

Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council
Meeting Minutes
Teleconference
June 9, 2020, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Meeting Attendees:

Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD):

Mr. William G. Bushman, Chairman, Performing the Duties of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (P&R)

Ms. Carolyn Stevens, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP), Director, Office of Military Family Readiness Policy (OMFRP) and Office of Special Needs (OSN)

Army:

Lieutenant General Jason T. Evans, Army Headquarters, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-9

Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA) Michael A. Grinston

Ms. Jill Waters, Spouse of Regular U.S. Army Member

Marine Corps:

Ms. Marie C. Balocki, United States Marine Corps (USMC) Headquarters, Director, Marine and Family Programs

Ms. Heather Zane, Spouse of USMC Reserve Member

Navy:

Rear Admiral (Select) Putnam H. Browne, Director, 21st Century Sailor Office

Ms. Evelyn Honea, Spouse of Regular U.S. Navy Member

Air Force:

Mrs. Jill La Fave, Spouse of U.S. Air Force Reserve Member

Mr. H. L. Larry, Director, Air Force Services

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF) Kaleth O. Wright

Air National Guard:

Major General Dawne Deskins, Director, J-1, National Guard Bureau

Military Family Organizations:

Ms. Shannon Razsadin, Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN)

Ms. Patty Barron, Association of the United States Army (AUSA)

Chief Master Sergeant (Retired) Ericka Kelly, Reserve Officers Association (ROA)

Substitutes:

SgtMaj R. Kevin Williamson *for* Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Troy E. Black

MCPO Toby Ruiz *for* Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Russell L. Smith

Advisors:

Ms. Virginia S. Penrod, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
Ms. Jennifer Dailey Perkins, OSD, Department of Defense Education Activity
Ms. Anne K. Joiner, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for MC&FP
Mr. Joe Ludovici, Principal Director, MC&FP
Ms. Rebecca Lombardi, Associate Director, Office of Special Needs (OSN), Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)
Ms. Kristen C. McManus, Program Analyst, Morale, Welfare, Recreation, and Resale Policy
Ms. Beth Riffle, Director, Military Community Outreach (MCO)
CAPT Ed Simmer, MD, Tricare, Defense Health Agency (DHA)

Speakers:

Mr. Marcus Beauregard, Director, Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO)
CAPT Kimberly Elenberg, Director, U.S. Public Health Service, Total Force Fitness
Ms. Zona Lewis, Associate Director, MCO Operations
Ms. Erika Slaton, Associate Director, Military Community Support Programs Outreach & Engagement

DoD MFRC Designated Federal Officer (DFO):

Mr. William Story, DFO, OMFRP
Mr. Bill Hampton, Alternate DFO, DSLO

DoD MFRC Support Staff:

Mr. Frank Emery, Travel and Logistics, OMFRP
Ms. Melody McDonald, Human Resource Liaison and Logistics, OMFRP

Proceedings of the Meeting

On Tuesday, June 9, 2020, the Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council (MFRC) held its second meeting of fiscal year (FY) 2020 via teleconference. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the MFRC's second FY 2020 focus area, "Community Collaboratives and Partnerships." A full transcript of the meeting and attendance of members and advisors present is available.

Call to Order

The MFRC Designated Federal Officer (DFO), Mr. William Story, welcomed MFRC members, advisors, and public guests. He initiated roll call, recognized quorum, reviewed the agenda, and explained that the session includes presentations on one focus area.

The DFO introduced the MFRC Chairman, Mr. William G. Bushman, alternate chairman for Honorable Matthew P. Donovan. Mr. Bushman welcomed everyone and noted that due to COVID-19, the MFRC meets virtually. He extended his appreciation for participants' flexibility during this unprecedented time. Mr. Bushman recognized Sergeant Major of the

Army (SMA) Michael Grinston, who was attending his first meeting of the DoD MFRC as a Council Member. Mr. Bushman welcomed the speakers and noted that family care is a top priority for Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper and Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Matthew P. Donovan.

Administrative Items

The DFO explained that the MFRC is an independent advisory committee that provides advice to the Secretary of Defense. All MFRC documents are available for review on the Military OneSource MFRC webpage. This MFRC meeting was not a town hall meeting. The Federal Register Notice announcing the meeting included instructions for the public to call-in and listen to the proceedings. The public may make written submissions to the MFRC public e-mailbox. The DFO reviewed how to contact the MFRC.

Public Submissions (15):

The DFO reviewed the written public submissions and shared them with the MFRC members as required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). He clarified that individual MFRC members are not required nor authorized to take action on submissions filed by the public except as they may address the MFRC's current tasking. As directed by statute and charter, the MFRC has a strictly prescribed role to provide collective advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on the matters described in 10 USC § 1781a(d) and as tasked to the MFRC.

