

***512th Airlift Wing
Airman & Family Readiness
(A&FR)***

Dover AFB



***Military Member's
Family Care Plan Guide***

January 2013

**A&FR Telephone Numbers
(302) 677-3566
1-888-677-3566**

From the Commander...

The nature of military service dictates that you must be ready to deploy throughout the world on short notice and be able to fully execute your military duties. If you have dependents, your ability to meet this requirement is directly related to the degree of prior family care planning. Thorough planning benefits both the military and your family by ensuring proper care for your dependents, reducing stress, and maintaining a deployable asset for your unit.

You have the responsibility to ensure your family members are cared for during deployments, mobilizations and temporary duty, as well as at all other times. Developing a workable family care plan means more than just putting information on the AF Form 357 (Family Care Certification) and turning it into your unit. It means you are responsible for providing the caregiver all necessary information and documentation needed to execute the Family Care Plan in your absence. The “simple family care plan” and the brainstorming checklist contained on the last page provide a great template to help you design your personal family care plan.

This guide is intended to help you focus on what your designated caregivers may need to know in your absence. Taking time to develop a well thought out plan now will ensure your dependents have the best care possible when they need it the most. Your unit will recertify your AF Form 357 annually, but it is your responsibility to update changes to the form and adjust your plan accordingly. Should you have further questions, you may call Airman & Family Readiness at 677-3566 (local) or toll-free at 1-888-677-3566.

CATHERINE L. MILHOAN, Major, USAFR
512th Force Support Squadron Commander

Family Care Plans...

Planning the care of family members is of great value and required by every member. While it is especially crucial (and mandatory) for ***single parents*** and ***dual military couples with family members***, everyone should consider developing a plan if they bear medical, legal, financial and/or logistical responsibility in any of the following categories:

Status changes in which the member becomes solely responsible for the care (housing, medical, logistical, financial, dietary, etc.) of another person. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a. Birth of a child or adoption of a child
- b. Loss of a spouse through death, separation or divorce, or spouse's injury or illness that prevents the spouse from caring for family members or other dependents.
- c. Enlistment (or commissioning) in any military service (active duty, guard or reserve component) by a spouse, which would result in the member and spouse becoming a dual military couple with dependents.
- d. Assumptions of sole care for an elderly, disabled or chronically sick family member who is unable to care for his or her self, in the absence of the member.
- e. Extended, recurring or other absence of a civilian spouse through career/job commitments or personal reasons which, in the opinion of the unit commander, may impact on the member's deployability.

Your Family Care Plan should include written provisions for:

1. Short-term absences—30 days or less. For example, Temporary Additional Duty requirements, pre-deployment workups, training exercises, school, periods of annual training and short-term involuntary recalls.
2. Long-term absences—any length of time the Air Force requires a member to be absent from family members (usually 30 days or more). For example, Deployments, extended temporary duty, school and periods of long-term involuntary recalls.
3. At the discretion of the unit commander, other kinds of absences such as extended working hours due to mission requirements.
4. The Family Care Plan should cover arrangements for the financial well being of family members during separations. Arrangements should include a Power(s) of Attorney, allotments or other appropriate means to ensure the self-sufficiency and financial security of family members. You will need banking information for your caregiver in order to set up an allotment. Assistance with financial planning can be obtained from the Financial Management Office, Airman & Family Readiness and the Legal Office. Guard and Reserve families may request financial assistance (in the form of a loan or grant from the Air Force Aid Society) for emergency type needs (food, shelter, utilities, etc.) during a separation when the member is gone for fifteen days or more, or is on orders under U.S.C. Title 10.
5. Logistical movement of the family or caregiver. Logistical arrangements shall include arrangements for relocation, if necessary, of the caregiver or family to a new location and the financial, medical and legal arrangements necessary to ensure continuity of care of family members during the movement. You should make advance arrangements with your short or long term caregiver should they live a good distance away, necessitating travel arrangements. How will they travel to pick up your dependents? Will they remain at your residence or travel back to theirs? Who will be responsible for expenses incurred during traveling?
6. Alternate caregiver(s) in the event the primary caregiver(s) become unable to perform duties under the Family Care Plan. Planning should include arrangements for logistical, financial, medical and legal support necessary to ensure continuity of care for family members.
7. Single parents and dual military couples with minor children should designate a person who, in the event of their death or incapacity, will assume temporary responsibility for their children until a legal guardian arrives or is appointed by a court with jurisdiction or the non-custodial natural parent assumes custody. The temporary designation is not a substitute for the appointment of a legal guardian in a will.
8. Ensure appropriate steps are taken to provide caregiver access to the Base Exchange, Commissary, and base clinic if applicable, while caring for family members.
9. A list of special considerations concerning your dependents should include:
 - a. Location and instructions for daily medications
 - b. Allergies
 - c. Name and phone number of pediatrician/family doctor/dentists/specialists

