
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT									
<small>AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552; 16 U.S.C. 813 and 804; and 36 CFR 1201.            PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: To prepare news stories and news releases for distribution and publication by civilian news media to recognize the achievements of Army and Air Force members. In accordance with the 1974 Privacy Act, you are hereby notified that your social security number on this form is required for identification and only for the purposes stated above.            NOTICE: Information may be disclosed to civilian news media representatives. Once published, information is considered "Public Domain."            DISCLOSURE: Information collected on this form is released over your signature and is returned. If you have no objection to the information being released to news media representatives, sign your name below. Failure to provide the information may result in no publication or news release material sent to the press. Your signing this individual public recognition for personal achievement.</small>									

### Social Security Number:

This information is used solely to track the form through the system. It is not released as part of the story.

**Next of kin:** The parents or Next of Kin tie is one of the most important elements on the form.

### Privacy Act Statement:

Make sure each individual reads and understands this statement. Signing and dating this form gives Hometown News the right to send the information on this form (except for the SSN) to his or her hometown newspapers.

10. YOUR LIVING PARENTS, STEPPARENTS, GUARDIANS, AUNT/UNCLE/GRANDPARENTS OR ADULT SIBLINGS			
a. (1) FIRST NAME, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST NAME Robert D. Doe		(2) RELATIONSHIP TO YOU Father	
(3) ADDRESS (Number and Street) 384 Fair St.		(4) CITY Hagerstown	(5) STATE MD
		(6) ZIP CODE 21740	
b. (1) FIRST NAME, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST NAME Patricia K. Doe		(2) RELATIONSHIP TO YOU Mother	
(3) ADDRESS (Number and Street) 384 Fair St.		(4) CITY Hagerstown	(5) STATE MD
		(6) ZIP CODE 21740	
11. SPOUSE'S NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last) Mary			
12. SPOUSE'S LIVING FATHER a. FIRST NAME, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST NAME Mark Smith			
b. ADDRESS (Number and Street) 8499 McArthur St.		c. CITY Richardton	d. STATE N.D.
		e. ZIP CODE 58652	
13. SPOUSE'S LIVING MOTHER a. FIRST NAME, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST NAME Barbara Smith			
b. ADDRESS (Number and Street) 8499 McArthur St.		c. CITY Richardton	d. STATE N.D.
		e. ZIP CODE 58652	

Things to watch for -- both parents first and last names, their relationship to soldier or airman, a complete street address, city, state and correct ZIP Code. Without this part correctly filled out, we have a news release all dressed up with no place to go.

# Complete form key to successful release

3. BRANCH OF SERVICE		4. STATUS		5. RANK	6. PAY GRADE	7. FIRST NAME, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST NAME		8. SEX
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ARMY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ACTIVE	SSgt.	E-5	John D. Doe Jr.		M
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AIR FORCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	RESERVE	9. EVENT (Example: Arrived; Promoted to Sergeant; Received Commendation Medal, etc. - Clarify Needed)				
<input type="checkbox"/>	NAVY	<input type="checkbox"/>	NATIONAL GUARD	Received Air Force Commendation Medal				
<input type="checkbox"/>	MARINE CORPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	CIVILIAN					
<input type="checkbox"/>	COAST GUARD	<input type="checkbox"/>						

**Rank:** Make sure your rank is included Use Spec. or Cpl. or SrA or Sgt. rather than E-4

**Gender:** Believe it or not, this block is important. Pat, Chris, Billy, Sean, and Toni are just a few of the names that could be either male or female. Don't assume we know.

**MOS/AFSC:** Don't use number/spell out completely.

**Event:** This block is critical. It needs to be as specific as you can make it. If the event is outside the realm of a normal stock story, attach a cover release or fact sheet with the DD Form 2266.

**Present Unit:** Spell out unit, base and location.

**Job Title:** Spell out job title if different from MOS/AFSC

14. a. YOUR PRESENT UNIT OF ASSIGNMENT <small>(Do not abbreviate)</small>		b. POST OR BASE (Not APO)		c. CITY		d. STATE OR COUNTRY	
222nd Training Squadron		Tinker AFB		Oklahoma City		Okla	
15. DUTY MOS OR AFSC		16. PRESENT JOB TITLE <small>(Full Title - Do not abbreviate)</small>				17. TOTAL YEARS MILITARY SERVICE	
22222		Information Management Technician				10	
18. a. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATED FROM		b. YEAR GRADUATED		c. CITY		d. STATE	
MacArthur High School		84		Hagerstown		MD	
19. COLLEGE GRADUATED FROM		e. YEAR GRADUATED		f. CITY		g. STATE	
a. COMPLETE NAME		b. DEGREE		c. YEAR GRADUATED		d. CITY	
20. REMARKS <small>(Continue on back if necessary)</small>							
21. SIGNATURE OF PERSON LISTED ABOVE <small>(Authorizing release of this information)</small>				22. DATE (YYMMDD)		23. DUTY PHONE <small>(DSN or area code)</small>	
<i>John D. Doe Jr.</i>				31296		222-8888	

DD FORM 2266, JUN 95 (EF-M7) GPO: 1995 O-480-000

**Signature:** Without a valid signature, this release is no good. Signing the form tells us you have read the privacy act statement and you're willing to have this information released to your hometown newspapers. Do not sign, then write "Do Not Release."