- Veterans Affairs (VA) information request for the April 29 MFRC meeting slides (Betty Moseley Brown)
- VA Lessons Learned on Remote Access Meetings (Betty Moseley Brown)
- DHA written submissions request (Edward Simmer)
- Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Manpower and Reserve Affairs (SAF/MR) written submissions request (Michael Coltrin)
- Assistance request Lisa Slusher)
- TRICARE for Kids Coalition submission (Kara Oakley)
- Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General complaint: August 2018 EFMP/OSN (Jennifer Penhale)
- DoD MFRC recommendation request: 2014 MFAN letter (Jeremy Hilton)
- Air Force Respite Care (Mandy Farmer)
- Partnership Promise written statement submission: Extended Health Care Option (Michelle Norman)
- Partnership Promise white paper submission: Advocating for Military Families With Exceptional Needs (Jennifer Barnhill)
- MAZON submission: Military Family Basic Needs Allowance (Josh Protas)
- Survey recommendation: OSN responsible for EFMP program survey completion (Renea Hilton)
- Integration initiative: EFMP Medical and Family Support at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (Peg Kinsell)
- EFMP suggested submissions: Advocates for exceptional family members (Lisa Williams)

Focus Area Presentations

Building Healthy Military Communities Pilot: Leveraging Civilian and Military Partnerships to Amplify Impact

CAPT Kimberly Elenberg presented the positive impacts of the Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC) Pilot. The collective DoD effort works to meet the needs and challenges of military families and Service members who are geographically dispersed and remote from installations. Initially a congressionally mandated initiative, the BHMC Pilot assesses and supports the Total Force Fitness (TFF) of Service members and their families, both Active Duty and Reserve Component populations. The pilot enhances the abilities of the DoD, the U.S. government, and the private sector to collaborate and address critical issues and optimize Service member readiness and family resiliency. Based on initial pilot findings, the Defense Health Agency (DHA) concluded that military readiness is influenced by local factors.

To initiate the pilot, the TFF Portfolio partnered with the Uniformed Services University Consortium for Health and Military Performance and connected with the DSLO, the military Services, and Military OneSource as part of a “chain link” system to provide effective support to the military-connected community. The BHMC pilot is a collaborative effort between multiple DoD agencies with critical support from Federal, state, county, community, and industry partners including state departments of health, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Centers for Disease Control, the National Association for Chronic Disease Directors, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and others. Senate Report 113-85 provided guidance to form a comprehensive long-term strategy for aligning efforts to improve TFF, and Senate Report 114-63 allowed the TFF Portfolio to conduct a pilot to enhance recruitment, retention, readiness, and resilience.

The TFF Portfolio and BHMC team then selected different states for the pilot, based on:

- **Diversity:** The pilot must represent each Service and military component as well as under-represented minorities.
- **Environment:** The pilot must represent various geographic living areas.
- **Health:** The Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) health related quality of life measure was validated against electronic health records as a proxy for readiness.

Informed by rapid needs assessments and strategic planning sessions, state-specific action plans were developed highlighting target counties in each state and associated priorities including physical and nutritional fitness, mental health, substance misuse, family support, education, employment, sexual assault, suicide-prevention, access to affordable food choices, transportation, and childcare. Within selected states, when possible, each strategic action plan aligns with the state health improvement plan. The alignment promotes increased collaboration between DoD and public sector agencies by demonstrating alignment between DoD readiness goals and state government health goals.

The aim of the pilot is to build partnerships and improve the readiness, resiliency, and well-being of current and future Service members and their families. Initiated in 2016, the pilot provides quantitative and qualitative analyses. Initial outcomes indicate overall improvement among

Active Duty and Reserve Components' ability to deploy to an austere environment in all pilots, according to data from the periodic health assessment. Retention rates among National Guard first-term soldiers improved from 2018-2019 in five of the six pilot states.

CAPT Elenberg displayed a public data bivariate map representing populations, called the Community Readiness Open Data Dashboard (CR-ODD) which supports BHMC's data driven approach. Greater population density is blue and greater at-risk populations are purple. Convergence is dark purple. The DHA focused on counties displaying dark purple and blue. A poor health-related quality of life measure indicated risk. The DHA used a TFF model. The data indicated strengths and improvement opportunities.