- d. Information regarding medical insurance plan and/or TRICARE
 - e. Food favorites and dislikes
 - f. Favorite toys (especially those they won't sleep without)
 - g. Routine daily schedule (to include snack, naps, etc.)
 - h. Child's school phone number and teacher's name
 - i. Birthday (just in case you have to miss it)
 - j. Behavioral changes that may occur
 - k. Military benefits your dependents may have authorization to use and how to access them.
10. A resource list to include other important telephone numbers and addresses. (Be sure to explain how each of these resources can help your caregiver.) Numbers to include: child's doctor(s), dentist, schools, day care providers, or other family members and friends that could lend support.
- a. Dover's toll free number (1-888-677-3000) and your work extensions and names of your commander, first sergeant, supervisor and Airman & Family Readiness (677-3566).
 - b. The phone number of your local American Red Cross to include proper notification procedures.
11. Documentation you should have readily available (**it is recommended that all important papers be kept in one location and labeled for easy access**)
- a. Power of Attorney(s): to allow for medical care, enrollment in school, and other actions
 - b. Social Security Cards/Numbers
 - c. Shot Records
 - d. Birth Certificate(s)
 - e. Medical or Insurance Cards
 - f. Medication dosages (if necessary)
 - g. List of family member addresses and phone numbers in case of emergency

A Sample Family Care Plan might look like this...

Date

Parent(s) Name
Address

Caregiver's Name
Address

Dear (Name,)

As you know, I have designated you as our short-term family caregiver for my daughter Melissa during my absence for military duty for 30 days or less. I have made the following provisions to help you provide appropriate care for Melissa:

a. Power of Attorney. A Power of Attorney is attached that will allow you to.... (Explain the terms of the Power of Attorney here.)

b. Financial agreement for Melissa's well-being: Depending on how long I will be gone, I will leave a mutually agreed upon amount of cash at your disposal to take care of my child(ren.) Should I be activated in time of war or other reason and you need additional money to take care of food or shelter for Melissa, you may contact the American Red Cross (phone number) on my behalf to request money to take care of the emergency. Be sure to take the power of attorney and a copy of my deployment order with you, as ARC will require it. **See additional memo at end of letter.** You may also contact Airman & Family Readiness (302-677-6930/3566) for available assistance through Air Force Aid.

c. As previously agreed, Melissa will stay at your residence until our return. Should my military commitment cause me to be unable to bring Melissa to you, I have designated Mrs. Shelly Caitlin as a temporary custodian who will bring her to you. Mrs. Caitlin can be reached at (302) 123-4567. Should anything happen to cause you to have to come to my home or Mrs. Caitlin's home, I will reimburse you for necessary travel expenses.

d. Should you be unable to care for Melissa during my absence, I have designated Mrs. Caitlin to take over the responsibility for Melissa until our return. Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Caitlin if you need any assistance.

e. The following information is provided to help Melissa transition into your home with the least amount of difficulty:

1). Melissa must take a daily dosage of allergy medication; it will be in her suitcase and is called_____. Melissa is allergic to cats, so please try to keep her away from them. If I forgot to pack her medication, it can be found in the left kitchen cabinet, to the right of the kitchen sink.

2). Melissa's favorite toy is her stuffed animal (elephant) Alphonse - trust me when we say she won't go to sleep without it.

3). Melissa's pediatrician is Dr. Mark Brandon and can be reached by calling Mercy Hospital at (302) 987-6543.

4). Melissa is covered by my civilian medical plan, Mail Handlers Benefit Program; plan number 422. The Power of Attorney should handle her care. Should you need additional help, call the Mail Handlers program at (617) 5551234. Copies of our insurance card and military ID card are attached should you need them.

