VP-8
FIGHTING TIGERS
“Live, Learn, Lead!”

Kadena, Japan
2017 - 2018
Deployment Information
Family Guide
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Skipper’s Statement

Fighting Tiger’s Families,

Our squadron has trained extremely hard over the past 12 months to achieve and maintain the highest level of combat readiness. Now more than ever, we are eager and ready to promote and defend our great nation by operating across the globe. Rest assured that your Sailors are well equipped for the many challenges that await them. We understand that the key to our success has been your patience and endless support.

In many ways, this deployment will be more demanding on family members remaining at home than it will be on those deploying. This VP-8 Deployment Guide has been created for you and your family to help you through our upcoming deployment. Keep this packet readily accessible as it provides you with a wide range of resources. Please take the time to review this guide and the materials provided.

During deployment an emergency may arise that requires direct communication with your deployed spouse. This guide has information on how to contact your spouse in such a case. If you need further assistance, our Command Ombudsman, Christy Lamm, is readily available and her contact information can be found on page two. Mrs. Lamm is an invaluable resource that serves as a liaison between the Command and our Tiger families. She has a strong knowledge of the military way of life and can provide information about the military and other community resources. Additionally, the VP-8 Family Readiness Group (FRG) is another great resource that can assist with any questions you may have and will be a valuable conduit of information and social opportunities during the deployment.

Although the distance between us will be great, your preparation, communication, and dedication will prove invaluable to our shared success. Thank you for giving us your love and support. We are proud of the important role you play as critical members of Fighting Tiger Family!

Tiger Tiger!

EDWARD R. KRIBS
Commanding Officer, VP-8
From the Ombudsmen

Tiger Families,

I am so happy your Navy Journey has brought you to VP8 Home of the Fighting Tigers. VP8 prides itself on being supportive and providing resources to our families when they need it. One of those resources is myself your Tiger Ombudsman.

As your Ombudsman, and a military spouse I love helping families, spouses and their service members. I tend to have a “Mother Bear” instinct, protect your cubs and when they are ready, take the help, knowledge, and confidence you’ve instilled and they will thrive. The support I give to our command comes from my heart. I want to help people and I want everyone to know that they have a voice and they are not alone. I try my best to make sure people feel like someone is listening and they are important. Simply stated, I care about people, I thrive when I am around people and I could not ask for any position better than the Ombudsman role. Our leadership at VP8 is one of a kind. They listen, they care, and they are ready to act if I need help. Together we make the support for the families at our command a top priority. Supporting Tigers by attending events to meet and engage with our families, and being available 24/7 to support a family in crisis is something I hold near to my heart. Not only am I available, but VP-8 created a Careline that is also available 24/7 for spouses and Tigers. If someone is looking for a phone number or resource on base they can call our VP8 Tiger Careline @ 904-542-4653 and the resources are at their fingertips.

The Careline and I are great resources during deployment. Deployments come and being the strong military family we are at VP8 we always look on the bright side. Our FRG (Tiger Support Group) and I are hard at work planning activities and events for our families to bring us all together during this time. Having resources on hand and being prepared for anything that comes our way, is going to be a key component in helping our mission at home be successful. Mission readiness for our families is just as important as mission readiness for our Tigers. Making sure that everyone knows I’m here, and ready to go with anything they need is important to me! I always like to share some advice for a deployment and one thing my family stands by is to never lose your sense of humor, always be willing to help someone in need, always be yourself and most of all remember that deployments always end and your loved one will be right back to you soon!

I am excited to get to know everyone and always remember to reach out if you need anything! You can reach me via phone at 904-463-3579 or via email at vp8ombudsman@yahoo.com and never forget about the Careline that can be reached at 904-542-4653. Please also email me to be added to my email list, I send out OFFICIAL information from the command along with base updates monthly.

Sincerely,
Christy
## Useful Numbers

**TRANSIENT PERSONNEL UNIT:** 904-542-4591

### EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police</th>
<th>911</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAS Security/Police</td>
<td>(904) 542-2663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville Police (Emergency only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Emergency Information</td>
<td>(904) 630-0500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange Park Police (Emergency Only)</td>
<td>911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>(904) 264-5555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay County Sheriff</td>
<td>(904) 264-6512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John’s County Sheriff</td>
<td>(904) 824-8304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Highway Patrol</td>
<td>(904) 695-4115</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire:</th>
<th>911</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville (Emergency only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-emergency (day)</td>
<td>(904) 630-0434</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-emergency (night)</td>
<td>(904) 630-0527</td>
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<td>Orange Park (Emergency only)</td>
<td>911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Emergency</td>
<td>(904) 264-3411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay County (Emergency only)</td>
<td>911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Emergency</td>
<td>(904) 284-7703</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| NAS JAX Hospital Information Desk/Quarter Deck | (904) 542-7300 |

**American Red Cross (On base):**

**Hours of Operation:** 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
**During Working Hours:** (904) 542-7525
**After Hours (Weekends and Holidays):** (904) 246-1395

**Poison Information Center**
(800) 222-1222

**Legal Assistance**
(904) 542-2565/3485

**24-Hour United Way Resource & Suicide Hotline**
(904) 632-0600

**Women’s Center of Jacksonville Sexual Assault Hotline**
(904) 722-3000 ext 4

**Public Works (On Base)**
(904) 542-1827

**NAS Hospital Information**
(904) 542-7300
NAS JACKSONVILLE FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS (all 904 area code)
(The base information line is no longer in service; however, the base directory is available at www.nasjax.navy.mil)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air Terminal</td>
<td>542-3956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Service Center</td>
<td>777-7142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber Shop/Beauty Parlor</td>
<td>777-7228/7229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Center</td>
<td>542-3493</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clubs:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>542-3041/3042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Petty Officers</td>
<td>542-3461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulligan’s</td>
<td>542-2936</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dewey’s</td>
<td>542-3900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor Enlisted Quarters Reservations</td>
<td>542-8195/8196</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor Officer Quarters Reservations</td>
<td>542-3138</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commissary</td>
<td>542-3431</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convenience Store</td>
<td>777-7286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleet and Family Support Center</td>
<td>542-2766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Source</td>
<td>542-3518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Pro Shop</td>
<td>542-3249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>542-3239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Office</td>
<td>542-2996</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAC Cards</td>
<td>542-3633</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAX Child Care Center</td>
<td>542-5529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina</td>
<td>542-3260</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naval Legal Services Office (NLSO)</td>
<td>542-2565 x3006</td>
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<td>Navy Exchange Main Store</td>
<td>777-7286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy Lodge</td>
<td>772-6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAS JAX Quarterdeck/OOD</td>
<td>542-2338</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optical</td>
<td>777-7232</td>
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<td>Pass and Decal (NAS JAX)</td>
<td>542-1470</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td>542-4961/2148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tailor/Dry Cleaning</td>
<td>777-7295</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ticket Office for Events (ITT)</td>
<td>542-3318</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniform Shop</td>
<td>777-7295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USO</td>
<td>778-2821</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Center</td>
<td>778-9772</td>
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Family Readiness, Facilities, and Activities

Family Readiness is key to surviving the deployments you and your spouse will face while stationed with Patrol Squadron EIGHT. Following is a listing of a few of the tools and resources that will help you prepare and survive.

**Fleet And Family Support**

The FFSC is located in Building 554 across from the Child Development Center and across from the Post Office. Services available at the FFSC are for all Active Duty Military, Retired Military personnel and their dependents. Below is a list of services offered by FFSC:

**Military Services:**
- Babysitter List/Referral
- Transition Assistance Management Program
- Exceptional Family Member Program
- Good Neighbor Program
- Information
- Spouse Employment Assistance Program

**Hospitality Kits**
- New Parent Support Team
- Relocation Assistance
- Retirement Assistance Worldwide Base
- Affairs/Entitlements
- Emergency Food Locker

**Counseling**
- Child Development
- Family and Marriage
- Family Advocacy-Spouse Abuse, Child Abuse, etc.
- Information and referrals to Social Services Agencies

**Financial**
- Assertive Communication Training Workshop (2 day)
- Assertive Communication Training (10 weeks)
- When Loving Hurts-Painful Relationships
- Crisis Intervention Training
- Marriage Communication Workshop
- Coping With Deployment
- Stress Management Class
- Overview – Family Service Center
- Military Pay and Allowances (LES)
- Women Abused As Children – Support Group
- Surviving Divorce Support Group
- Self-Awareness/Self Esteem
- Kids and “K”ommunication
- Dynamics of Burn-out
- Understanding Child Abuse
- Women in Abusive Relationships
- Part Time Dads/Full Time Love
- Me, Myself and I

**Educational Programs**
- Kids, College and Costs
- Car Buying
- Income Tax
- Rape Awareness
- Surviving Divorce
- Youth Support Program
- Home Buying
- Financial Management
- Anger Control
- Learning to Invest
- For Kids Only
- Insurance Workshop
- Step Family Living
- Suicide Awareness
- Time Management
- Anger Management
- Couples Anger Program

**Insurance Workshop**
- Step Family Living
- Suicide Awareness
- Time Management
- Anger Management
- Couples Anger Program

**Summary**

Family Readiness is essential for surviving deployments, and the Fleet And Family Support Center (FFSC) offers a variety of services to assist military families. From babysitting referrals to counseling and educational programs, the FFSC provides the tools needed to prepare and survive during deployments.
Military One Source
http://www.militaryonesource.mil/
Provides information on all phases of military life from PCSing to deployments and everything in between. They offer financial & personal counseling, a great resource for spouses while you’re away for any answer while you’re deployed.

American Red Cross:
http://www.redcross.org/fl/jacksonville
904-358-8091
Can assist you with passing urgent or emergency messages to your spouse while deployed.

YMCA:
http://www.ymca.net/
Various services and classes offered to assist you while stationed in Florida.

NAS JAX Exceptional Family Member Program
904-542-5745

NAS JAX Information and Referral
904-542-5745
Provides information and referral assistance for services aboard NAS Jacksonville, in the community and nationally.

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society:
http://www.nmcrs.org/
904-542-3191
Charitable organization which provides financial, educational counseling and other assistance to service members and survivors in time of need.

Substance Abuse Counseling Center:
1-800-610-HOPE (4673)
http://www.treatment-centers.net/directory/florida/jacksonville/substance-abuse-rehabilitation-program.html
Provides alcohol and drug education courses, outreach training, outpatient treatment and referral services.

MWR Facilities and Activities
ATHLETIC FIELDS: Located onboard NAS Jacksonville are numerous sports and recreational playing fields maintained by the JAX Navy Recreation Division. These are available for active or retired personnel and their dependents during normal hours except those designated for use by intramural programs.

SOFTBALL FIELDS: Four fields for use by reservation only. Call 542-2930 for reservations.

HANDBALL/RACQUETBALL COURTS: Four located in the Fitness and Aquatic Center located on the south side of the Bowling Center; these are lighted for night play.

BASKETBALL & VOLLEYBALL: Located in the Fitness and Aquatic Center Building 614. Used for general intramural programs.

TENNIS COURTS: There are 11 lighted, hard surfaced tennis courts in the area. Call 542-2930 for additional information.
SQUASH COURTS: Located in Building 44 on Mustin Road opposite the BOQ for use by all hands. Keys for the building can be obtained at the BOQ Main Desk in Building 11.

TOUCH FOOTBALL: Six fields conveniently located and equipped with goal posts. Available for general use. Call 542-2930.

SOCCER FIELD: Located south of Yorktown Avenue.

TRACK AND FIELD: There is a hard surface oval track and equipment available for field events.

FITNESS CENTER: Located in Building 867 on Enterprise Avenue. There is a large selection of fitness equipment, dry sauna, locker rooms and pro shop. Qualified instructors offer a variety of aerobics classes seven days a week and wellness clinics once a month. For information concerning fees, aerobics schedules and additional information, call 542-3518.

BOWLING: Located in Building 609 on Gillis Street, 542-3493. 24 ABC sanctioned lanes and a snack bar.

BOATING: Sailboats, fishing boats and outboard motor boats are available for a nominal rental fee at the Marina at the South end of Ranger Street. Rented on a first come, first served basis. Call 542-3260 for further information.

FISHING: Fishing aboard the station is permitted; however, a valid fishing license is required for all persons from 16 to 65 years of age. Boats with motors are available at the marina. Fishing sites aboard the station are Casa Linda Lake (no boats permitted), shoreline fishing (Golf Course side of lake restricted from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.); St. Johns River, Shoreline and dock fishing (except in marked restricted areas). Boat launch at Marina at South end of Ranger Street. For additional information call 542-3260. Hunting and Fishing Licenses available at NAS Special Services Ticket office Building 620.