The BHMC offers a unique approach for holistic support of the DoD community:

1. Local focus: The DHA investigates initiatives by state vs. region. Each state has its own laws, resources, and culture which impact access to community services and support for Service members and their families. For example, many states have policies requiring that a state be an individual's home of record to access state resources. This informed the pilot's strategic partnership with National Guard Bureau Adjutants General at the state level. The pilot provides a State Coordinator in each participating pilot state—Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, and Oklahoma—to serve as the state and DoD community's focal point for developing joint strategies, facilitating connections, and building DoD/civilian relationships to support TFF, readiness, and resiliency.
2. Strategic partnerships: Leveraging insights from both quantitative and qualitative assessments indicating at-risk populations, the State Coordinators then determine where bridges or relationships need to be built or strengthened within their states to address identified challenges and detractors from readiness. BHMC efforts at the community level complement the work of other DoD entities to support military families both at the national policy level (such as DSLO) and individual/family support levels (such as Military OneSource). This forms a "chain link" system to approach health, well-being, and resiliency as a collective DoD community. For example, BHMC collaborates with the Services' family assistance programs and communicates their concerns to non-DoD entities through participation in state health and economic improvement planning boards and NGO partnerships. State Coordinators participate and provide a perspective to help inform the State Health Improvement Plans, County Health Improvement Plans, and State Economic Improvement plans and bring a voice to the table to ensure the needs of the military family are considered in strategic planning efforts.

State and county leaders lack a comprehensive understanding of the locations of Service members outside of installations, their needs, and how military-connected populations contribute to the local community. If they are aware, they are not aware of whom to contact. State coordinators assist non-DoD stakeholders to better understand military culture and needs and link public health departments to Service agencies to address challenges collaboratively.

Readiness and resiliency are greatly influenced by community characteristics. The DoD, states, and communities all support Service members, which requires a joint approach to address readiness and resiliency requirements that are community-based. The DHA leverages diverse partnerships, both national and state-specific. CAPT Elenberg provided examples of State

specific partnerships and initiatives:

1. Oklahoma: The State Coordinator works closely with the Oklahoma City Naval Operational Support Center to provide monthly newsletters to senior leadership and ombudsman for distribution to Sailors and their families and provides helpful resources to maintain Total Force resiliency for the majority populace of tribal nations.
2. New Mexico: State partnerships with the YMCA and Ninja Fitness Academy help prepare program participants for the new Army Combat Fitness Test and opened capacity for all Service members, regardless of Service branch. This supports recruit sustainment by preparing them to pass the fitness test and basic training.
3. Mississippi: Billboards were most effective means of communication. In addition, live public broadcasting amplified employment outreach in counties at greatest risk.

The TFF Portfolio received positive feedback on the state-specific initiatives. Specific testimonials and interim findings by state are available upon request. Some nonparticipating states have requested a state coordinator to participate, including North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Ohio.

Evaluation efforts are underway to capture how the BHMC pilot operationalizes TFF and improves support of geographically dispersed Service members. Initial findings demonstrate the BHMC Pilot is already having a positive impact on its target communities. The Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences/Consortium for Health and Military Performance will continue to provide evaluation expertise to measure:

- Community-level CDC health related quality of life scores
- Retention
- Service members readiness to deploy
- Prevalence of disease and non-battle injury
- DoD perspective and representation on state health improvement boards (or equivalent)

The pilot's target completion date is March 2021. The impact of COVID-19 emphasizes the need for continued support, especially for those who are geographically dispersed. The CR-ODD guides DoD data and analytics for COVID-19 resourcing and policy decision coordination. Next steps for BHMC include discussions with leadership about the way forward. The TFF Portfolio is not sure where to direct additional requests for state support. Enduring state relationships and public/private partnership collaborations are important.

The pilot is not a program and will not replace existing programs. The pilot amplifies existing outreach messages and utilization of existing DoD, state, or county resources through enhanced DoD/civilian connections. The pilot would benefit from additional time to evaluate outcomes, measures, and benchmarks demonstrating impact on Force and family readiness and resiliency.

DoD Collaboration and Partnerships with State Governments

Mr. Marcus Beauregard of the Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) addressed coordination efforts with the states and COVID-19 impact information. Over the past 10 years, the DSLO team assisted state policymakers to enact over 700 bills that improve quality of life for the military community.

The DSLO works on state policies that impact Service members and their families, and seeks to harmonize Federal, DoD, and state laws. It examines existing policy and then presents a list of the 10 most significant issues to the Military Departments, Joint Staff and National Guard Bureau for coordination and for leadership approval. The DSLO then works with state governors to build relationships, educate, and assist policymakers. The DSLO does not lobby; rather, it facilitates policy changes.

