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**Medical Command**

**SPECIAL NEEDS IDENTIFICATION  
AND ASSIGNMENT COORDINATION**

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This directive establishes policies for the Air Force Special Needs Identification and Assignment Coordination (SNIAC) process. It implements Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 1315.19, Authorizing Special Needs Family Members' Travel Overseas at Government Expense, December 20, 2005. The SNIAC process supports the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) described within AFI 36-2110, Assignments, April 20, 2005, AFI 36-3020, Family Member Travel, June 10, 1994, and AFI 36-2102, Base-Level Relocation Procedures, Sept 18, 2006. The policies outlined in this directive guide Air Force facilities on three components of family member travel: (1) the authorization of family member travel at government expense for active duty service members assigned overseas, (2) the coordination with the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) on military assignments within CONUS for sponsors who have family members with special needs, and (3) the mechanisms for processing family member travel requests of DoD civilian employees where special needs are identified. This directive does not apply to Air National Guard unless on Title 10, Extended Active Duty (EAD). This directive applies to Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) personnel when on Title 10, EAD or Active Guard Reserve tour. Title 10, United States Code Section 1076 entitles military family members to medical and dental care. Title 20, United States Code Section 1400 et seq., The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees free and appropriate public education for persons with disabilities, and is implemented by the Air Force in AFPD 40-6, Educational and Developmental Intervention Services, June 30, 2006. AFI 36-2110 provides guidance for command sponsorship for active duty family member travel. The authority to collect and maintain records is prescribed in Title 10, United States Code Section 8013, Privacy Act System Notice F044 AF SG U, Special Needs and Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS), and AFI 33-332, Privacy Act Program, January 29, 2004. AFI 33-332, AFI 41-210, Patient Administration Functions, March 22, 2006, and the administrative provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 guide the protection and privacy of individually identifiable health care information. DoD Directive 5400.07, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program, October 28, 2005, applies to the disclosure of health care information to the public. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with AFMAN 37-123, Management of Records and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) located at

<https://afrims.amc.af.mil>. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the AF IMT 847, Recommendation for Change of Publication; route AF IMT 847s from the field through the appropriate functional's chain of command.

1. The AFPC and Air Force Medical Service (AFMS) work cooperatively to identify active duty sponsors whose family members have special medical and educational needs and to determine the availability of services for assignment purposes. AFMS additionally supports DoD civilian personnel who plan to take family members with special needs overseas. This directive establishes policy for managing the SNIAC process throughout the Air Force.

2. The SNIAC process supports Air Force readiness by promoting access to family member health care and by decreasing barriers to free and appropriate public education for the children of military and civilian sponsors. It ensures AF compliance with DoD policy pertaining to mandated services for individuals with special needs. Air Force SNIAC promotes health and education through broad-based awareness activities and information technology. The goals are to ensure appropriate access to information and care, and to prevent untimely relocations from areas where medical services and special education services are not available for family members. The primary considerations under SNIAC are the safety of family members requesting government-sponsored travel to accompany sponsors, and the protection of their federal entitlements.

3. Medical treatment facilities (MTF) will identify special education and medical needs in military family members and document them for the purpose of assignment coordination. AFPC will ensure military and civilian sponsors are informed of the requirements and procedures for family member screening prior to OCONUS travel at government expense. AFPC will ensure appropriate confirmation of needed medical and educational service availability by the MTF prior to the issuance of PCS orders for active duty sponsors with special needs family members. AF SNIAC will assist civilian personnel accepting employment overseas upon request by inquiring about service availability prior to family member travel.

3.1. Active duty sponsors of family members whose needs meet DoD Criteria for special educational and medical services as specified in DoDI 1315.19 must be enrolled in the EFMP via MTF notification to AFPC, via the local Military Personnel Flight (MPF) where applicable, to issue assignment limitation code "Q". An assignment coordination screening activity, the Family Member Relocation Clearance (FMRC) process, assesses the family members' medical and educational conditions and confirms the availability of required services for both CONUS and OCONUS relocations. The SNIAC process supports the Air Force assignments function by informing AFPC if specific needs cannot be met in a projected location prior to the issuance of travel orders. Command sponsorship for family members of active duty sponsors will not be offered for OCONUS travel where services do not exist to meet special needs.

3.2. The SNIAC staff completes the FMRC process upon request for DoD civilians who accept employment overseas and plan to travel with family members who have special needs. Information regarding the availability of needed medical and educational services at the gaining locations is provided through HQ USAF/A1, Civilian Personnel or their designees, to inform employees' decision-making prior to travel. Decisions regarding family member travel OCONUS remain with civilian sponsors. Civilian sponsors are not enrolled in SNIAC or EFMP.

3.3. The SNIAC staff supports other DoD components in the determination of available services prior to family member relocation overseas upon request. These may include, but are not limited to, fami-

lies of sponsors assigned to State Department duties or of military attachés, families of AF Reservists on extended active duty, and families with sponsors of other branches of military service. While supportive coordinating and referral services are offered by SNIAC for these families, these other DoD sponsors are not enrolled in AF SNIAC or AF EFMP.