GOLF COURSE: A 27-hole Golf Course is located on Mustin Road and is open to both military and dependents. Clubs and carts are available for rent. Open daily from 8:00 a.m. to sunset. A nominal daily or monthly greens fee is charged. A driving range is available and there is a full restaurant and bar inside the clubhouse. A Golf Pro Shop in the Club building has a complete line of pro equipment. Arrangements for private golf lessons may be made with the Golf Professional. For further information call 542-3249.

HOBBY SHOPS: Auto Hobby Shop, Building 622 (542-3237) has tools and materials for auto repair and welding. Woodworking Hobby Shop, Building 622 has tools and materials for models, boat building and repair and wood crafting projects. Dependents of military personnel under 12 years of age are not permitted in Hobby Shop.
PICNIC GROUND: Fishing camp at the end of Langley Street, with party area, fishing, picnic tables, and restrooms available. Reservations only, at 542-3260. Areas include: Skeet Club, Building 387, and adjacent area with party area, clubhouse, restrooms, softball field, swings, barbecue pits and tables available. Corner of Allegheny and Birmingham Streets; two areas, barbecue pits, covered shelter, and restrooms facilities. Also available in the Marina area are barbecue pits, covered shelters and restrooms.

GEAR ISSUE: Located at Marina, 542-3260. Equipment is issued to authorized individuals only on presentation of a valid ID card. Checkouts will be during normal working hours. Items for issue include fresh water/salt water rods and reels, water skis, sports equipment, nets, lanterns, stoves, cots, coolers and related equipment. There is a nominal charge for use of all equipment. Late returns will be charged at double the daily rate.

SWIMMING: Outdoors pools are open during summer months on a scheduled basis as announced each spring. Pool 419 (with new water slide) on Allegheny is available to all hands. The indoor pool is located in the fitness and aquatic center, Building 614, and is open for lap and recreational swimming. For dependent children to swim without an adult present, they must have passed a swim test administered by one of the lifeguards. They will be issued a patch to be affixed to their swim wear (75 cents). Call 542-3239 for further information on the pool schedule.

TICKET OFFICE: The Recreation Division attempts to procure tickets for all events in the Jacksonville Coliseum and Civic Auditorium. Many of these tickets are available to military personnel and their dependents at a reduced rate, usually a saving of 50 cents to $1.00. Tickets are on a first-come, first-served basis. Information and discount coupons to many of the Central Florida attractions are also available. For further information contact the Ticket Office, 542-3318, during working hours.

**Child Development Center**
Stork Landing - Infant complex
Manatee Landing - Infants to 5 years old
Pelican Perch - 2 – 3 year olds

The Composite Recreation Fund provides funding for the base Child Development Center. Your child’s maximum safety is guaranteed. The Child Development Center is located in Building 705, on Child Street (telephone 542-5529).

Priority service is provided as follows: (1) single active duty personnel assigned to NAS Jacksonville (2) dual active duty personnel assigned to NAS Jacksonville (3) all others.

Children will be accepted from six weeks of age through five years of age. All patrons must show proof of an up-to-date shot record, physical exam, military ID, completed application (if initial visit) and signed authorization for emergency medical care.

Included: Breakfast, lunch, and snack if child arrives between 0630-0730.

**Hours:**
- Monday – Friday: 6:15 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays: Closed
Youth Activity Center

The Youth Activity Center is located behind the hospital in building 2065 (2065 Knight Lane). It is a recreational center, which sponsors summer/holiday youth camps and before/after school programs. Additional activities are available on evenings (usually 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.) and weekends.

Eligibility: Children enrolled in Kindergarten through age 12.
Cost: Based on sponsor’s pay grade.
For additional information call 904-778-9772.

Commissary and Exchange

COMMISSARY
904-542-3431
Sundays: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Mondays through Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

NAVY EXCHANGE
904-777-7286
Sundays: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Mondays through Saturdays: 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Educational Opportunities

Navy College Office: 904-542-2477
nco.jacksonville@navy.mil https://www.navycollege.navy.mil/
Yorktown Avenue Building 110 2nd Floor

University of North Florida 904-620-1000
UMUC 301-985-7000
St. Leo 352-588-8200
Jacksonville University 800-225-2027
FL State College at Jacksonville 904-633-8100

Employment Services

Family Member Employment Services: 904-542-5745
Provides assistance and referrals for family members seeking employment, career counseling and personal career goal identification.

Temporary Employment Agencies
Addeco 904-354-4054
Randstad 904-388-9929
Spherion 904-356-0000

Helpful Websites
www.jaxjobs.com
www.monster.com
www.jobsearch.com
www.usajobs.opm.gov
www.military.com/deployment
Contacting Your Spouse

Telephone access from stateside to Kadena and Misawa is fairly simple. Calling cards, VOip, various phone applications, and other changing time methods may make it relatively inexpensive to keep in touch with your significant other while on deployment. Once your significant other is setup they should be able to provide you with specific contact information.

Be advised, most cell phones will work overseas. However, the cost for utilizing them overseas will be very expensive. Call your service providers beforehand for detailed plans. You may be charged even if you just receive voicemails. Look into Wi-Fi calling and international plans: Skype, FaceTime, Magic Jack, and other similar services are all available methods of communication. Please be sure not to reveal, or ask for, sensitive information like flight times or aircraft maintenance status. Most phone systems lack encryption and we don’t want to compromise squadron operational security.

LETTER WRITERS GUIDE

Here are a few ways to enhance talking back and forth to each other by letter:

- Answer all questions. Write with your spouse’s letter and picture in front of you as though talking directly to them.
- Ask advice when needed.
- Explain problems clearly. If vague and unresolved, your spouse will worry.
- Express appreciation for letters, tapes, etc., mentioning one or two points of special interest.
- Tell of daily activities in an amusing and interesting way.
- Remember the importance of the amount and frequency of expressions of affection.
- Share your feelings as openly and freely as you can without indulging in self-pity. Let your spouse know you would like them to share their feelings.
- Above all, express yourself clearly and unequivocally so they will not have to say, “I wonder what was meant by that!” Neither husband nor wife should try to interpret what the other says, read between the lines or distort the meanings. If you do not understand, ask questions—otherwise take things at face value.
- If you have children, enclose their drawings or notes in your letters. Children can use separate envelopes. Send pictures of home during a holiday, home activities, etc. Have the deployed parent write separate letters to the children rather than one letter to everyone.
- Give news of neighbors, friends and relatives.
- Write often. If that is hard, supplement with cards (funny, romantic.)
- If you write when hurt, angry, or frustrated, write down exactly how you feel but do not mail it for three days. Really think about it before mailing… Will it do any good? Would you like to receive this letter? After three days, rewrite it, calmly explaining what you feel and why.
- Number the back of each envelope before you mail it. Remember that there will be times your spouse will get five or six letters at once. This helps in maintaining continuity and time lines.
PACKAGES

Packages can be sent to your loved one at the address listed below. Note: UPS and FedEx will NOT accept packages addressed to the FPO.

First class postage is all that is required to get a letter to your spouse. All mail that is sent to the squadron goes from your post office to the Fleet Post Office (FPO). All packages less than 40 pounds in weight and not more than 80 inches in combined length and width mailed to the FPO should be sent parcel post with the word “SAM” on it. (SAM stands for “Space Available Mail” and requires the stateside sender to pay only parcel post rate from the city of origin to the FPO.)

All packages should be wrapped and packaged very securely with mailing tape due to the extra distance and handling involved. Special postal services (such as Special Delivery and Special Handling) should not be used. Once these items reach the Fleet Post Office in Miami they are not afforded these services. In addition, there is no C.O.D. service to or from any Military Post Office.

NOTE: BE SURE IF YOU ARE SENDING PACKAGES FOR A SPECIAL OCCASION THAT YOU MAIL THEM EARLY, ALLOWING ADEQUATE TIME TO ARRIVE. FOR APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIMES FOR VARIOUS SHIPPING METHODS, VISIT WWW.USPS.COM.

NEVER MAIL: Aerosols, liquids in glass containers, anything explosive, or things that could melt, spoil, otherwise deteriorate in extreme heat, cold, or rough handling in transit.

Packages sent overseas require the completion of PS Form 2976 or PS Form 2976-A to satisfy Customs requirements - these are available at any Post Office.

CARE PACKAGE IDEAS

Have fun putting together a Care Package. Be creative. Make each shipment an adventure for your spouse. Remember that photos and home movies can be sent via email or posted on websites such as Flickr for your loved one to enjoy sooner. Some ideas are below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magazines</th>
<th>Brownies</th>
<th>Pictures</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cookies / Fudge / Candy</td>
<td>Kid’s art</td>
<td>Home movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorded “letter”</td>
<td>News clippings</td>
<td>“Love You” card</td>
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<td>Blank CDs / DVDs</td>
<td>Report Cards</td>
<td>School work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stamps</td>
<td>Travel games</td>
<td>DVDs of favorite shows</td>
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Mail: The official squadron address during deployment will be:

COMMANDING OFFICER
VP 8
UNIT 203004 BOX 1
FPO AA 34080
For personal mail, each member of VP-8 will be assigned a designated box number at a later date which they can pass to their family member(s).

AM2 John Doe  
VP 8  
UNIT 203004 BOX__ (3-499 box range)  
FPO AA 34080

* Personal mail must be sent to the address shown directly above and not the VP-8 official mailing address. If you use the VP-8 official address it could take more than a month to receive the package.

**Mailing Tips:**
- If cookies are not packed tightly or well cushioned, you might get a letter about the lovely crumbs you sent.
- Put an extra address card INSIDE before you seal the package.
- Don't send things that are highly perishable.
- If you are sending a package for a special occasion, be sure to mail it early so it has plenty of time to arrive.
- Don't send aerosols or liquids in glass containers.
- Include some photographs, not only of the children, but of yourself as well, and anywhere you may have gone for an outing.
- Send short videos. Especially if you have children, hearing their parent's voice will keep them closer to the kids. For him/her, it's more fun to tell them about losing a tooth, hitting a home run or going out on a first date when they can hear a voice. Putting it on paper can't always convey the enthusiasm a short video can.
- UPS will not accept packages addressed to FPO address.
- DO NOT throw away your money on next day or second day air. If you do you will guarantee delivery to San Francisco only – not the ultimate destination. Once the mail gets to San Francisco it gets shipped on a space available basis. Put an extra address card INSIDE the package. IF the box is damaged, and neither address can be read, it will be opened by the post office. The package will go to the dead-letter bin if no address is found.
- You may need to use customs forms. Check with your local post office.
  - **Customs:** Parcels and articles mailed from outside the U.S. are subject to examination by U.S. Customs officials, with the recipient liable for any duties assessed. Articles, which bear marks or names copying trademarks, cannot be mailed unless these marks or names have been removed (i.e. no fake Gucci bags). Be aware that any gifts mailed back to you from your spouse may be assessed customs fees.
  - **U. S. Postal Regulations:** U.S. Postal regulations prohibit the shipment of poisons, explosives, flammable material and alcoholic beverages. Additionally, the following items cannot be mailed to military post offices: securities and currencies, precious metals, cigarettes and other tobacco products and living plants. If in doubt about mailing an article, consult your local post office.
Operational Security

In the current operational environment, there is a media spotlight on the U.S. military. While we do not believe you are a personal danger to us or to National Security, there is always the possibility that someone else is listening to your phone or reading your e-mail. As always, our enemies will attempt to collect intelligence about our operations, our personnel, our location(s), and our readiness. Therefore, it is important to review what we can and cannot say in non-secure correspondence (e.g. e-mail, open phone lines, in line at the commissary, etc.). Simply because something is unclassified does not mean it is not sensitive information. To protect your Sailor and fellow Tigers while deployed, **do not** discuss the following in email, social networks, or over the phone:

- Past, ongoing, or future operations, to include where we are or where we will be flying, what we are doing in the air, and any planned future movements among detachment sites.
- The current location of squadron aircraft and squadron personnel or of U.S. Navy ships or submarines.
- The extent of force protection measures (designed to protect your Tigers) in place at any detachment site.

If you have any questions concerning the sensitivity of information you want to discuss with your loved ones, observe the following rule of thumb: “When in doubt, leave it out!”
Prior to calling your spouse, consult this table to see what time it is at their location. To use, first check what time it is at your location and then move over to the column of your spouses’ location. Be aware that this table is in Standard Time.