Mr. Beauregard presented the 10 key issues for 2020:

1. Licensure portability for military spouses
 - a. Immediate action: Implement current state policies. The DSLO aims to make all application forms and staffing procedures obtainable online to ensure that military spouses are fully aware of all requirements and benefits.
 - b. Near-term action: Enhance state licensure laws. The DSLO is working with states to have their licensing boards, at a minimum, provide a license (temporary or permanent) within 30 days of application, with minimal paperwork.
 - c. Near-term action: Certify military spouse teachers, using their current credentials and testing to expedite issuing an equivalent credential in the new state.
 - d. Long-term action: Enact interstate licensure contracts, which create reciprocity for all practitioners within the occupation, to include military spouses. A practitioner can establish licensure in his/her home state (based on residence) and then practice in all member states. Spouses can choose any state where they hold a current license in good standing as their home state while associated with active duty.
2. Education
 - a. Virtual schools: Allow military children to use state resources to bridge between two school systems.
 - b. Advance enrollment: Connect military families with school districts before moving to their new location to determine student needs and requirements.
 - c. In-state tuition continuity: Allow Service member children to pay in-state tuition, even if new orders cause a residence change prior to enrollment.
3. General
 - a. Medicaid waivers: Allow special needs family members to register for a Medicaid waiver in their state of legal residence and proceed to a wait list. When they separate or retire from the military, they receive services through the state Medicaid waiver if they have progressed to the top of the list.
 - b. Child abuse and neglect reporting: Requires Child Protective Services to identify military families as part of intake procedures and to share pertinent information with the local installation for military intervention.
 - c. "Ask the Question" campaign: Add a military affiliation question to the intake processes for all state services. State agencies can then direct individuals to special benefits reserved for the military.

Mr. Beauregard displayed the DSLO progress report slide and noted that COVID-19 has delayed most states deliberating on legislation. Usually by May-June, most state legislation bills have passed chambers and the governors have signed them into law. Due to the pandemic, most state

legislators postponed sessions, and COVID-19 response efforts and recovery, as well as the 2021 budget requirements, are the current focus. The DSLO continues to work with legislators during the current legislative sessions to consider supportive bills, and where this may not be possible, to consider these bills in next year's sessions.

Mr. Beauregard displayed his contact information and thanked the MFRC for helping military families: Marcus.j.Beauregard.civ@mail.mil / <https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil> / (571) 236-2893.

Military OneSource – Connecting Our Military Community

Ms. Erika Slaton leads outreach and engagement functions for Military Community Support Programs within Military Community and Family Policy. Ms. Slaton presented an overview of Military OneSource, with a focus on collaborative efforts through national partnerships.

Military OneSource is a 24/7 call center and website that provides information and resources on every aspect of military life using a holistic approach. All Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve Components, and immediate and surviving Service family members have access to Military OneSource. Service members and their family members remain eligible up to one year post-separation or retirement.

All call center triage consultants have a master's level of education in a mental health-related field. They listen for unstated needs. Executive Order 13822 enables the call center to help transition Service members and connect them to support services in their new location. More than 130,000 Service members have connected. One of the 15 call center support services is peer-to-peer support. Military-connected members support callers on any military life topic. They identify resources and follow up to make sure they met callers' needs.

Military OneSource state consultants actively work with military and civilian organizations to find resources based on identified needs. They offer a state support plan based on top issues within each state. Coordination efforts focus on geographically dispersed populations, but they affect the total populace. In September 2016, Military OneSource made an online resource finder for members. The Community Resource Finder includes regional and local connections and is a centralized resource for service providers. Military OneSource attends hundreds of events every month to facilitate resource needs and link supportive services to members. Military and civilian service providers can request state consultant support at: <https://supportrequest.militaryonesource.mil>.

The Military OneSource Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) program connects military spouses to education employment through a virtual platform. SECO augments the military readiness program at installations. The DoD Military Spouse Employment Partnership and more than 440 companies, Federal agencies, and employment organizations signed a statement of support to increase military spouse employment opportunities. Since 2011, more than 143,000 military spouses have found employment, some as a result of employment opportunities SECO shared with employment readiness personnel. Additionally, the Spouse

Ambassador Network connects military spouses to opportunities through more than 25 member organizations.

Military OneSource has partnered with LinkedIn. Military spouses can have a one-year LinkedIn upgrade at no cost, even during a move or separation from the Services, which provides access to the LinkedIn online library of learning courses.

Military Community Outreach Associate Director Ms. Zona Lewis leads the Outreach Operations Team within Military Community and Family Policy. Ms. Lewis shared successful statistics of outreach operation efforts from FY 2019, to include a 92 percent increase in MilitaryOneSource.mil platform users. There were more than 6 million web sessions. Collaboration with Federal and DoD partners to provide timely and relevant information contributed to MilitaryOneSource.mil platform growth.

