



# NON-MILITARY GUARDIAN INFORMATION/CHECKLIST

There are special challenges to being the guardian of a military family member. This information and checklist are provided to help you meet these challenges. As an appointed guardian, you assume the responsibility of providing food, housing, health care, education and legal support. Your acceptance of this responsibility is acknowledged on the Family Care Plan form. The service member should provide you with a copy of this form as well as necessary powers of attorney.

Military facilities are available to help you provide this care. Entitlements and benefits may be obtained at any military installation. Call or visit the installation closest to you to ensure you have the correct documents and know the correct procedures to gain access. You may require an "Agent Letter" issued by the local base CO and a Power of Attorney which permits you to shop at the Commissary and Exchange for the dependent you are caring for.

## Benefits and Entitlements

- Commissary – A non-profit supermarket offering the same products as most civilian supermarkets.
- Exchange – A department store offering name brand merchandise at the lowest practical cost. Prices in the exchange may be lower than civilian stores and no sales tax is paid.
- Medical Care – Medical care may be obtained at uniformed services medical treatment facilities or from authorized civilian health care providers.
- Dental – Emergency dental care, if provided at military dental facilities, is on a space available basis. Routine dental care is not normally provided.
- Legal Assistance – Should the need arise family members are authorized to use the legal services at any military installation.
- Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) – The Navy's FFSP has locations on most Navy bases. They are staffed to assist family members with information and referral services, counseling and related support. You can reach your FFSP by calling information at your local Navy base.

## Helping Children Cope with their Parent's Deployment

The service member has chosen you to take care of a very precious possession – their children. As their caregiver you will be dealing with the everyday ups and downs, as well as with the emotions brought about by their parent being gone. Try the following tips to help the children understand and cope with their parent's absence:

- Be patient. Remember that children may "act out" their feelings. Expect some regression or anger.
- Talk about the deployed parent often and encourage the children to do the same.
- Find ways to help the children express their feelings. Encourage talking, writing, and drawing.
- Look at family pictures and videos.
- Help the children keep in touch by letter, email, phone and care packages.
- Tell them over and over that their parent misses and loves them.
- Develop and use a support system. The Family Support Group, the ombudsman, and the FFSC are good places to start.



## Guardian Checklist ✓

Discuss the following items with the service member prior to departure:

- \_\_\_ Are all ID cards up to date and valid until after member returns?
- \_\_\_ Do you know how to obtain new ID cards if necessary?
- \_\_\_ Are all eligible family members enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)?
- \_\_\_ Do you have necessary Powers of Attorney to take action on important family matters?
- \_\_\_ Do you have the birth certificates of all family members?
- \_\_\_ Do you have medical and dental records including immunizations records, prescriptions and a medical power of attorney?
- \_\_\_ Do you know how to contact the right medical and dental assistance if needed?
- \_\_\_ Do you know where the nearest military Medical Center is located?
- \_\_\_ Do you know about TRICARE and how to use it? Do you have the TRICARE medical card?
- \_\_\_ Do you have the required documentation for day care, camp or sports enrollment, etc?
- \_\_\_ Do you have school records including individual education plan for special needs children?
- \_\_\_ Do you have the contact information for service members command including CO and/or supervisor's name and hull or squadron number?