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Financial Planning

The Sailor and spouse should review family financial procedures and ensure all financial matters are resolved prior to departure. There should be a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each spouse concerning allocation of pay, payment of bills and a household budget. Fleet and Family Services, the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society, and many credit unions and banks can provide assistance with budget planning. Our unit also has several Command Financial Specialists. The Sailor should ensure the family has enough money each pay period for all living expenses such as rent, food and utilities. Some possible additions to pay are Imminent Danger Pay, Hazardous Duty Pay, and tax-free status. Specific pay issues will be dependent upon the type, length and location of deployment.

Military pay and Allowances

Base Pay:
There will be no changes to the base pay unless there is a promotion, reduction, or entering a new year bracket (i.e., over 2 years, 3 years, etc.).

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH):
Personnel receiving BAH for residing off-base will continue to receive these allowances while deployed provided they maintain their place of residence. For those living in government quarters, there will be no changes. For members that elect to relocate dependents at their own expense back to the mainland, you must notify the Personnel Office of this action so that your entitlements may be readjusted. Any change to a rental or mortgage lease is the responsibility of the Sailor and must be submitted to the Personnel Office to prevent unnecessary financial hardships at a later date.

Family Separation Allowance: (FSA):
Personnel who are married and not legally separated or those who retain legal custody of dependents/wards will receive a Family Separation Allowance (FSA) in the amount of $250.00 a month. This is not authorized until after the 31st day of separation, at which time retroactive payments will be made.

Per Diem:
All squadron members will receive per diem on deployment. Those members who remain in Kadena or Misawa for the entire month will receive the government rate for meals. Members who travel away from Kadena or Misawa for temporary duty will be reimbursed for lodging and meals. Per Diem is intended to cover some of the living expenses of the squadron member while he/she is on deployment.

Taxes:
Federal and state tax returns (when required) must be filed even though the service member is deployed, unless an extension is granted. The deadline for filing tax returns, paying taxes, filing claims for refund, and taking other actions with the IRS is automatically extended if any of the following statements is true:
- You serve in the Armed Forces in a combat zone or you have qualifying service outside of a combat zone.
- You serve in the Armed Forces in a qualified hazardous duty area or are deployed overseas away from your permanent duty station in support of operations in a qualified hazardous duty area, but your deployment station is outside the qualified hazardous duty area. (In the rest of this discussion, the term “combat zone” includes a qualified hazardous duty area.)

Be advised that the IRS is automatically notified by the U.S. Navy through your LES when your spouse falls into these categories.

Your deadline for taking actions with the IRS is extended for 180 days after the following:

- The last day you are in a combat zone or have qualifying service outside of the combat zone.
- The last day of any continuous qualified hospitalization for injury from service in the combat zone or contingency operation or while performing qualifying service outside of the combat zone.

In addition to the 180 days, your deadline is extended also by the number of days that were left for you to take the action with the IRS when you entered a combat zone (or began performing qualifying service outside the combat zone). If you entered a combat zone before the period of time to take the action began, your deadline is extended by the entire period of time you have to take the action. For example, you had 3 ½ months (January 1 – April 15, 2012) to file your 2011 tax return. Any days of this 3 ½ month period that were left when you entered the combat zone (or the entire 3 ½ months if you entered the combat zone by January 1, 2012) are added to the 180 days when determining the last day allowed for filing your 2012 tax return.

**Combat Zone:** A combat zone is any area the President of the United States designates by Executive Order as an area in which the U.S. Armed Forces are engaging or have engaged in combat. An area usually becomes a combat zone and ceases to be a combat zone on the dates the President designates by Executive Order.

**Qualifying Service Outside Combat Zone.** Military service outside a combat zone is considered to be performed in a combat zone if:

- The service is in direct support of military operations in the combat zone, and
- The service qualifies you for special military pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger.

Military pay received for this service will qualify for the combat zone exclusion if the other requirements are met and the pay is verifiable by reference to military pay records.

**Pay Problems:**
If you receive a pay problem while your spouse is deployed, first attempt to contact your spouse. If due to detachments or exercises, you cannot contact your spouse, contact the VP-8 Admin office.
**Direct Deposit:**
Direct Deposit to a joint account can lead to confusion and problems if both spouses are writing checks and making withdrawals on the same account. Bounced checks and letters of indebtedness can result. Most banks will set up separate accounts and distribute the direct deposit funds between the accounts as requested. Transfer of funds between accounts can easily be made if one person falls short of cash. Contact your bank or credit union for more information.

**Allotments:”D” Allotment:**
The Sailor can initiate an allotment to family members to cover basic living expenses. All or part of a Sailor’s basic pay or BAH can be allotted. Only the Sailor, not the spouse, can start, stop, or change an allotment. Should an allotment need to be changed, you can change it through the unit Dispersing Clerk or the Employee/Member Self Service, website: [http://emss.dfas.mil](http://emss.dfas.mil), phone: 1-877-363-3677. The LES (Leave and Earnings Statement) can also be viewed on the E/MSS web site with a user PIN. It can take up to 45 days for the implementation of an allotment. Once the squadron is deployed, there can be up to a 60-day wait.

A Sailor may allot part or all of his pay, with the exception of COMRATS and Clothing Allowance. When individuals start an allotment, it is wise to have money set aside, particularly if allotting a large amount of total pay. The money for an allotment is taken out of both checks (1st and 15th) of the month. The first allotment check is issued on the first of the following month. If there is a pressing need for the funds when an allotment is started or delayed, Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society can often assist with an interest-free loan until the money arrives. A Sailor can sign a pre-authorization form to enable his/her family members to receive assistance.

**Advance Pay for Pre-Deployment type “D” allotment:**
Service members deploying for at least a month outside the United States may receive advance pay when they either register a pre-deployment “D” allotment or increase a present “D” allotment. The purpose of this advance payment is to allow a member to be paid the amount of the monthly allotment. The advance payment will be deducted over a period of up to six months. The allotment cannot be registered, nor advance pay received, more than 60 days before the scheduled deployment date. Be sure you can live with payments being deducted from your pay during the payback period.

**IDENTIFICATION CARDS (ID CARDS):**
A current Dependent Identification Card Application (DD-1173) is required for patients over 10 years of age including stepchildren, prior to treatment. Please make sure your card is up to date and in your possession when in need of health care.

For those beneficiaries with minor children (under 18 years of age) the clinic must have parental consent prior to treatment of the child. This is a particular problem when children are left in the care of friends or relatives and need health care. To prevent any inconvenience, a “Special Power of Attorney” may be obtained and a copy placed into each child’s record.
Legal Planning

Services available at the Legal Assistance Office, NAS Jacksonville include, but are not limited to: general estate planning, wills, insurance review, and general property matters. Advice is available on such matters as credit purchasing, state and federal taxation, state motor vehicle laws, landlord-tenant relationships, laws involving domestic issues (divorce, adoption, etc.), state residency matters, immigration laws, and commercial contract laws. Check with the Legal Assistance Office for information specific to your area of concern.

Act immediately when a legal issue is discovered. Immediate action will often resolve small problems before they become more serious. For example, the best time to ask questions is before signing a contract rather than when the terms of the contract come into dispute. Never sign a blank contract!! Utilization of Legal Assistance services is both advised and encouraged when a legal problem is first identified.

Powers of Attorney
One of the most important matters to consider during pre-deployment planning is a Power of Attorney. With any Power of Attorney it is important to remember that a business or institution is NOT obligated to permit your agent to act on your behalf simply because they have a duly executed Power of Attorney. Therefore, the best policy is to contact those businesses and institutions with which you want your agent to interact in order to find out their internal policies on Power of Attorney. A Legal Assistance Officer should be contacted to help you prepare one. Powers of Attorney come in two forms:

A General Power of Attorney grants an agent very broad powers and authority to act on behalf of the principal. This means that the agent can access and utilize your bank accounts, buy and sell property in your name, cash your tax returns, and much more. Whatever the agent does using the general power of attorney, the principal remains the responsible party for the legal and financial consequences. General Powers of attorney often create more difficulties than they cure and are generally not advised. It is an extremely powerful legal instrument and can be a dangerous instrument in the hands of someone inexperienced in business matters, a person of unstable temperament, or a spouse when the marriage relationship is in a state of discord. A general power of attorney should not be executed unless the individual making it is fully aware of the risks associated with such a document. Always consider whether a special power of attorney would serve the immediate purpose.

A Special Power of Attorney is a narrowly drawn document, limiting the power of authority to the specific act or acts described in the power of attorney. This power of attorney will list in writing the actions you want conducted on your behalf. A special power of attorney can be very useful for such matters as moving of household goods, selling a vehicle, and managing financial accounts or funds not jointly held. Care should be taken in determining who will hold the power of attorney and what actions will be authorized in the document. Remember, without the power of attorney, the spouse at home could be significantly hampered in dealing with matters that may arise during deployment. See the squadron Legal Officer or NLSO representative for more information.
**In Loco Parentis** is a type of special power of attorney meaning to “stand in place of parents.” This document allows another to act on behalf of the parents when caring for the child of another. If children are in the care of someone other than a parent or legal guardian, that person is considered **“in loco parentis.”** Some states will appoint children as wards of the state when the parents are injured and/or unconscious unless there is an **original notarized document** authorizing a specific person to act as guardian. It is possible that children in the care of someone other than the legal guardians or parents will not be seen for medical emergencies without the original notarized form. A separate form must be filled out and notarized for every person caring for the child or children and there should be a form in your vehicle that can be easily accessed. For more information, DEERS dependency information is available from the Tricare web site at: http://www.tricare.mil/DEERS.

**Wills**

This document is very important for every Sailor, particularly those with family members. The primary purpose of a will is to dispose of your property in the event of your untimely demise. If you die without a will state statutes establish the order in which your relatives inherit your possessions. A will can ensure that minor children are cared for and property distributed as the writer’s desires. Without a will, it is possible for children to become a ward of the state. Because the state’s wishes generally do not follow those of the deceased, it is important that an individual’s will reflect his/her desires. Keeping it up to date is critical. Overlooking the execution of this important document could directly affect the security of your family.

Your banking institution or a responsible adult should be named executor of your will. It is important to remember that not all property passes by a will. Insurance passes directly to the named beneficiary. Verify that your beneficiary designations on insurance policies are accurate and current.

The legal office will assist both military personnel and their family members in the preparations of wills. After the completion of the workshop, the work sheet is filled in, and the legal office then prepares the will. The turn-around time typically runs about two weeks. If any of the following have changed since you had your last will drawn up you need to obtain a new will:

- You’ve married, divorced, or widowed
- You’ve had children, or have adopted children
- All of your children have reach adulthood
- You’ve changed your State of legal residence
- A person named in your will has died
- It has been more than three years since you made out your last will

**A WILL IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LEGAL DOCUMENT THAT YOU NEED TO OBTAIN PRIOR TO DEPLOYMENT!**

Check your will and make sure it is current. If not, on another piece of paper, not on your will, write down all of the changes and make an appointment with a military lawyer to have a new will drawn up. Keep your present one intact and safe until a new one is signed and properly witnessed. Then, put the new will away for safekeeping.
**Family Care Plan**

A Family Care Plan is required for Sailors who are single parents, dual military couples; or who otherwise bear sole responsibility for the care of minor children or family members who are unable to care for themselves in the Sailor’s absence. A Family Care Plan provides guidance and procedures to the persons who provide care for the children, disabled, elderly, and/or other family members in the absence of the Sailor due to military duty (such as our upcoming deployment). The plan outlines the legal, health care (medical and dental), logistical, educational, monetary, and religious arrangements for the care of the Sailor’s family members to include Wills, Power of Attorney, Certificates of Guardianship or Escort, family contacts, Special Letters of Instruction, and any other documentation reasonably necessary for the caregiver’s use. The plan must be sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide for a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to the caregiver upon the absence of the service member. The MILSPERMAN provides guidance for Family Care Plans. The plan must be reviewed for accuracy and validity each year and is a part of the Sailor’s service record.

**Carefully Choose The Care Provider!**

You are entrusting your child’s life to them. Be certain that they are totally willing to be responsible for your children without suddenly changing their minds during the deployment. If you must hire someone, be sure that you carefully interview them and check their references to be certain that they are trustworthy and qualified to provide proper temporary home care for your family.

