

Contents

Influenza (Flu)
Vaccination Program

TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime
Remote Handbook

Children and Deployment

Heroes' Legacy Scholarships

Safeguard Your Military ID Card

Navy Housing Turns Up the HEAT

Family Connection is a publication of the Fleet
and Family Support Program.

The Navy's Fleet and Family Support Program
promotes the self-reliance and resiliency of
Sailors and their families. We provide information
that can help you meet the unique challenges of
the military lifestyle.

If you have questions or comments, contact
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Visit us online at:



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Make 2012 a DEBT-FREE HOLIDAY

Now that the 2011 holidays are over, it is not too early to start preparing for the 2012 holiday season. Take a look at what you spent last year and commit to making this year's holidays debt-free! If you spent \$1200 on gifts last year, immediately begin putting \$50 in the bank each payday. Then, when it is time for holiday shopping, your biggest chore will be to move your money from savings to checking to pay the bill.

For additional savings, add another \$25-\$50 a month to the savings plan to take advantage of 2012 after-Christmas sales. Retailers usually discount wrapping paper, greeting cards, and decorations as much as 90%. Remember to make shopping lists, and stick to limits. If you have friends or family who seem to have everything, consider a gift of time or talent. Offer to babysit, clean house or run errands. Share a skill such as carpentry services, home remodeling or painting. Last, but certainly not least, consider sharing time with those who may be confined to a hospital, nursing home or the local Veterans Administration Medical Center during the holidays and who do not have family close by to share the joy of the season.

Debt



Tax Season Preparation

It is time to start gathering receipts and paperwork in preparation for the tax season. Do you have questions about retirement plan payments, tax relief for Sailors serving in a combat zone or extension of deadlines? Resources are available.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program

Navy Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) centers around the world will be open for business soon. On-site services are available to assist service members and their families with free tax advice, tax preparation and return filing by IRS-trained volunteers. To find the nearest VITA center, visit [Navy JAG Corps](http://NavyJAGCorps).


Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

For additional tax questions and/or combat zone information, call 1-800-829-1040 or go to IRS.gov.

"Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each New Year find you a better man."

— Benjamin Franklin



**Influenza (Flu)
Vaccination
Program**

It is that time of year — flu season! While Navy personnel are required to be vaccinated annually for influenza, the vaccine is also available to family members. Influenza, commonly referred to simply as the “flu,” is a highly contagious viral infection of the respiratory tract. Symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches and extreme fatigue. Most people recover in one to two weeks, but some people may develop life-threatening complications from the infection. The most effective protection against the influenza virus is an annual flu vaccination.

What is the flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine currently comes in two forms:

- a flu shot
- a nasal spray

The flu shot is made up of inactivated influenza viruses that have been broken down into pieces and purified. Vaccination involves an injection directly into the muscle of the arm. The nasal spray contains live but weakened influenza virus. Anyone who wants to reduce the risk of getting the flu should be vaccinated, especially those in confined living and working conditions, which can accelerate the spread of the disease.

Reduce your risk of getting the flu by:

- Getting your vaccination
- Covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Practicing good hygiene and hand washing
- Staying at home and away from others if you are sick

The flu vaccine may be obtained at no cost from any military treatment facility (MTF) or at a participating [TRICARE](#) retail network pharmacy.

**TRICARE
Prime and
TRICARE
Prime Remote
Handbook**

The newly combined *TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote Handbook* is an 88-page guide that provides an overview of the TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Prime Remote program options. The handbook discusses regional contractors, DEERS, providers, enrollment, disenrollment and more. Stateside and overseas contact information is also included. [Download your copy!](#)



**Navy Family Accountability
and Assessment System (NFAAS)**

NFAAS allows Navy personnel to manage the recovery process for personnel affected by a widespread catastrophic event. It is also helpful in providing commands with information to support IA family members while their sponsors are deployed overseas.

Log on to NFAAS at <https://www.navyfamily.navy.mil>.



Children and Deployment

Anytime a parent deploys, it is hard for the whole family. [Sesame Street](#) and [The Electric Company](#) unveiled a new collection of resources for military families. These innovative materials, produced by Sesame Workshop, are designed to help elementary school-aged children and families stay connected and communicate during times of tremendous change and uncertainty. Resources are available for grown-ups, too. Sign up for [Sesame Street Digital](#) or go to [The Electric Company parent site](#). It is free and easy!

- [FamiliesNearAndFar.org](#) — a free bilingual website designed for military families
- Feel Electric! — a free mobile app, available on the App Store, that encourages children to explore and express their emotions
- [The Electric Company Magazine Special Edition for Military Families](#)
- The Electric Company Extended Learning Program — afterschool tools for educators, filled with literacy and math-based lesson plans, games, activities and tips.

Heroes' Legacy Scholarships

The [Heroes' Legacy Scholarships](#) program honors not only those who have fallen in battle, but all who have died or have become disabled through their active military service since September 11, 2001. The program is open to dependent unmarried children of fallen and wounded warriors under age 23. A disability is defined as one that results in the service member being eligible for, and receiving, Traumatic Service members' Group Life Insurance (TSGLI) or a permanent and total disability compensation rating of 100%. For more information on how to apply visit [Fisher House Foundation](#).



Safeguard Your Military ID Card

Incidents have been reported recently of commercial establishments photocopying military identification cards and common access cards (CAC) to verify military affiliation or provide government rates for service.

Family members and military personnel are reminded that photocopying U.S. Government identification is prohibited. While commercial establishments are allowed to ask for military/government identification, many government personnel and commercial establishments are unaware of the prohibition on photocopying of government identification.

Criminal elements and terrorist organizations place U.S. government identifications at a premium when planning acts against the U.S. military. Unfortunately, there are no safeguards in place to ensure a government identification card won't be counterfeited or "cloned" based on a photocopy by a commercial establishment. It is recommended that family members, military, and DoD personnel provide a state drivers license or other form of photo identification to be photocopied.

Note that this prohibition does not apply to medical establishments (e.g., doctor's office, hospital). Medical establishments are allowed to photocopy your military/government identification for the purpose of filing insurance claims. Other government agencies in the performance of official government business are also allowed to photocopy your military/government identification.



Navy Housing Turns Up the HEAT

HEAT stands for the Housing Early Application Tool. Navy Housing has developed HEAT to assist Sailors and their families in applying for housing Navy wide. HEAT allows Sailors and their families to apply for housing at one or more locations before or after they receive their PCS orders. Spouses can use the application as well, needing only minimal information about their Sailor.

You can use HEAT even if you don't have PCS orders. You or your spouse may use HEAT at any time to request information about housing or to check on your eligibility for Navy or privatized housing. HEAT allows you to start the housing application process and communication with the HSC early in your search for housing. It does NOT place you on the housing waiting list earlier or in a higher spot. To learn more, go to [CNIC Navy Housing](#).



Moving Expenses

Did you have moving expenses during the past year? Remember to ask at the Navy Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Centers about what expenses may be tax deductible. If there is no VITA Center in your area, go to [Irs.gov](#) for more information.

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Returning Warrior Workshops (RWW)

Returning Warrior Workshop Schedule & IA Family Events — www.ia.navy.mil. Click "Links and Resources."