4. This directive establishes the following responsibilities and authorities:
  - 4.1. The Assistant Secretary, Manpower & Reserve Affairs (SAF/MR) provides policy oversight and guidance for SNIAC policy.
  - 4.2. The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Airmen Division (SAF/IAPA) reviews family relocation clearance packages regarding Air Force Attaché assignments.
  - 4.3. AF/SG implements policy and advocates for the Air Force SNIAC process. AF/SG interfaces with SAF/MR and the staff of the Office of the Secretary of Defense to develop proposed policy and legislative initiatives.
  - 4.4. The Air Force Medical Operations Agency (AFMOA) acts as the agent for AF/SG in carrying out the Air Force's approved and directed policies of prevention, record keeping, reporting, and program evaluation.
  - 4.5. The Program Manager, AF Programs for Families with Special Needs (AFMOA/SG300), advises the Air Force Surgeon General to form plans and policies for the SNIAC process and tracks and reports Air Force implementation of DoD policies.
  - 4.6. The AFMOA/SG300, Clinical Quality Management Division, provides clinical oversight to ensure that Major Command Surgeons (MAJCOM/SG) comply with the FMRC process for active duty members with embassy attaché and/or State Department duties. AFMOA/SG300 coordinates with representatives of Combatant Commands where AF MAJCOMs have no direct oversight of services to family members, and coordinates with AFMOA/SG300 as needed.
  - 4.7. MAJCOM/SGs support and monitor the SNIAC process to ensure their installations comply with DoD and AF policy. Additionally, gaining OCONUS MAJCOM/SG or their designees:
    - 4.7.1. Provide oversight and management of the family clearance process in support of families of DoD civilians and those assigned to embassy attaché and/or State Department duties.
    - 4.7.2. Coordinate with Tricare Regional Offices as needed to determine available services for civilian and attaché clearances.
    - 4.7.3. Ensure coordination with regional Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) personnel and the responsible Military Department for Educational and Developmental Intervention Services where special needs are identified in children of active duty or civilian sponsors requesting government-sponsored travel into the MAJCOM.
    - 4.7.4. For OCONUS active duty assignments, the gaining MAJCOM will seek alternate assignment opportunities within the command if services are not available in the MTF or from DODDS at the initially projected location within the MAJCOM.
  - 4.8. AFPC, through MPF Commanders, ensures the establishment and monitoring of procedures that support the coordination of accompanied assignments of active duty personnel with the MTF SNIAC process, according to DoD and AF Policy and implementing guidance.

4.9. AFPC/DPAPO manages EFMP Reassignments when services for newly identified medical or educational needs are unavailable, or when violations of the assignment coordination process have occurred. These violations may include those in which a previously existing condition was not properly identified by the losing MTF, those in which a sponsor withheld information or did not fully participate in the SNIAC process, or those in which an error in processing assignment orders occurred prior to completion of the FMRC process. EFMP Reassignment is described in AFI 36-2110, Attachment 25.

4.10. AFPC and AFMOA/SG3OO will ensure education on DoD and AF Policy issuances regarding family member travel requirements and the SNIAC process to all active duty base personnel, and to civilian personnel accepting overseas employment.

4.11. Unit commanders will ensure appropriate actions are taken when there is evidence that active duty sponsors willfully violated the FMRC process, either through refusal to fully participate in the screening process or through disregard of official recommendations against family member travel OCONUS. All active-duty sponsors will comply with procedures for identifying family members with special needs, with EFMP and SNIAC enrollment procedures, and with established procedures for the review of those special needs prior to relocating family members at government expense.

4.12. Civilian Personnel staff involved in civilian employee recruiting, hiring, and relocations will ensure DoD employees are aware of the coordinating supportive services available to them through SNIAC for family members with special needs. Civilian Personnel will ensure appropriate notifications are made to those considering overseas employment IAW DoDI 1315.19.

4.13. Civilian Personnel employees will follow Civilian Personnel guidance and DoDI 1315.19 regarding screening procedures for civilian employees' family member travel overseas. MTF Special Needs Coordinators (SNCs) may determine the availability of special medical and educational resources at projected locations upon request of the civilian employee. The MTF provides information to support those selected for overseas positions in making the best decisions possible for their special needs family members. Civilian employees maintain the responsibility for obtaining and paying for needed care for family members when choosing to relocate them overseas. The exception is for those services authorized under DoDI 1342.12 to support a free, appropriate public education for eligible minor children as would be provided under IDEA.

5. Standards of Care: MTF Commanders and personnel will comply with DoD issuances, AF policies pertaining to family members with special needs, the Air Force Inspection Agency, and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization standards.

6. Standards of Practice: Standards of practice are the parameters of service provision as permitted by licensure and accrediting bodies. The scope of practice for medical providers is covered in AFI 44-119, Clinical Performance Improvement, June 4, 2001.