**Complete Information That The Care Provider Needs:**

- Names, phone numbers, addresses of your extended family members.
- Correct squadron mailing addresses.
- Names and phone numbers of your Commanding Officer and Ombudsman.
- Detailed info about the children: full name, birth date/place, medications, favorite foods, toys, habits, and “comforts.”
- Name of school and teacher, grade, study habits, and learning problems or disabilities.
- Religious preference, pace of worship, any plans for religious instruction attendance during your absence.
- Name, phone number, and location of doctor/dentist, clinic/hospital where medical records are maintained, location of shot records, where prescriptions are filled, any chronic illnesses, who to contact in case of medical emergency. Be sure the caregiver is aware of scheduling of shots, routing or planned doctor’s appointments or dental visits.
- Dependents identification cards for children 10 years of age or older. If the caregiver does not have an ID card, you must get one for your child regardless of age. This is necessary for the caregiver to have access to military privileges (commissary, NEX, medical) for the child.

**Ensure You Both Have A Clear Understanding For Each Issue:**

- **Discipline:** Set realistic guidelines (it is wise to observe and discuss discipline practice in the care provider’s home of application)
- **Emergency:** Who the caregiver would contact in emergency situations if one were needed closer to home than you or if you were unavailable.
- **School:** Will the caregiver attend parent conferences, sign report cards, etc.? Be sure teacher/school is aware of the situation.
• **Communication:** Will you write/call directly to your child? Will communication be through the care giver? How will the care giver report to you and how often?

• **Financial:** Clarify amount of pay to the caregiver and how it will be paid. Clarify if the caregiver will be responsible for purchasing food, household necessities, clothing for the children, and other crisis that might arise.

### Custody
A clear understanding of who possesses legal custody is imperative.

• **If you have custody as the result of a divorce.**
  - A copy of the divorce document (not the only copy) should be given to the care provider.

• **If you are separated from your spouse and custody has not been settled.**

• **In all cases you must obtain a custody agreement and a special power of attorney.**

### Notarization
A notary public is a person legally authorized to administer oaths, take depositions, take and certify acknowledgements, and perform other similar services which can expedite the handling of an individual’s legal affairs. Notary public service is available at the legal assistance office, most banks and credit unions, and usually through the Family Service Center. There may be a small fee for the service depending upon where obtained. The VP-8 Legal Officer and all commissioned officers O-4 and above are a notary public and available for notarization.

### Legal Assistance
A US Navy lawyer cannot plead a Navy family member’s case in court, but can advise Navy Personnel and their family members who have personal legal problems. The Legal Assistance Officer treats all such problems confidentially, and may not be lawfully ordered to disclose such information by any superior naval authority.

The military lawyer stationed at the Navy Legal Service Office, at Ranger Street Building #4, Jacksonville, FL 32212, takes clients on an appointment basis, but anyone having an emergency can usually be seen the same day.

**Navy Legal Services Center, NAS Jacksonville**  
**PHONE:** (904)542-3481/2565  
**FAX:** (904)542-2571

### Medical & Dental Services
As a Navy dependent, you are eligible for medical care at all uniformed service facilities. If you are planning to visit or stay outside the Jacksonville area while your spouse is deployed, the nearest military medical facility or hospital may be utilized. You will need to present a valid dependent ID card (for children under 10 years of age, parent may certify eligibility) and be enrolled in DEERS.
DEFENSE ELIGIBILITY ENROLLMENT REPORTING SYSTEM (DEERS).

Policy requires that all infants be enrolled in DEERS. This can be accomplished with a certificate of live birth, which unlike the official birth certificate is available within a few days. This document is accepted as proof of birth. TRICARE will no longer process claims of individuals not enrolled in the DEERS program. Children less than one year old are no longer exempt from the requirement to be enrolled in DEERS.

In an emergency requiring immediate attention, do not hesitate to use the nearest medical facility (civilian or uniformed service) that can provide the necessary emergency treatment.

DEPENDENT DENTAL CARE

Primary dental care is provided to dependents by MetLife through TRICARE.

Dental assistance can also be provided by the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society in Building 8. For more information call N/MCRS.

NAS JACKSONVILLE MEDICAL SERVICE

If you will be staying in the Jacksonville area, the Naval Hospital on base has the facilities to care for all of your medical needs. Normal treatment and examination at the hospital and medical center is by appointment only. Emergencies, of course, will be treated at anytime.

MAKING APPOINTMENTS

All clinics work on an appointment basis. Appointments may be made or canceled by calling Central Appointments.

Hours of Operation

7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
7:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Weekends/Holidays

Note: Patients reporting to the hospital without an appointment, who are not considered an emergency case, will be referred to the screening clinic or Pediatric Clinic as appropriate. If this is the case, a waiting period can be expected.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

On-station ambulance service is provided for dependents. However, those dependents living off base must use their local rescue squad, fire department, police or city ambulance service.

Navy Ambulance (904) 542-2451 Ext. 10
PHARMACY SERVICE

Prescriptions from civilian doctors or dentists can be filled at the hospital pharmacy free of charge, provided the exact medicine is available. Prescriptions can also be filled at outside pharmacies for a minimal fee. It is a violation of federal law to substitute another drug or medication for one prescribed by its trade name. Therefore, if you wish to have a civilian doctor’s prescription filled at the Naval Hospital, ask him to specify the drug or medicine’s generic name on the prescription in addition to any brand names. The Department of the Navy regulation prohibits dispensing narcotic drugs, if the prescriptions have not been written by a medical or dental officer. If you are picking up a prescription for a dependent 10 years old or older, you are required to show their military I.D. (photocopies of I.D.s are acceptable)

EMERGENCY 911

Naval Hospital Jacksonville Appt Line 904-542-7094
For the most up to date contact information, see the clinic’s website at: http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/NavalHospitalJAX/AboutUs/Pages/ContactUs.aspx
Provider After-Hours Advice Line 904-542-7300
Admissions 904-542-7811
Immunizations 904-546-7050
Pediatric Clinic 904-542-7302
Emergency Room 904-542-7340
Laboratory 904-542-7380
Medical Records 904-542-7425
Pharmacy Refills 800-628-7427

Mayport Branch Medical Clinic
Central Appointments 904-270-3248
Tricare
https://www.humanamilitary.com/
Tricare South 800-444-5445
Metlife 800-866-8499
Dental Active Duty 904-546-7100/01/02
Mayport Branch Center Info/appt line 904-270-4343

Chapel Services

Chapel 751 Birmingham Ave 904-542-3051
Duty Chaplain 904-614-7385

Mon-Fri: 7:30 am - 4:00 pm
Sun: 7:30 am - 1:00 pm
Catholic Services St. Edward’s Chapel

Mass:                           Monday-Thursday 1135
CCD, Building 749:             Sunday 0930
RCIA, Conference room:         Sunday 1115
Sunday 1115

Protestant Services All Saints Chapel

Worship Service:               Sunday 0815 & 1100
Sunday School, Building 749, Classroom 5:
Women’s Bible Study, Building 749, Classroom 4:
Adult Bible Study, Building 749, Classroom 4:
Sunday 0945
Tuesday 0900
Wednesday 1400
Family Housing Services

Welcome Aboard Information and Main Housing Office 904-542-2996
Monday-Friday 0800-1700

Navy Gateway Inn and Suites 877-628-9233

The Navy Lodge 904-772-6000

Lending Locker
FFSC provides this service. Aids in providing household goods for newcomers to the base and families who PCS out of government quarters. Allowances may be made for visiting guests if the supply is there and the need is great.

Housing Maintenance Problems
Routine and Emergency: 904-779-1060

Moving Information

Located at Naval Air Station Jacksonville

Transportation Office: 855-444-6683/904-542-1000 X120
Located at Naval Air Station Jacksonville
www.PCSmyPOV.com

Personal Property 855-444-6683/904-542-1000 X120
For general information and to make an on-line shipment application.
www.navsup.navy.mil/navsup/ourteam/navsupgls/prod_serv/household
Pet Care Services

The NAS Jax Veterinary Treatment Facility, managed by the Army Veterinary Service, is located in Building 537 on Biscayne Street near the gas station. Customer parking is located at the far end of the building at the end of the dead-end street.

The clinic offers veterinary preventive services including new puppy/kitten vaccines and health certificates, routine pet immunizations, testing for intestinal parasites/heartworms, medical management of obesity, arthritis and allergies and minor sick call appointments. The clinic offers heartworm preventatives, flea control products, shampoos and other items. The sale of heartworm prevention is limited to pets that have had a negative heartworm check within the last calendar year and have been on heartworm prevention since the test. Routine surgery and dentistry is also available, as well as, digital radiology, ultrasound and in-house blood analysis. The VTF also has a well-stocked pharmacy.

Housing residents may keep cats and dogs in their homes, however, all cats and dogs must be registered with the veterinary clinic. All pets staying on base must have proof of current vaccinations, microchipping and spay/neuter presented at the time of registration. Cats and dogs must be on a leash at all times when outdoors unless they are in a fenced-in yard.

The facility is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Veterinary service is available to pets owned by active duty and retired personnel, their dependents and reservists on active duty. Please bring any previous medical documents and vaccination records to your pet's first visit.

Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m (904) 542-3786
Air Travel Opportunities

Space Available Travel, AKA Space A Travel, is NOT for the faint hearted, nor for those traveling on a tight schedule. Space A is a wonderful benefit for military families and provides the opportunity to save hundreds of dollars on airfare to the mainland and overseas.

In order to sign up for this military benefit, you will need a Command sponsorship letter (EML) from your spouse’s Commanding Officer.

Regulations, Forms, and Letters for Space A travel
Any form, instruction, or guidance you may need for travel can be found here.
http://spacea.net/regulations-forms-letters

Spacea.net
https://www.facebook.com/spacea.net/?fref=nf
NAS Jax Air Terminal 904-542-8165/8159
https://www.facebook.com/Jacksonvillepassengerterminal/
SeaTac AMC Passenger Terminal 253-982-3504
https://www.facebook.com/SeaTacAmcPassengerTerminal/
Kadena Passenger Terminal
https://www.facebook.com/AMCKadena/
Misawa Passenger Terminal 011-81-176-77-2370/2371
https://www.facebook.com/MisawaPassengerTerminal/
Yokota Passenger Terminal 011-81-3117-55-5660/5661/5662
https://www.facebook.com/YokotaPassengerTerminal/
Osan Passenger Terminal
Joint Base Pearl Harbor/Hickam Passenger Terminal 808-449-6833
https://www.facebook.com/HickamAMC/
Norfolk Passenger Terminal 877-417-1695
https://www.facebook.com/NorfolkPassengerTerminal/
Disaster Preparedness

DISASTER FIRST AID KIT

You may wish to keep the following in a large fishing tackle box or tool kit to help keep them organized.

- Adhesive tape (2” wide)
- Aspirin or substitute
- Applicators (Q-tips)
- Antacids
- Alcohol (rubbing/isopropyl)
- Antibiotic Ointments
- Antiseptic solutions
- Anti-fungal cream
- Baking soda (bites; toothpaste)
- Bandages-sterile 2” and 4” rolls
- Bandages 37x37x52” triangles
- Band-Aids, misc. sizes.
- Benadryl (antihistamine)
- Betadine
- Cotton (sterile balls/Q-tips)
- Calamine lotion
- Cough medicine
- Compass
- Cold pack (turns cold if opened)
- Contact lens solution
- Diarrhea medicine
- Dropper/spoons
- Eardrops
- Eye drops and salves
- Elastic ACE bandage
- Extra contact lens
- First aid handbooks
- First aid spray (antiseptic)
- Hot water bottle
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Hearing aid batteries
- Iodine tablets
- Inhalation aid
- Ipecac syrup (induces vomiting)
- Lip balm
- Laxatives
- Lanolin skin cream
- Medical Alert tags
- Medical prescription items
- Motion sickness medicines
- Mirror
- Nose drops (water-soluble)
- Petroleum jelly
- Plastic bags/twist tie or zip
- Pocketknife (Swiss army)
- Safety pins and sewing kit
- Scissors (sharp/pointed)
- Snelling salts
- Soaps-antibacterial
- Sore throat tablets
- Splint (18” wooden)
- Salt (table type)
- Sun block (SPF 15 or higher)
- Sheet for bandage strips/slings
- Small pad of paper/pencil
- Toothache remedy (oil of cloves)
- Thermometer
- Tweezers
- Whistle
POTENTIAL DISASTERS AND WHAT TO DO

HURRICANES
We will be gone during the second half of Florida’s Hurricane season, so having an emergency kit on hand and ready is always a good idea.

Know What Hurricane WATCH and WARNING Mean
- **WATCH**: Hurricane conditions are *possible* in the specified area of the WATCH, usually within 36 hours.
- **WARNING**: Hurricane conditions are *expected* in the specified area of the WARNING, usually within 24 hours.

