

Emergency Family Assistance Center Established to Support Victims of WNY Shootings

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by MC2 Pedro A. Rodriguez, Naval District Washington Public Affairs

In the aftermath of the shooting at the Washington Navy Yard, the Navy has established an Emergency Family Assistance Center (EFAC) on board Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Sept. 17.

An EFAC is the central point for promoting short and long-term recovery. This includes the return to a stable environment and mission ready status for Department of Defense personnel and their families following a significant

incident. EFACs provide a consolidated staging area where families and individuals can obtain disaster relief assistance and/or support, current information from leadership, and contingency services. They integrate services addressing the needs families and individuals affected by the incident.

“The Navy’s primary mechanism for responding to family needs following a disaster or mass casualty incident is the establishment of an EFAC,” said Robert Klebahn, NDW regional Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) manager. “The NDW FFSC plans, trains, and exercises plans annually, in order to be able to respond to incidents at a moment’s notice.”

“The Family Support staff supporting the current EFAC provided support and assistance at the Pentagon Family Assistance Center, at EFACs established for Hurricane Katrina, the Southern California Wildfires, the evacuation of personnel from Japan following the earthquake and tsunami in 2011,” said Klebahn

Since it was established the EFAC has received 536 calls, including five for clinical counseling from personnel concerned about their co-workers being among the casualties.

The EFAC will be available 24/7 for any members or civilian employees and affected family members that feel the need of talking to somebody. It is comprised of NDW Family Support staff, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Clinicians, the Navy’s Special Psychiatric Rapid Intervention Team from Portsmouth, VA, the FBI and other support agencies are all dedicated to ensuring the fastest recovery, or return of normalcy as possible.

“It is important for affected family members to know that important benefits may exist for them,” said Klebahn. “The FBI’s Office of Victim Assistance, they provide information to victims of crime, and will provide lodging and travel for two family members of the deceased or injured if needed. The Red Cross, they are providing services to those affected. DC Crime Victims Compensation provides financial assistance for burial. William Wendt Center provides trauma counseling to victims and families affected, and The Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs provides information and assistance with federal employee benefits. Other agencies will be added as the need for them is identified.”

For Navy families seeking assistance with yesterday’s tragedy at the Navy Yard, please call the Warfighter and Family Support Center at 1-855-677-1755. The Emergency Family Assistance Center (EFAC) is open and located in Building 72.



U.S. Navy Photo by Chatney Auger Corporal Mason of Naval District Washington Special unit stands guard with DC Police Officer Morawski. Due to the continuing investigation, personnel will not have access to the base except for mission essential and first responders.