7. Standards of Performance: AF commanders and MTF/CCs will design and implement local processes that support the following aggregated targeted performance standards for the AF SNIAC process. AFPC/DPAPO and AFMOA/SG3OO will measure these standards centrally and report annually to OSD (P&R) on the effectiveness of AF processes as specified in DoDI 1315.19, para. 5.4.15.

7.1. One-half of one percent or less (< 0.5%) of the total number of family member relocation actions each calendar year (total AF PCSes) must be re-accomplished due to unavailability of the required

medical or educational services at the gaining location after a family member relocation clearance process was successfully completed.

7.2. Five percent or less (< 5%) of needed EFMP reassignments in each calendar year will be due to the failure of the losing MTF to identify a special need for the gaining base's consideration when evidence existed of the need prior to the sponsor's receipt of PCS orders for accompanied assignment.

7.3. Five percent or less (< 5%) of needed EFMP reassignments in each calendar year will be due to the failure of AFPC to ensure completion of the FMRC process with travel recommendation provided for each traveling family member prior to the issuance of orders for accompanied PCS.

**8.** This policy applies to all military and civilian beneficiaries who are entitled to receive care in an MTF. Additionally, DoD civilians not normally served by the MTF are supported upon request for inquiries into the availability of care for special needs family members when planning travel overseas.

MICHAEL W. WYNNE  
Secretary of the Air Force

## Attachment 1

### GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### *References*

Title 10, United States Code Section 1076, Medical and Dental Care for Dependents: General Rule

Title 20, United States Code Section 1400 et seq., Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Title 10, United States Code Section 8013, Secretary of Air Force

DODD 5400.07, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program, October 28, 2005

DODI 1315.19, Authorizing Special Needs Family Members Travel Overseas at Government Expense, December 20, 2005

AFPD 40-6, Educational and Developmental Intervention Services, June 30, 2006

AFI 33-332, Privacy Act Program, January 29, 2004

AFI 36-2102, Base-Level Relocation Procedures, September 18, 2006

AFI 36-2110, Assignments, April 20, 2005

AFI 36-3020, Family Member Travel, June 10, 1994

AFMAN 37-123, Management of Records, August 31, 1994

AFI 41-210, Patient Administration Functions, March 22, 2006

AFI 44-119, Clinical Performance Improvement, June 4, 2001

#### *Abbreviations and Acronyms*

**AFPC**—Air Force Personnel Center

**CONUS**—Continental United States

**OCONUS**—Outside the Continental United States

**DODDS**—Department of Defense Dependent Schools

**EIS**—Early Intervention Services

**EFMP**—Exceptional Family Member Program

**FDI**—Facility Determination Inquiry

**FMRC**—Family Member Relocation Clearance

**IDEA**—Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IEP**—Individualized Education Program

**IFSP**—Individualized Family Service Plan

**MPF**—Military Personnel Flight

**MTF**—Military Treatment Facility

**RS**—Related Services

**SNC**—Special Needs Coordinator

### *Terms*

**Early Intervention Services**—Services provided pursuant to the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,” as amended by the military medical departments to infants and toddlers (birth through 2 years of age) who are experiencing developmental delays or who have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay.

**Exceptional Family Member Program**—Established by the DoD to identify and serve sponsors with family members who have special needs. The AF EFMP ensures appropriate assignment considerations for active duty members via coordination with the AFMS SNIAC staff. It processes requests for TDY deferment or other personnel actions on behalf of families with special needs.

**Facility Determination Inquiry**—The mechanism used by AF SNIAC offices to forward documented family member special needs (medical and/or educational) to gaining MTFs for the review of available services.

**Family Member Relocation Clearance**—The coordination process between the MPF (for active duty sponsors), the Civilian Personnel office (for DoD civilian employees), and the MTFs (both at losing and gaining installations) that supports family member travel in conjunction with assignment or employment activities. Family Support Centers, Family Member Programs, and Housing Management may be asked to provide resource information to support sponsors relocating with their special needs family members.

**Individualized Education Program**—A written document defining specially designed instruction for a student with a disability, ages 3 through 21 years. The IEP is further described in, and prepared under DoD Instruction 1342.12.

**Individualized Family Service Plan**—A written document for an infant or toddler (birth through 2 years of age) with a disability and the family of such infant or toddler that is further described in, and prepared under DoD Instruction 1342.12.

**Related Services**—Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as required to assist a child, ages 3 to 21, with a disability to benefit from special education under the child’s Individualized Education Program. This includes speech-language pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluative purposes. It also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training. The sources for those services are school, community, and medical treatment facilities.

**Special Educational Needs**—The educational needs of a family member who meets DoD criteria for identifying a family member with special needs as defined in DoDI 1315.19, Enclosure 4.

**Special Medical Needs**—The medical needs of a family member who meets DoD criteria for identifying a family member with special needs as defined in DoDI 1315.19, Enclosure 4.

**Special Needs Identification**—The mandatory process for all base agencies to identify and refer active duty family members with special needs in order to ensure family member access to required services at current and projected assignments. It is also the process used by Civilian Personnel to inquire of the presence of special needs among family members of civilian personnel who have accepted employment overseas and plan to take accompanying family members into OCONUS areas.