Prepare a Personal Evacuation Plan
- Identify ahead of time where you could go if you are told to evacuate in every direction. Choose several places—a friend’s home in another town, a motel, or a shelter.
- Keep handy the telephone numbers of these places as well as a road map of your locality. You may need to take alternative or unfamiliar routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV stations for evacuation instructions. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Take these items with you when evacuating:
  - Prescription medications and medical supplies
  - Bedding and clothing, including sleeping bags and pillows
  - Bottled water, battery-operated radio and extra batteries, first aid kit, flashlight
  - Car keys and maps
  - Documents, including driver’s license, Social Security card, proof of residence, insurance policies, wills, deeds, birth and marriage certificates, tax records, passport, etc.

Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit Including the Following Items:
- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Canned food and can opener.
- At least three gallons of water per person.
- Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members.
- Written instructions on how to turn off electricity, gas and water if authorities advise you to do so. (Remember, you may need a professional to turn them back on.)

Prepare for High Winds
- Install hurricane shutters or purchase precut 1/2” outdoor plywood boards for each window of your home. Install anchors for the plywood and predrill holes in the plywood together before deployment so that you can put it up quickly.
- Make trees more wind resistant by removing diseased and damaged limbs, then strategically removing branches so that wind can blow through.
Know **What to Do When a Hurricane WATCH Is Issued**

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV stations for up-to-date storm information.
- Prepare to bring inside any lawn furniture, outdoor decorations or ornaments, trash cans, hanging plants, and anything else that can be picked up by the wind.
- Prepare to cover all windows of your home. If shutters have not been installed, use precut plywood as described above. *Note:* Tape does not prevent windows from breaking, so taping windows is not recommended.
- Fill your car's gas tank.
- Recheck manufactured home tie-downs.
- Ensure items in your disaster supply kit are still good, if not then restock.

Know **What to Do When a Hurricane WARNING Is Issued**

- Listen to the advice of local officials, and leave if they tell you to do so.
- Complete preparation activities.
- If you are not advised to evacuate, stay indoors, away from windows.
- Be aware that the calm "eye" is deceptive; the storm is not over. The worst part of the storm will happen once the eye passes over and the winds blow from the opposite direction. Trees, shrubs, buildings, and other objects damaged by the first winds can be broken or destroyed by the second winds.
- Be alert for tornadoes. Tornadoes can happen during a hurricane and after it passes. Remain indoors, in the center of your home, in a closet or bathroom without windows.
- Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flooded road, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car and move on foot to higher ground.

Know **What to Do After a Hurricane Is Over**

- Keep listening to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV stations for instructions.
- If you evacuated, return home when local officials tell you it is safe to do so.
- Inspect your home for damage.
- Use flashlights in the dark; do not use candles.
- For more detailed information, visit [www.redcross.org/services/disaster](http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster).

**TORNADOES**

Tornadoes have the most violent winds that occur on earth and may cause widespread death and destruction. Most tornadoes occur in the US and hit primarily in spring and early summer. They usually form on a hot, humid day, in the afternoon or early evening with dark dense thunderclouds present. They will usually be accompanied by heavy rains, possibly some hail, flashes of lighting and a hissing sound that becomes a loud roar much like that of a speeding train. States in the Midwest, Southwest and those bordering the Gulf of Mexico are most likely to be hit. In the US most tornadoes travel in a northeast direction.
Precautions to take for tornadoes
If weather conditions indicate a tornado may occur, stay tuned to a TV or radio. If one is spotted, the national Weather Service will warn communities in the path of the storm, giving the location, size and course it is following. Some areas have sirens to warn people to take cover.

Think low. If available, use a storm cellar, or the next best thing is a basement. In a basement, crouch under a table on the side from which the tornado is approaching.

In a building with no basement, lie flat under a table or bed on the ground floor, away from any windows and preferably on the side from which the tornado is approaching.

Always vacate a mobile home, particularly if unanchored. They offer virtually no protection and are easily overturned by tornadoes.

If suddenly caught outside, lie face down in a ditch or ravine to protect yourself from flying debris. You may still be lifted out by the tornado, however, so attempt to get to shelter if able.
Pre-deployment Planning

IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY DATA

Fill in this information before sending a copy of this to your friends and family. They can fill in the phone number of the Red Cross Office nearest them. Remember that this section, once filled in, will have your social security number and the location of important documents. Ensure that you know where it will be kept and who, if anyone, will have copies.

Service members:
  Full Name___________________________________________
  Rank/Rate___________________________________________
  Branch of Service_____________________________________
  Social Security Number_______________________________
  Military Address_____________________________________
  Local Red Cross Phone number___________________________

Give your family members this information in case they need to get a message to your deployed spouse should something happen to you.

ON THE HOMEFRONT: QUICK THOUGHTS

Your deployed loved one knows that being apart from each other can be difficult. Try to remember that he or she would rather be home with you, but the job they hold requires them to deploy to help keep people safe.

Write frequently. Let your service member know what is going on at home. It is not necessary or even desirable for it to always be good news. Let them know they are still an important part of your life, but do not make them feel guilty that they cannot be there.

“Care Packages” are always appreciated. Choose things that are non-perishable, easily eaten and may be difficult for them to find. Send favorite foods or homemade treats that travel and share well. Humorous gifts, books, or magazines that will remind him/her of you each time it is received or a hometown newspaper are good ideas. Ideally, they will write as frequently as you do, however your loved one is working harder and longer on deployment than at any other time.

DEPLOYMENT STRATEGY

SMOOTH SAILING INSURANCE

Plan ahead together. This is one of the keys to a successful deployment. There are many things you can and should do before the deployment. This will prevent spouses back on the home front from feeling they have to handle it all alone and the service members from worrying about all the things left undone.

The best place to start is at the Command’s Pre-Deployment Briefing. Topics discussed during this brief will be informative – from the mission of the command on this deployment to whom to contact if your allotment check is late. Bring something to write with and on to this brief.
Then, read this handbook. Mark or highlight passages you find particularly interesting or helpful. Some parts you may want to re-read or post on the refrigerator, just in case an emergency occurs and you do not have time to find the page you need.

Spend an evening with your spouse to discuss the deployment, how each of you feel, what you worry about, how to handle emergencies or repair problems and what you think needs to be done around the house to get things shipshape. Have a “show and tell” day. Go through the house electronics, landscaping equipment, vehicles, etc. and discuss maintenance and operation.

Finally, before your spouse walks up that ladder, make sure YOU are the one with the keys and the checkbook. Once they have deployed, the U.S. mail is the only way to get them back, and that can take a while.

So much will depend on your advance preparations. The more you learn and accomplish before the deployment, the more confident both of you will be when parting time comes.

SERVICE MEMBERS CHECKLIST

Utilize this checklist to aid in your organizing efforts. It is by no means inclusive of all details.

☑ Have your Next of Kin been informed on rights, benefits, and assistance available?
☑ Has your Next of Kin been informed of your deployment address?
☑ Is your Emergency Data Page (Page two) in your service record up-to-date?
☑ Are emergency numbers easily accessible?
☑ Have you contacted the Ombudsman with emergency information?
☑ Are all Dependents’ I.D. Cards current and in good condition? Ensure they will not expire while on deployment.
☑ If you wish to have a will, is it completed and filed?
☑ Have you considered granting your spouse a Power of Attorney?
☑ Have you allowed enough time (8 weeks) for your allotment/DDS to begin?*
☑ Has your family budget been arranged?
☑ Have locations of important documents been identified, discussed, and written down?
☑ Have available emergency services been explained?
☑ Is your Record of Personal Affairs filled out?
☑ Have you completed a POA covering medical care for dependent children in the event that your spouse cannot attend and member remains deployed?
☑ Have you discussed a joint checking/saving account?
☑ Has the Emergency Red Cross assistance been explained?
☑ Do you know the name and phone number of your ombudsman?
☑ Have you established an agreement for the frequency of correspondence?
☑ Has the use of Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society been explained?
☑ Have you contacted your financial institutions about going on deployment?**
☑ Have your fears/anxieties about deployment and/or return been discussed?

*Allotments should be started eight (8) weeks prior to deployment. One allotment should be received prior to deployment to eliminate concern about correct execution of the administrative work. Check with Personnel or Disbursing for questions and assistance.
**Contact your bank and insurance company about possibility of reduced rates and service member benefits while deployed.
FAMILY CHECKLIST

- Is the Emergency Data Page in your spouse’s service record up-to-date?
- Has the family budget and business been discussed and arranged?
- Has the car’s maintenance been discussed at length?
- Do you know a reputable auto shop you can trust to take the car to if something should go wrong while your spouse is away?
- Have you checked the expiration date on your vehicle’s registration and base decal?
- Has household maintenance been discussed at length?
- Do you know what to do or who to call for home repairs?
- Do you understand what the Red Cross, Ombudsmen, Chaplain, Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society, etc. can do for you?
- Has the use of medical facilities been explained so that you understand? Have phone numbers for emergency situations been placed where you can get to them quickly?
- Have you and your spouse discussed how you will communicate to each other while he/she is deployed?
- If the kids are old enough to understand what is happening, have they been included in discussions on where their parent is going, what he or she will be doing and when he or she is coming back?
- Have you given each other all of the family’s clothing, shoes, hat, gloves, and ring sizes?
- Does your Ombudsman know whom she should notify in the event of an emergency?
- Does the Ombudsman know who you would want to care for your children in the event that you cannot?

SERVICE MEMBERS PERSONAL PACKOUT

Bringing everything you need helps prevent any unnecessary stress while deployed. Keep in mind that more items will be available at the exchange.

- Do you have all uniforms you will need while deployed with the correct insignia?
- Job-related professional materials/items (i.e. ID card, government credit card, orders)?
- Have you packed both warm-weather and cold-weather clothing for all det sites?
- Do you have enough PT clothes? Other workout/sporting equipment (i.e. cleats, water bottles, etc.)?
- Do you have a plan in place to communicate with family and friends back home (i.e. Skype ©, Magic Jack ©, international cell phone policy, etc.)?
- Are you bringing electronic equipment (i.e. laptop, modem, router, camera, etc.)? Do you have any required batteries or power cables?
- Toiletries – enough for 6 months? Travel size for short-term detachments/overnight bag?
- International driver’s license if able to rent a car?
- Personal passport? Is it up-to-date?
- Hobbies (musical instruments, video game systems, etc.)?
Location of Family Records

Birth Certificates:
Husband:____________________________________________________________
Wife:______________________________________________________________
Child(ren):________________________________________________________

Naturalization Papers:
Husband:____________________________________________________________
Wife:______________________________________________________________
Child(ren):________________________________________________________

Marriage Certificates:________________________________________________
Divorce Papers:_____________________________________________________
Death Certificates:___________________________________________________
Adoption Papers:____________________________________________________
Power of Attorney:__________________________________________________
Income Tax:_________________________________________________________
Stocks/Bonds:_______________________________________________________
Social Security Cards:_______________________________________________

Will Location:_______________________________________________________
Will Executor:_______________________________________________________
Substitute Executor:_______________________________________________
Beneficiary:_______________________________________________________

Insurance:
LIFE:
Company:______________________ When Due:_____________________
Policy number:__________ Amount of Payment:___________

PROPERTY/HOUSEHOLD:
Company:________________________ When due:________________
Policy number:______________ Amount of Payment:___________

AUTO:
Company:________________________ When Due:_________________
Policy number:______________ Amount of Payment:___________
CAR MAINTENANCE INFORMATION

Car #1 Data: Make/Yr. __________________ Model:_________________
Car #2 Data: Make/Yr. __________________ Model:_________________

(If more than one car, specify #1 or #2 when writing data below).

Car Title location:_________________________________________________

Car Registration location:__________________________________________
Expires:________________________

Car State Inspection sticker:_______________________________________
Expires:________________________

Car Insurance Policy Co./Number:____________________________________
Expires:________________________

Car License Tag Number:_____________________________________________
Expires:________________________

Service member’s License Number/State:______________________________
Expires:________________________

Spouse’s License Number/State:______________________________________
Expires:________________________

Oil Change/Lubrication required:
Date/Miles (Car 1 and 2):___________________________________________

Oil weight/Brand (Car 1 and 2):_______________________________________

Tires (Car 1 and 2):
Brand:__________________________ Type prefer:_____________________
Sizes:_________________ Air Pressure: Front:_____ Back:_________

Battery (Car 1 and 2):
Type:_________________________ Make:_______________ Age:______________

Regular servicing to be done by:
Name:____________________________________________________________
Address:___________________________________________________________
Phone:____________________________________________________________

Repairs (special) to be done by:
Name:____________________________________________________________
Address:___________________________________________________________
Phone:____________________________________________________________
Other remarks:_______________________________________________________
Property Ownership
Real Estate (type): ____________________________________________
Location: ____________________________________________________
Mortgage Holder: ______________________________________________
Taxes paid through: ____________________________________________
Real Estate (type): ____________________________________________
Location: ____________________________________________________
Mortgage Holder: ______________________________________________
Taxes paid through: ____________________________________________

SPECIAL INFORMATION
Now that Deployment has begun

A NAVY SPOUSE’S VIEWPOINT

When your spouse deploys, a piece of you goes too, but that is what you want: a part of you to be with them. You find that you keep a piece of them with you as well. You may sleep with their picture on your nightstand, or you may leave a pair of their shoes by the front door.