The MilitaryINSTALLATIONS website contains more than 10,000 pages of military installation information as well as state and local content. Beginning March 13, MilitaryOneSource.mil quickly responded to emergent COVID-19 issues with a landing page specific to pandemic updates. Facebook Live events every day at noon Monday-Friday spotlight DOD, federal and other programs. These successful live events may continue post-pandemic.

MC&FP Outreach Operations expands agency connections, including a collaboration with Sandboxx from September 2019 through January 2020, which led to 2.2 million website impressions. In FY 2019, MC&FP Outreach Operations worked with Zillow to spotlight permanent change of station (PCS) resources for the military community, which resulted in more than 7 million website impressions. In calendar year 2019, Military OneSource event outreach included:

- Boot camp programs
- Service academies
- Alumni association events
- Football games
- Army 10-Miler
- Marine Corps Marathon
- Armed Forces Bowl

Military OneSource works to stay connected to its military member populace through 15 available email subscriptions.

The DFO, Mr. Story, thanked all of the speakers for their presentations.

Question & Answer Session and Council Member Discussion:

The DFO presided over the question-and-answer session by roll call.

1. Mr. William G. Bushman, Chairman

Who should the states or localities contact within the DoD to support their immediate military community?

CAPT Kimberly Elenberg: State localities need a DoD contact to support their local military. Feedback indicates that the DoD point of contact (POC) should represent all Services and their components, given the frequent PCS turnover rate at various installations.

2. Mr. Horace H. L. Larry

The Air Force will email CAPT Elenberg to secure state liaison POCs.

The Air Force will share Mr. Beauregard's contact information to internal leads.

3. Ms. Carolyn S. Stevens

Military OneSource state consultants can serve as a resource for CAPT Elenberg's coordination efforts with the states.

4. Mrs. Jill La Fave

Mr. Beauregard will send Mrs. La Fave the regional liaisons' contact information.

Do DSLO efforts include Reserve Components Service members?

Mr. Beauregard: Interstate contracts impact all practitioners within an occupation. Once states agree, the interstate contract will encompass Active Duty Service members, Reserve Components, and veterans.

5. Ms. Evelyn Honea

How can Military OneSource reach military families on a local level for specific state and local laws assistance? For example, the Navy has an app for military families that links to state-specific websites.

Ms. Zona Lewis: Military OneSource offers tools to help military Service members and their families move, but none of them are specific to individual states and laws. Ms. Lewis and her team will research greater awareness opportunities for Military OneSource.

Ms. Honea will email her second question to Mr. Story.

6. Ms. Jill Waters

Mr. Beauregard will send Ms. Waters the regional liaisons' contact information.

Can the BHMC timeframe extend to include additional states?

CAPT Elenberg: No, the pilot timeline is set. CAPT Elenberg will review pilot output and outcomes with leadership to formulate a strategic plan.

7. Ms. Shannon Razsadin

Who are the Military OneSource users and their connection to military life, and the duration per session?

Ms. Lewis will send Mr. Story the user data to share. On average, web sessions are 2.5 minutes long. COVID-19 web content sessions are 4.5 minutes long.

8. Ms. Patty Barron

Was CAPT Elenberg able to gauge child care needs and the state availability ratio?

CAPT Elenberg: The BHMC addresses child care. Child care availability impacts readiness and the ability to drill. COVID-19 exacerbates childcare needs. CAPT Elenberg will provide information.

Is child care state licensing part of the DSLO privilege to practice outreach?

Mr. Beauregard: Child care is not a licensed occupation but a licensed business. Individuals working in child care must have national certification. In general, the interstate compacts with respect to privilege to practice are all developed at the request of the occupation.

Ms. Barron will connect with Mr. Beauregard for additional information.

Closing Remarks:

Mr. Bushman encouraged local MFRC members in the National Capital Region to visit the Military OneSource call center headquarters. Mr. Bushman also stated that he visited and observed Mr. Beauregard's impressive team and its efforts in Ohio for expanding licensure. He reminded the MFRC that the DSLO is a resource to leverage. He looks forward to CAPT Elenberg's BHMC pilot results.

The DFO asked the MFRC members to include him in their email correspondence to presenters.

The DFO adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

Next Meeting:

The DoD MFRC will meet again virtually on Tuesday, September 22, 2020, from 1000-1200.

Submitted by William Story, Designated Federal Officer, DoD MFRC.

certified by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William G. Bushman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

William G. Bushman

Chairman

Performing the Duties of the Deputy Under
Secretary of Defense for Personnel and
Readiness