5). Melissa hates carrots, but will eat just about anything else you put in front of her, especially spaghetti. She has no food allergies.

6). Melissa attends Erick Road Elementary School (716) 555-9876, and her teacher's name is Mrs. Patsy Smith. Patsy is aware that I am in the military and may be deployed. Please make arrangements if necessary to receive homework, etc., through her.

7). I should be back in time for Melissa's birthday, but just in case something delays me, her birthday is the 4th of April. She knows when it is, so please try to make sure she knows I haven't forgotten her and will celebrate shortly upon my return... please go ahead and give her the birthday present I packed ahead of time in the blue suitcase.

f. In the unlikely event of my death, it is my wish that Mrs. Grace Hastings, my aunt who lives a short distance away, <address>, <phone>, take temporary custody of Melissa until my brother, Mr. Richard Clayton, <address>, <phone>, can arrange to take legal custody. Rest assured that all legal documents (wills, power of attorney, etc.) have been formalized and stand ready to be enacted if necessary. I have taken the liberty of giving my brother your name, phone number and address for such an event.

2. I'm sure there is something I may have forgotten. Just in case there is an emergency, please call my commander or first sergeant at (888) ###-####, or Airman & Family Readiness at 888-677-3566. In case of a medical emergency where a doctor may request my presence, please call the American Red Cross to verify the emergency. They will need to know the doctor and hospital name and phone numbers to reach them. I have left you a copy of my orders, so any information they need about me, is contained in that document. The American Red Cross will then contact our commander to make a determination concerning my return. Should you have any problems with this process, do not hesitate to call our Commander, First Sergeant or Airman & Family Readiness.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe

*MEMO: Long-Term Financial Allotment in the monthly amount of \$_____ will be initiated during our out-processing. You will receive this amount on the first of each month during our absence, directly into your bank account. Should I leave prior to the first, I will ensure you receive an appropriate amount to be able to manage things until the first.

More Things to Consider...

Allotment – Discuss how much money you will need to provide for the family while gone.

Checkbook – Who will write checks on what account? Can the person left behind manage the checkbook? Do they even have access to the account? Remember that the Finance office will not release financial information to any person other than the member.

Will – Everyone needs a will, otherwise the state decides what happens to your estate and dependents.

Records – Can you locate important records? Do you know what bills need to be paid and when they are due?

Insurance – Car, life, renters/home. When are premiums due?

Power of Attorney – Do you need a General POA or a Specific POA for your caregiver?

Mail – How often will you write and what kind of information will you share? Ask Airman & Family Readiness for a “Write From the Heart” letter writing kit before you leave.

Telephone – How long will you speak? Decide ahead of time how long you can afford to talk. Can you decide on a time when it is least expensive to talk? Have you asked Airman & Family Readiness for a free phone card (if available) and use of their videophones while you are away? Are you registered for the Hearts Apart Program (overseas only)?

Relatives – Who will write? Do they have the mailing address? Will you need to send holiday or birthday gifts to loved ones? Shop ahead of time together

Duplicate Calendars – Note special events, birthdays and school activities. Keep each other updated.

Children’s Discipline – Establish rules in advance regarding chores, curfew, etc.

Gifts – Buy gifts in advance and leave with a friend or family member for anniversaries, birthdays and special events.

Emotions – Recognize and accept the range of emotions you are feeling. Talk about them with your spouse.

Keep the Connection – Look for creative ways to communicate that “something special” about your relationship. You can stay close during deployment – look for ideas in the Moms Over Miles, Dads at a Distance guides available through Airman & Family Readiness.

Unit Commander and First Sergeant’s name and phone number – Keep this information close at hand for emergencies.

Airman & Family Readiness – Find out how their programs and services can help you survive deployment and assist the caregiver in your absence.

Support Systems – Have you established a good support system – family, friends, Airman & Family Readiness, church, school, co-workers support groups and hobbies?

Special Events – Plan a once-a-week outing for Spouses left behind – dinner, movie, shopping, bowling, etc.

Special Time – Plan a family day with quality time and no interruptions.

Family Activities – Establish family activities that help maintain the deployed members presence-send photos or videotape everyday activities.