When your spouse leaves, you go through a whole series of different emotions. About six to eight weeks before they leave, you begin to “psych up” for their leaving and you both get very busy thinking about details that need to be tended to before they go. You both may feel excited, intimidated, and maybe a little worried about how you will manage. About three to four weeks before they leave you begin to put distance between the two of you, building a few walls, maybe withdrawing from each other. You may become irritated with each other and may even have a fight. This distancing reaches a peak about two to three days before they leave when you both think they should be gone so that you both can begin counting down to the reunion, which may seem an eternity away! This “distancing” is normal and allows a person who is so very important to you to go away… for a while!

When “The Day” arrives, you may drive your spouse to the hangar and be thinking that somehow, something will keep him home. Whatever you say to each other might seem awkward and not quite right and afterward, when you reflect back on not seeing each other for a half-year or more, you may wonder why you could not have had a more romantic, more “right” good-bye. This is completely normal.

For the first day or so after he/she leaves, you may feel like a robot, just going through the motions, almost as if you are in shock. You might just want to stay home. You may want no one around you. You may feel depressed and have no energy. You may wonder if the goodbye was as tough for your spouse as it was for you. You may feel overwhelmed by all the responsibilities you are facing.

Then you may get angry with your spouse, with the Commanding Officer, with the Navy, with the whole world! How could they leave? They get to go all over the world with their friends, and I have to stay here alone, or with the kids?

Right about then is the time to remember what you both have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You have:</th>
<th>He or she has:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Netflix, DirecTV, High speed internet</td>
<td>NMCI, AFN (maybe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of your friends</td>
<td>Some of their friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>2 more workdays…every week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The car</td>
<td>Their boots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your house or apartment</td>
<td>A barracks room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will find you can handle the separation. You will probably find yourself, within a few weeks, beginning to settle into a routine. If you do not find some comfortable pattern or continue to feel upset, call your Ombudsman or the Fleet and Family Support Center and get some professional assistance to help you over the hurdle.
Your new routine with your spouse deployed may initially be a little more subdued, and certainly lonely. Sleep may come a little more easily than in the first few weeks of the separation, but probably not as easily as when they are home. Food may finally begin to taste less like sawdust. You may find from your spouse’s letters that they are missing you and going through many of the same emotions you are. If you find a routine that works while they are gone, stay with it! That regularity, that ritual is very comforting.

Six to eight weeks before the squadron comes home from deployment, you may begin planning for the homecoming. There are decorations to make, special meals to plan, a long-deferred diet to begin. A new hairdo? A new hair color? There are nagging worries…

Will he or she have changed?  
Will he or she approve of the changes in me?  
Will he or she still love me?  
Will we have the same closeness we had before?

As the time grows nearer, you will probably get more and more excited, may sleep less and less, and launch into a frenzy of housecleaning (this is a good way to burn off extra energy, anticipation, and time). In your mind, you play over and over again various versions of the homecoming. You imagine… You see the reunion all in slow motion, over and over again, like in the movies. In a backdrop of sunlight and fields of flowers, you are the only two people in the world.

In the last few days you seem to find yourself caught up in many different emotions. You may have restless nights. You should be happy that they are returning – and you are – but you are also apprehensive. For the past several months you have been the head of the house and you really haven’t had to answer to anyone for where and when you go somewhere, or what you spent money on. You have had the bedroom all to yourself and you’ve taken care of the family’s finances. Maybe you feel like your hard-earned independence is at stake. Could it be that you resent your spouse for making you feel this way?

You are proud of surviving, and maybe even thriving while they have been gone. You’ve missed them terribly, but you’ve also learned you can manage quite well while they were away. You so want them to be proud of you and how you have managed while they have been deployed.

The Big Day arrives and you have probably not slept well at all (they’ve not slept either)! In addition, you have spent hours trying to look your best. You finally have that reunion. There may be raindrops instead of sunlight and, instead of fields of flowers; there are many people at the airfield. The hug and kiss are every bit as good as you remembered them.

Understand that your spouse, too, is apprehensive about the homecoming, and also wants it to be very, very right. They may be a little unsure and wonder if maybe you have learned to do without them too well…that they are not needed, or wanted, anymore. You know they are wanted and needed, and you should tell them that again and again.
When you are back together again, take some quiet time to sit together and calmly talk about what has happened. You need to listen to each other, and you both need to talk. You both have a thousand questions to ask each other and you both need reassurance that everything will be O.K.; however, you both probably have grown through the time spent apart.

Your spouse will not change all the months of new habits after returning from deployment and you may forget that you have had a different routine and ritual while they have been gone. Be patient with each other. Give each other space and time alone as well as the intense time together.

The time to re-establish old patterns and to establish new, better ones takes several weeks, so do not expect to fall back into “how it was” overnight. Take time to enjoy the intense pleasure of reuniting as a couple.

Keep this in mind as you face a deployment: the leaving and returning are not easy, but they are not forever. Neither the separation nor the reunion is ever just like you imagined. Both have their drawbacks, however, both have their rewards too.

**DEPLOYMENT STAGES AND THE SEPARATION PROCESS**

Separation within a family is not an event but a process. It is a succession of challenges that begin well before the deployment and extend beyond the reuniting of the family at the end of deployment. Not all families go through all stages, nor does everyone experience stages at the predicted times, but the following can serve as a road map of the territory to be covered.

1. **SHOCK AND DENIAL** (4-8 weeks prior): The first stage typically involves unconsciously denying or ignoring the reality of the impending deployment. Couples in this stage may refuse to discuss the deployment, fail to make realistic plans for dealing with deployment and may begin to withdraw from each other emotionally and sexually. A gradual (or sometimes sudden) anticipation of the impending loss will eventually occur.

2. **ANGER AND PROTEST** (1-4 weeks prior): This stage, which has also been referred to as the “so hurry up and leave” stage, is characterized by an increase in arguments and expressions of negative emotions. Frequently, the spouse that is being left behind expresses resentment or envy at the fact that the other is involved in a high level of activity to prepare for deployment. The arguments and friction are not all bad – they may permit the couple to begin to emotionally “detach” from each other and can release stress and apprehension if handled properly.

   You may feel angry toward the Navy for taking your spouse away and even feel angry towards them for being willing to leave. The member is often frustrated because they do not really want to leave their family and does not understand such reactions. They may just be excited about doing the job for which they were trained. Let them look forward to it, while you gently help them understand “being left” is quite a different experience. You may feel frustrated with the increased hours your spouse spends at work getting ready to deploy; and you become more aware of how many household/family business chores must be handled before they leave.

   This is the time to share feelings and to constructively communicate with each other about the upcoming separations. (Perhaps you could arrange a “Getaway
Weekend” for the two of you before deployment to ensure time to talk. Because of all the strong emotions involved, be aware that feelings of rejection may occur. HOW you say something may be as important as WHAT you say.

3. DESPAIR AND DEPRESSION. (1-2 weeks prior to departure continuing 3-4 weeks after): This stage is characterized by emotional confusion. Emotional instability, irritation, despair, depression, crying, excess anxiety, fatigue, tension, appetite and sleep disturbance may be experienced during this stage.

   Depression typically begins on the day of the deployment. This can be a rather brief period of acute discomfort. Intense feelings of loneliness, withdrawal from friends, reduced levels of activity, sleeplessness, apprehension and disorganization are all common reactions. Go ahead and cry! It will help relieve the tension and stress, and may free you to then get on with your life in a constructive way.

   Irritability may be expressed at the military and at the spouse for causing so much inconvenience and hardship. Each new demand, frustration, or rumor is likely to prompt additional feelings of annoyance. Spouses during this stage may feel overwhelmed by the number of tasks they must perform and the amount of responsibility they have assumed.

   Feelings of despair often alternate with feelings of irritability or depression during the first few weeks before or during deployment. Thoughts like “How will I ever live through these next months without him/her?” are common. There may be difficulty in sleeping at this point due to general fear for one’s safety, and even the usual noises in the house can seem unnerving. It is during this stage that the spouse comes to grips with the situation and begins to develop a healthy range of coping skills.

4. ADAPTATION AND DETACHMENT. (3-4 weeks after departure): Usually within four weeks of the deployment, the family has begun to adapt to the departure of the spouse/parent and to establish a routine to be followed in his absence. The family “detaches” from the service member in certain ways, learning to cope without their presence. Other family members assume the parent’s tasks. Often a spirit of cooperation prevails and the parent becomes closer to their children. A sense of independence comes as the family discovers it can temporarily make it without the deployed parent. Each family member may explore new interests, or develop new skills and grow in different ways.

5. RETURN AND ADJUSTMENT. (4-8 weeks prior to homecoming and continues for 4-8 weeks after): The return of the spouse requires that they reintegrate into the family that had learned to adjust to their absence. In many ways this is the most difficult stage of the deployment. It is normal to anticipate the return with mixed feelings – to look forward to it and at the same time to fear it or wish that it is not going to occur.

   There are often unrealistic reconciliation fantasies in which it is assumed that things will be just as they were or better before the deployment. Husbands, wives or family members may have other unrealistic expectations and the kids may have to give up their special relationship with Mom/Dad.
The detachment and independence required of the family to survive the separation may make the process of reintegration more difficult. Dad/Mom may fear he or she is no longer needed or wanted.

Many spouses experience an almost incredible emotional and physical frenzy, getting every inch of the house and themselves ready for the return of the service members; cleaning, dieting and preparing. These are understandable reactions and can help to distract the spouse when the situation seems overwhelming. Additionally, your returning loved one will appreciate these efforts more than you know.

He/she arrives exhausted from the final days overseas, eager to be home. The first few days of unwinding bring LONG conversations, which are attempts to catch up. Finally, he/she spends lots of time sleeping. The family may be disappointed.

During this unwinding process, there is bound to be some friction; after being totally separated and then being totally together, each needs a little time alone to sort out the whole process. The service member especially, has been surrounded by people the entire separation and may feel more of a need for solitude than the spouse, who may have had more than enough solitude. Being aware of each other’s needs - and the needs of the children - is crucial at this point. Open communication is vital.

Families who have experienced the excitement of several returns from deployment urge that the reunion be down-played a little. This will prevent expectations from being so great that disappointment in a delayed arrival or an exhausted dad/mom will not be overwhelming.

Remember that each partner has been changed by his or her experiences; the challenges – physical, mental, financial and emotional - have added dimensions that each did not have before. Much like the cliché “You can’t go home again,” a wife and her husband are different after separation and must learn to be flexible as they adjust to each other’s growth. Many see each return as a honeymoon-like affair, but the getting-to-know-you process may be a mixture of pain as well as pleasure. Roles may need to be redefined and relationships renegotiated, before the family can settle back into a comfortable life.

SUGGESTIONS FOR COPING WITH THE PHASES OF DEPLOYMENT

- Stay connected. Continue to meet with friends, attend club meetings, volunteer your time and talents, attend your church, etc. Remain involved and refuse to become isolated.
- Establish a schedule and stick to it. This forces you to stay busy.
- Set goals. Deployment offers you a tremendous opportunity to do some things you may have not had time to do previously. Read from the best-seller list, take a course, learn a language, lose weight, etc.
- Plan a trip. If you are financial situation allows for it, a visit with family members or to a local point of interest can work wonders.
- Look for “free fun.” There is an abundance of entertaining things to do locally. Use your spouse club to help locate them, make a list and take advantage of those that appeal to you.

Remember that family separations are something you can either go through, or grow through. The choice is yours – and your attitude can make all the difference.
Exercise. Join a class, or create your own class among friends in your living room.

Talk often with the children about their parent’s absence. Discuss the things they may be doing today and the fact they will be coming back. Keep a picture nearby. Count down the days remaining on a calendar.

Do not get “marooned” with the kids. Be sure you frequently have conversations with other adults.