**Date:** The date the form is signed is the date we use for the event. Even though these stories may not be "hard news," they are still perishable. We no longer have a 30 or 60-day rule, but it's still a good idea to send these forms in as soon as they're filled out.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Why is the social security number required?**

*It is used strictly as a tracking device during the news release composition process, to identify any ‘casualties’ that may occur before a news release is sent and is **never** sent as part of a news release.*



## **If a person doesn't sign the DD Form 2266, why is it rejected?**

*The signature tells us that the servicemember has read the privacy act statement and agrees to release the information on the form (except social security number) to commercial media outlets.*

## **There is no block on the form to identify the hometown newspaper. How does HNS know where to send the releases?**

*The address of each servicemember's next-of-kin ties are entered into a program that accesses a database of about 11,000 daily and weekly newspapers. Each paper that subscribes to our service provides a list of ZIP Codes within their readership area, so only those newspapers requesting coverage of a particular ZIP Code will receive the news release.*

## **Why is the PAO Code important on a DD Form 2266?**

*Without a PAO Code on each form, there is no way to determine how many submissions, rejections and releases were generated by each customer.*

## **We get many ‘grip n’ grin’ shots for such things as promotions and awards. Are these the type of pics you’re looking for?**

*The best type of photograph to accompany a hometown news release is the ‘head and shoulders’ mug shot, which clearly shows the individual. In a ‘grip n’ grin’ shot, the individual is often too far away and, unless properly identified, can be confused with others in the photo.*

## **I have a homewowner from Chicago, but there is no street address for the next-of-kin tie. Why does it matter as long as I have a city, state and ZIP Code?**

*Large cities like Chicago have a multitude of suburban weeklies that cover a very specific area. Listing a street address for a large city helps verify to newspapers whether the coverage to their newspaper is valid.*

## **What are “electronic” submissions for the DD Form 2266, and how do I get them to the Hometown News Service?**

*The forms management software, ‘Formflow,’ contains an electronic version of the DD Form 2266. When filling out this form electronically, keep a printed copy with the servicemember's signature on file for 90 days. To e-mail the form after it's created, pull down ‘file’ and select ‘package form.’ Then select ‘form package.’ For data records, select ‘all.’ Also, include ‘form and form application.’ Save the file with an .fpk extension. Attach to your e-mail message and send to [hometown@master.pa.af.mil](mailto:hometown@master.pa.af.mil).*

# The Hometown News Process

## *Transforming the DD Form 2266 from raw data to finished release*

Many soldiers and airmen, and more than a few public affairs professionals, often wonder about the “black hole” where hometown news release forms are devoured once they leave the public affairs office — never to be seen or heard from again.

Even those who eventually see their stories in print often complain about the unwieldy, lumbering process involved from the time the form is filled out until they see the final release in print. What is the process? And, more importantly, why does it take so long?

When the DD Forms 2266 are received from the mail room, they are immediately counted, date stamped and the respective PAO Codes are entered into the computer. Entering the PAO Codes ensures each public affairs office with accurate submission counts, number of rejects and number of total releases.

The forms are then divided into their respective categories depending upon their stock story (That’s why it’s important to include the PAO Code on each form). Each batch of like stories is then assigned a batch number and given to a composer where the information on the form is entered into a database and merged with the appropriate stock story.

Once the batch of stories is composed, it is sent to the quality control branch where a proofreader will bring up the computerized “batch” and proofread each story to ensure that the information listed on the form was picked up correctly, check for spelling and grammar errors, and ensure the proper stock story was used. The batch is then released into the print mode, where a marketing database containing close to



11,000 daily and weekly newspapers is matched with the ZIP Code of each individual. The name and address of each newspaper is printed on each final news release, with each servicemember receiving an average of three releases per story.

As automated and smooth as this process can run, the successful outcome of each story is totally dependent upon the quality of the forms we receive. The following are a few helpful hints to ensure a successful release.

Quite a few forms come through without the social security number. While this information is not used in the release, it is vital to the tracking of the individuals we process. There may be five John Jones in the system at any given time, but only one with a particular social security number. We use the SSN strictly as a tracking device. Especially when we match the daily casualty lists against releases.

If you send forms with events outside the norm, simply attach a cover story or fact sheet explaining the event or award. We’ll write a stock story specifically for that event, award or situation. The number one quality control measure to look for before submitting each form, though, is legibility. Make sure all the elements are complete and clearly readable.



Army Air Force  
*Hometown*  
**News**

**Print News Division  
203 Norton Street  
Kelly AFB, TX 78241-6105  
DSN: 945-6502 or Cmcl: (210) 925-6502  
Fax DSN: 945-3467 or Cmcl: (210) 925 3467  
hometown@master.pa.af.mil**