At the end of the day review all the good things you have done that day, from the smallest to the largest. Learn to compliment yourself and affirm how good you are.

If all your efforts aren’t working and you are too down and depressed, get help in a hurry! Call a friend, the Fleet and Family Support Center, or a local crisis center.

Volunteer. If you are not working full time, volunteering can help you keep your job skills current. The Fleet and Family Support Center has a full time volunteer coordinator who can match up your skills and interests with the center’s programs or refer you to outside agencies.

Start working towards a certification or degree. Many universities offer partially or totally online learning that can be done at home on your own schedule. A more traditional program with classroom time will also provide additional distraction from loneliness and interaction with more people.

HANDLING STRESS

- Take care of yourself. Don’t try to fix family and friends first.
- Get involved in things that make you happy.
- Avoid self-medication and abusing substances like drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and food. Liquor and drugs reduce the perception of stress, but they don’t eliminate it.
- Be flexible: accept that you can’t control everything.
- Plan for stress. Set realistic goals that leave time for breaks and limit work. Take a stress reduction class.
- Learn how to praise yourself and accept praise. Turn off that “constant censure” voice that always says, “You should.”
- Keep a sense of humor with you at all times.
- Start thinking about what you want out of life and begin to work toward those goals.
- Take a mental health day every two or three months.
- Avoid sulking. Let people know what you want.
- Learn how to express irritation and appreciation to others.
- Pick out somebody you work with and tell them something about yourself that you haven’t told anyone else.
WHEN THE BLUES GET BLUER

Loneliness. Most Navy spouses find the dinner hour and Sunday afternoon the times they miss their spouse the most. And everybody has an occasional blue Monday. However, if you are blue days are increasing in frequency, pay attention to what is going on in you and around you. Are you . . .

- Letting things go?
- Picking up weight?
- Yelling at the kids?
- Watching TV constantly?
- Spending a lot of time with your thoughts?
- Drinking more than usual or drinking alone?

No one takes a giant leap into depression. It is more of an adding-on process. Your favorite words are “I can’t.” Consequences include physical and emotional problems, accident proneness, bad decisions and relationship problems with others. All these can deepen your depression. Some use alcohol and drugs as a remedy. However, that does not work. Drinking does nothing to answer life’s problems and creates a new one. In fact, drinking just helps you to relax and forget but the problems are still there.

The cure for depression is the same as the prevention. Take positive action. Thought and feelings change behavior.

If you are feeling alone, out of sorts and problems seem overwhelming, call 542-2766, The Fleet and Family Support Center. They have trained, confidential counselors who can help.

CHILDREN AND DEPLOYMENT

The pre-deployment period is stressful for parents and children. Confronted with an extended absence of a parent, family members sense a loss of continuity and security. Children may not fully understand why mommy or daddy must leave. Very young children may become confused and fearful that the parent who stays behind will also desert them.

Children are not very good at expressing fears and feeling in words. Anger and a desire for revenge and guilt for feeling that way, is often demonstrated in the child’s behavior. Change is puzzling to children. They want everything to remain the same. When change occurs, children usually have no other way to release anxieties and nowhere to go for help. They may become withdrawn, unruly or just may want to be a shadow. This all comes at a time when dad /mom’s responsibility to the squadron becomes most demanding of their time and energy. It is very easy for dad/mom to feel overwhelmed, anticipating six months with sole responsibility for the children, home and car.

What can be done about relieving the stress of the pre-deployment period? Think about these ideas, which have been helpful to others in similar situations:

- Talk to your children about the deployment before it happens. Communicate your thoughts and feelings about the separation. Be open and honest. Some parents worry that advance warning will only give the child more time to fret. However, children can sense when something is about to happen and worry more when they
are left in the dark. Knowing about the deployment is advance helps in adjusting to the idea.

- Building an emotional bond: A parent needs to spend quality time with each child before they leave. Younger children (under eight) will be willing to accept a half hour of face-to-face communicating. Older children (eight and over) appreciate being consulted when deciding how long and where this “special” time together can occur.

- Use this time to share pride in your work, the squadron, and the purpose of your deployment. Children of school age are beginning to understand that some events must happen for the good of everyone. It is a little easier to let go if dad /mom’s job is seen as essential to keep people safe.

- Help children to plan for the departure. While the parent is packing his/her things, allow your children to assist in some way: rolling socks in balls or folding a handkerchief or T-shirt. Suggest a “swap” of some small token, something of your child’s that can be easily packed, in return for something of the parent’s (key ring, old hat, ribbons or other uniform devices, etc.)

- Discuss the household chores and let your children choose (as much as possible) the ones they would rather do. Mother and father need to agree that the division of household chores is reasonable. One parent’s role as a disciplinarian needs to be supported and demonstrated by the other.

- Become familiar with some of the excellent children’s books that deal in a sensitive manner with a variety of family-change situations.

A SPECIAL FAMILY AND A NEW ADVENTURE By Hoffman & Sitler
WILL DAD EVER MOVE BACK HOME? By Paula Hogan
ALL KINDS OF FAMILIES By Norma Simon
IF YOU LISTEN By Charlotte Zolotow
THE GOODBYE PAINTING By Linda Berman

Reading them with your child can help to clarify facts and identify feelings. Turn on your sensors and tune in to your child’s worries about the deployment. Just because a child does not tell you about their concerns do not mean that they are not troubled. Children do not usually recognize the cause, nor will they tell you.

Often when asked if something is bothering them, children will say “no”. Nevertheless, there are ways to get through. Make some casual reference to your own worries or ambivalent feelings about the impending deployment. Sometimes that enables parent and child to share similar feelings. It also helps a child to realize the parent is a real person who can cry as well as laugh and it models an appropriate way to release feelings – talking about them.

Visit your child’s teacher. Frequently children react to the deployment by misbehaving in class or performing poorly in their schoolwork. A teacher who is aware of the situation is in a better position to be sensitive and encouraging.

Children need to see Dad /Mom’s workplace. Very young children need to see where they eat, sleep and spend some of their day when away from home. This provides them with a concrete image of where daddy/mommy is when they cannot come home. Older children can learn a great deal from the service member about the functions of the
squadron, the sophisticated technology, interdependence of each division on each other and of course, career direction.

Plan for communicating: Expect children to stay in touch with their dad/mom. A lively discussion needs to take place before deployment. Encourage children to brainstorm the many ways communication can occur in addition to the usual methods: encoded messages, puzzle messages and many pictures drawn by the children. Mom/Dad should communicate with each child individually. There is no substitute for a letter with your own name on the envelope. Send postcards, photos and tape recordings of the sounds of the squadron. Talking is risky business. It is very possible you will admit feelings of sadness, self-doubt, fear and loneliness to your spouse and children. Most parents will agree that these are acceptable risks, and the feelings revealed are much easier to deal with when they can be expressed within the comfort and security of the family.

TIPS FOR “MOMS” AND “DADS”

- Be honest about your feelings. Do not attempt to hide feelings – your own or the children’s. Many times we try to spare our children from knowledge of our own self-doubts and fears.
- Give children a method of measuring the passage of time. Families use such techniques as a ceremonial crossing-off of each day on a calendar as it passes or tearing a link of paper chain consisting of the number of days or weeks the parent will be away.
- Make sure the service member stays well informed. Do not make the mistake of depriving the parent of knowledge of what is happening at home, or the way things are being handled, out of fear of “distracting” or “worrying” them on the job where nothing can be done about them.

Be responsible for all disciplining. Do not fall into the trap of using, “just wait until your father/mother gets home!” as the ultimate threat. How can a child be expected to greet with joy and affection the parent who has been held over their head for months as the ultimate punishment?

If the father is deploying, there are many ways a new mother can help a father get to know and love his new baby.

- Write letters/messages often describing baby’s looks, likes, personality, abilities and growth.
- Send videos and pictures of baby to dad.
- Write letters/messages from the baby as if the baby were talking to dad.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING FAMILY DAYCARE

Read through the list and check those items you want the arrangement to provide. When you visit a home and talk to the care provider, decide whether the arrangement offers those things.

- Is the facility licensed?
- Do you know anyone else that has children enrolled there you can talk to?
- What are the reasons a child might have to be picked up early?
- If this is a private home, does the caregiver have previous experience or training in childcare? Are they CPR or child care certified?
Are personal items of the child allowed to ease the transition period?
Is there a safe outdoor play area?
Are any field trips conducted?
Is there any teaching or learning performed, such as reading and writing? Or is it just playing?

HELPFUL HINTS ON PERSONAL PROTECTION
Spouses become deeply concerned for the safety and well-being of the spouse in their life during times of separation. This loving concern has prompted the following protection:

- There is no such thing as criminal typeface. Criminals can be very friendly and attractive until they are ready to strike.
- Not all criminal acts are premeditated. Many violent crimes have been committed on the spur of the moment.
- Be Alert! This cannot be overemphasized. The moment when you least expect it is usually when trouble presents itself.

The following safety tips have been strongly endorsed by law enforcement officers and can aid in making your home, car and neighborhood a safer place to live. The Crime Prevention Office does home security surveys. Call 270-5583 and ask for the C. P. Office.

AT HOME ALONE
LOCKS: Use bolt type locks on doors and windows leading to the outside. Preferred arrangement is one bolt on top of door and one on bottom. Outside door should be locked at all times. (Chain type locks and ordinary knob door locks have proven to be ineffective.) Remember to lock doors opening from the garage.

CALLERS: Do not open the door unless you are positive of the person’s identity. This rule applies for women as well as men. If someone comes to your door in need of assistance, you obtain the number he/she wishes to call and you call for them.

TELEPHONE: Do not under any condition volunteer information over the phone. Don’t ask any questions. If the caller persists, contact the police and the phone company. Have your number changed if these calls continue. Advise children not to give information concerning parents’ whereabouts.

GENERAL: If someone leers through a window at you, make every attempt to act as natural as possible. Walk to the nearest room that has a phone in it and contact the police. Turn on the lights and remain inside the house until help arrives. The police recommend that prior to placing a call, or better yet, prior to the need to place a call, write your name, address and telephone number on a piece of paper for easy reference. It is a good policy not to keep large sums of money around. Never tell anyone what valuables you have in the house. Have an inventory and pictures of valuable items. Use good exterior lighting consistently whether you are at home or away.
Keep shrubbery trimmed so that it cannot be used as a hiding place. If you hear SOMEONE outside your home, call a neighbor or the police for help. DO NOT HIDE YOUR HOUSE KEYS OUTSIDE.

If a repairman needs to enter your home to do work, schedule all repairs during daylight hours. Additionally, invite a friend over “for coffee” but be sure to tell them why you are asking. Have a friend present during the repair work.

PREVENTION IN THE CAR

- Keep the car locked, both occupied and unoccupied.
- Have the key in your hand so you do not have to linger outside the car.
- Check the car before entering to see if someone is inside.
- Park only in well-lit areas.
- Use the national sign for distress if you have car trouble (a white material square tied to either the car’s antenna or door handles with a raised hood and trunk.)
- Keep car in good running order with at least ¼ tank of gas at all times.
- If being followed, do not go home. Go to a well-lit public place, make sure your car doors are locked and park. Blow the horn until help arrives. Drive to police or fire station and blow the horn. Do not turn off the car.
- Do not panic. Dangerous errors in judgment occur most often when people operate in panic situations. Take time to think calmly.
- Take someone with you if at all possible.
- Keep your purse close to your body with one arm free for emergencies.
- A dog in the house can be instrumental in deterring a would-be intruder.
- Law enforcement officials do not recommend keeping guns in the home for protection. Few people, especially women, are adept in the use of guns and their presence can be extremely dangerous if there are children around.
- Many inexpensive home burglar systems are on the market. Before you purchase one, ask local police about its effectiveness. Asking could save you time, money and future disaster.

BEFORE DEPARTING ON AN EXTENDED TRIP

- Let your Ombudsman know.
- Leave a house key/mailbox key with a trusted neighbor so that he/she can check on your home daily.
- Temporarily discontinue newspaper service and have your mail kept at the post office until your return. If this in not feasible or not desired, have the same trusted neighbor pick up your mail, etc. and hold it for you until you return.
- Ask a neighbor to turn on a light in a different room every day. Some timers are automatic and inexpensive.
- Make arrangements for someone to mow your lawn regularly. Tall grass and no apparent activity around the house are indications that the house is empty.
- Call the local police and tell them when you are departing and when you will return. Most police departments will check your home periodically for you. Tell them your neighbor has a key and will be inspecting your home.
WHEN OUT OF THE HOME ALONE

- Ensure the house is locked. Do not place the house key in the mailbox or under the doormat.
- Prior to driving off in your car, make sure that the doors are locked and the windows are rolled up so that no one may put a hand or arm through the window.
- NEVER, NEVER, NEVER pick up hitchhikers. This has become such a problem that many states now make it a criminal offense for a motorist to do so.
- If a police car has its lights on to pull you over, you have the right to drive to a well-lit or public parking area first. There have been counterfeit police pulling people over for the purposes of stealing a vehicle.

PERSONAL SAFETY AT HOME

- Use effective locks on all doors and windows. If the attacker is armed, your choice of resistance may be hindered. Decide for yourself what action you should take. Do not let the assailant decide for you.
- Pepper gas is a good deterrent to have handy – be sure to know how to use it properly.

Remember: The highest priority in any assault is to survive with the least amount of psychological and physical injury.

- Understand that attackers could easily ask for directions or engage in conversation.
- If a car starts to follow you, turn and walk in the opposite direction.
- If someone is following you on foot, go to a well-lit residence or business. Get someone’s attention by any means possible. Go inside if open.
- Do not go to your car if people are standing near it. Get to a safe place and observe. Do not return to your car until you are positive no one is nearby.

PROTECTION IF CONFRONTED

All of the above hints have been given as guides that should help you avoid a confrontation with an attacker, burglar, etc. If, despite all precautions, you are faced with an attacker, the most important thing to remember is to remain calm. Keep yourself together. You still have many options open to you. Think.

FIRE PREVENTION AT HOME

- Fire prevention in the kitchen: (1) Don’t leave cooking unattended; (2) Keep appliances clean; (3) Wear close-fitting sleeves when you cook; (4) Keep flammable objects clear of the stove; (5) Do not overload electrical outlets (especially at Christmas time with those lights). Microwave ovens stay cool, but what’s cooked in them can be very hot. Use pot holders when removing food, remove lids from packaged microwave foods carefully to prevent steam burns and test food temperatures before eating. Prevent burns and stovetop fires by always turning pot handles in toward the back of the stove. Heat oil slowly over moderate heat and never leave cooking oil unattended.
- Fire Safety throughout your home: (1) Check your home for fire hazards inside and out; (2) Protect yourself with a smoke detector and fire extinguisher; (3) Plan your escape route – and practice it! (4) Know what to do if fire strikes. For further information, contact your local Fire Department.
PREVENTION IN BABYSITTING SITUATIONS

When Hiring Sitters:
- Check the background of the sitter i.e. HRS Child Protective Services/Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office
- Try to obtain a sitter you know and trust.
- Listen to your child’s response after a sitter leaves. Do not rehire any sitter a child fears or dislikes.
- Often your church may have a list of possible sitters that the pastor knows and approves of.

When your child wants to baby-sit:
- Check out the family for whom your child will be sitting.
- Make sure your child has your phone number written down.
- Make sure you have the address, phone number and expected return time.
- Instruct your children to report to you any circumstances that occurred which make them feel uncomfortable.
Coming Home

REUNION ISSUES

The pre-deployment and deployment periods are filled with challenge and tremendous opportunity for personal growth. So is the post-deployment, or reunion, period. If the opportunity has created a situation to be coped with and managed through, then in the minds of some, the reunion should solve whatever difficulties have developed. This assumption could not be further from the truth – a fact that couples learn after one or two deployments.

During the deployment the spouse at home has assumed total responsibility for the budget, running the household and care of the children. This may have involved major car repairs, sick or injured children, purchasing a major appliance or even a home to name a few. Whatever the circumstance, your spouse will have gained strength and independence. Although this is a very positive aspect, it is also the “snag” which catches some couples. There has been a role reversal and now there must be re-integration.

Not only must the practical parts of life and relating be re-adjusted, the more intimate facets of togetherness must be given special care. Couples may find that the sexual relationship will take some patience and understanding. One strategy that some couples use is to return to a period of “courting” or “dating” again before intimacy is re-established. Each couple should work it out according to their own needs, but with each giving special consideration to the feelings of the other.

Children, too, must re-adjust. They have been raised by one parent alone for some months and naturally look to this parent first for direction. The returning parent may initially sense that the kids resent this reappearance. Here, parents should “go easy.” Give it time. Allow yourself to gradually “move back in.” Re-establish your parental role by taking time to be with the children. Before you attempt any strong-handed discipline, find out how things were handled in your absence. Your partner probably did great! If you disagree with how a particular matter was handled, both adults need to discuss it calmly and privately.

Expect that it may take 4-6 weeks before you are feeling comfortable again. Be willing to put up with the transition period, knowing that it too shall pass. Here are some suggestions:

- Be realistic. Accept that the period of reunion may be tough and that it requires special patience.
- Be willing to invest the time to work through it as a couple, a family, and as individuals.
- Talk! Share all the happenings and feelings – mad, sad, glad – all of them.
- Keep a journal while absent from one another. Share it.
- Be slow to criticize.
- Resist suspicion concerning infidelity. Most couples are faithful.
- Go easy on the kids, as they are readjusting too. Handle discipline as a team. In parenting: “United we stand, divided we struggle”.
- Talk with other couples. They are probably having some of the same difficulties you are. It is nice to know you are not the only ones.
• If it gets worse instead of better, get professional help. You need an objective ear to hear you. Call your Fleet Family Support Center and ask to see a counselor.

ANTICIPATION: NERVOUS EXCITEMENT BEGINS

Weeks before their loved ones’ return, service families are making nervous preparations. New haircuts, diets, shopping for an “arrival outfit,” dinner menus planned, groceries stocked up from the commissary. And housecleaning. “You clean out drawers, scrub cabinets, shampoo the rugs,” says one spouse. “You clean things you never noticed before, and probably won’t notice later. It is nervous energy. Everyone is so excited. We worry about whether they’ll be as glad to get home as we are to see them.”

“I’ll never forget our first homecoming,” one woman recalls. “He called me from Manila and said, ‘I’ll be home in 18 hours.’ Well, I ran through the house, cleaning everything. I fixed my hair, bought champagne, got groceries. Then I sat and waited. He finally got home three days later.”

“That last day it’s like the world stops turning,” confides one spouse. “And when you spot your special sailor you’re so nervous your knees are shaking. However, it is the happiest day in your life – each time. If you’ve never experienced it, I believe you’ve missed something special.”

THINGS THE PARTNER AT HOME SHOULD REMEMBER

• Expect your spouse to be different. Think how much you have changed. So have they.
• Remember that the crews have been subject to daily regimentation and routine. Leave room for spontaneity instead of scheduled activities and preplanned events.
• Falling to sleep may be a temporary problem. It took time for the crew to learn to sleep when they could on rotating schedules or with roommates.
• There is a very good chance that the long flight has left your warrior very tired. All they may want is to do is get home and to fall asleep in their own bed, something they have been longing for since they left. This is not emotional disinterest in you, this is a physical requirement.
• Do not be defensive about the way you have handled the children, home, or finances. Discuss criticisms calmly and away from any children’s ears.
• Expect that it may take time to re-establish sexual intimacy.
• It may seem natural to want to celebrate the return from deployment with a spending spree. If you cannot afford it, hold tight to the purse strings. The urge to spend will pass.
• Resist the urge to grill your partner about real or imagined affairs. Questioning your mate about infidelity can only destroy trust between the two of you. Swallow your curiosity.
• Your loved one has been in a military environment 24 hours a day for the last 6 months, just as you have been head of the house. It may take some time to change out of those mindsets. Compromise is the key to helping you both establish your new roles in the home.
• Expect him/her to be surprised or hurt that you have coped so well alone. You can reassure your partner that they are loved and needed, without giving up your own independence.
Not all the anticipation is positive, of course – sometimes it is laced with fears and resentments. As the homecoming approaches, some couples begin to wonder about their mates’ fidelity. Perhaps their fears have some basis, but more often they are imagined. Most military social workers and psychologists agree that worries about infidelity – whether real or imagined – lend an underlying tension to a couple’s reunion.

BACK TO REALITY

“When you first see each other, it’s like an incredible electrical shock,” says one Navy wife. “It’s exciting for the moment, but when that moment ends, what do you do? You do not really know how to deal with each other at first. You think, should I offer to drive? Should I help with unpacking?” In some families, disappointments begin to set in almost as soon as the couple walks in the door. Nothing seems to go as planned; the fantasies of months begin to fade; feelings are hurt. Meals planned weeks in advance are never eaten in all the excitement. Presents lovingly tooted home do not elicit the response expected. Children seem resentful or indifferent, sometimes flinching from their parent’s touch.

Sheer happiness at being together again can gloss over problems for a few days, but eventually they surface. And, say military counselors, many of the problems are caused by the very anticipation that makes a homecoming so exciting. Reality rarely lives up to expectations.

According to a Family Service Center counselor, much fantasizing goes on between couples during deployment. Their letters communicate their love and, given time, this leads to great expectations. Once they are together they sometimes find that in reality neither lives up to the fantasy. They are back to reality. Disappointment in each other can set in. Adjustments to these differences come through allowing a gentle flow of communications by words, actions, touching, caring, sharing, listening, and giving to each other.

In the case of children, correspond with the child. Parent and child can keep a diary. The child pins a map showing the places that the deployed parent visits. The result is a geography lesson within the family at home on those countries the crew visits. This opens further communication between the parent and child. The deployed parent can feel present in the home although absent in body.

CHANGING ROLES AND NOTHING IN COMMON

Neither of you is the same person you were a few months ago. The partner at home might have gone through far more changes than the one on deployment. The main adjustment problem for families after a long separation is the reversal of roles when the deployment is over and the family reunites.

But roles do not switch back so easily, as every military spouse discovers. Says a Navy wife whose marriage has survived 17 years of separation and adjustment: “Sometimes wives resent their husband’s return. While he is gone, she is independent. Once he is home again, she has to cook and pick up after him. And when your husband is accustomed to military life and its regimentation and routine, he’s likely – though unintentionally – to treat you and the kids as if you are in the Navy.”

Some service members recognize this syndrome. They have learned not to put their families through the unhappy adjustment to “dependent” status each time they return. They have learned to expect their partners to grow, to become more competent
and assertive with each separation. They have learned not to feel threatened or unneeded because their families can survive without them. The keys to a successful homecoming are communication, compromise, and patience. Both the member and spouse should make every effort to not get defensive and try to understand the other’s position.

**HOW TO REDUCE THE HOMECOMING STRAIN**

What can couples do to reduce the strains that accompany a homecoming? Begin by talking to each other. If you feel awkward or unsure of yourself around your spouse, say so – gently. Give each other a little space for a while. Remember that the two of you adjusted to being single while you were apart; now you must readjust to being married again. This is another “honeymoon” period for you, and it should be spent getting back to your normal relationship.

Expect some readjustment difficulties for your children as well. After all, it is hard for them to understand why Daddy/Mommy has been away. They may feel angry with him/her and try to shut him/her out. They may point out how differently one parent handled things while the other parent was gone. It is important for the Parent to re-enter the family picture, at least at first, as an “honored guest.” Then he or she can gradually re-establish his/her role as spouse and parent.

**WHAT THE RETURNING SPOUSE SHOULD REMEMBER**

- Do not disturb a family set-up that has been working well without you.
- Ease back into the system gradually. Try to enjoy being an “honored guest” for a while.
- Take it easy on the kids, especially where discipline is concerned. It is best for kids to have a consistent routine, so let your mate’s rules stand. Do not barge in as the disciplinarian.
- Do not try to alter the financial affairs. They are usually fine. Remember that prices have probably soared while you were gone.
- Expect your partner to be a little envious of your travels, so go easy on the descriptions of seven-course banquets or German beer fests. Bring home a gift.
- Do not ask your partner to pack the kids off to Grandma’s so the two of you can have an intimate reunion. It is vital to reaffirm your bond with your children. Later, the two of you can slip away for a “second honeymoon.”
- Expect your partner to be different; a more confident, independent person. Coping without you does not mean that your partner wants to.
- Give your wife time to talk about everything she wants to, but do not offer any advice – she wants you to listen, not solve the problem for her.

**SUMMARY**

Talk calmly with each other. You have both had to become slightly different to deal with the long separation, so coming back together can be difficult. Either person putting his or her foot down and refusing to compromise can drive a wedge between the two of you. Before you tell your loved one something, ask yourself, “How could this be received or interpreted?” Little things, like a calmer tone or a “please” can make all the difference. Good luck to everyone with deployment; we are all counting the days until we get home again.