

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Organization Name
Organization Address
City, State, Zip

(Office Symbol)

(Date)

MEMORANDUM FOR (NAME OF UNIT) COMMANDERS, FAMILY READINESS LIAISONS, FAMILY READINESS DEPLOYMENT ASSISTANTS AND FAMILY READINESS GROUPS

SUBJECT: Family Readiness Group Newsletters - Standing Operating Procedures (SOP)

1. References.

- a. DOD 4525.8- M, DoD Official Mail Manual, 26 Dec 01
- b. AR 680-1, Army Community Service, 21 Jul 06

2. Purpose. Provide procedures publishing and distributing FRG newsletters.

3. Scope. This SOP applies to the *(name of unit)* Family Readiness Group which is comprised of all Soldiers, civilians, volunteers and family members assigned to the unit.

4. Responsibilities.

- a. Unit Commander, or designated representative, will

- (1) Ensure the FRG has access to supplies and equipment needed to produce and distribute the FRG newsletter.

- (2) Prepare one article, as a minimum, for each FRG newsletter providing a command update to the unit's FRG members.

- (3) Assign the FRG Deployment Assistant to provide logistical and administrative support to the FRG Newsletter in newsletter production and distribution.

- (4) Ensure the Newsletter editor receives an updated mailing roster for the FRG monthly, (unless the FRG Deployment Assistant has distribution responsibilities).

- (5) Review and approve the FRG newsletter prior to publication insuring it meets the requirements listed in references (a) and (b).

- b. The FRG Leader will

- (1) Appoint a volunteer newsletter editor to publish and distribute the newsletter. Additional volunteers may be selected to assist with development and distribution.

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(2) Ensure the volunteer newsletter staff completes the required paperwork to be classified as a statutory volunteer and that volunteer hours are submitted monthly.

(3) Provide the editor with current information and articles of interest to Soldiers and families, including materials received from the FRG Steering Committee meetings.

(4) Ensure the newsletter letter receives a current mailing and e-mail roster for FRG members monthly.

c. The newsletter editor will

(1) Prepare a (monthly/quarterly) newsletter for the unit's FRG members following the policies established in references (a) and (b).

(2) Prepare the newsletter for mailing or provide the master copy to the FRGDA for printing and mailing.

(3) Maintain a list of FRG members' e-mail addresses to use for distributing the newsletter.

(4) Provide an electronic copy of the newsletter to the unit's vFRG system administrator for posting on the unit's vFRG.

9. Newsletter Content.

a. The dissemination of timely, accurate information is one of the essential tasks of the FRG. The most important advantage of a unit newsletter is its effect on the morale of Soldiers and families. A well designed and written newsletter, especially during long deployments, can bring welcome news about the FRG and give families and Soldiers a good feeling about themselves and the unit. It's another way of communicating as a unit family—one of the essential ingredients.

b. The newsletter editor will ensure the newsletter content is primarily official, mission related information. Official, mission related information refers to:

(1) Information related to unit, Soldier and family readiness, such as information on FRG activities in support of field exercises and deployments and FRG meetings

(2) Information on military benefits, entitlements or services and activities that are educational in nature designed to create informed, self reliant service members and their families, such as articles provided by (*Army Community Service/Reserve Component Family Programs*), the Chaplains office, Finance Battalion, American Red Cross or other military or community agency.

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(3) Information regarding activities for service members and families that promote unit cohesion and help strengthen the ongoing esprit among family members within the unit such as command-sponsored Organizational Day activities and Memorial Day Services.

c. Unofficial information may be included in the newsletter, provided it does not exceed 20% of the printed space used for official information; it does not increase printing and mailing costs to the Government; and it does not include personal wanted/for sale advertisement. Unofficial information includes information on FRG social events, personal information such as birth announcements or marriages, recipes, or fundraising events.

d. The newsletter must contain one of the following statements: "This newsletter contains official information only" or "This newsletter contains official and unofficial information." Newsletters containing official and unofficial information must also include the following statement: "The inclusion of some unofficial information in this FRG newsletter has not increased the cost to the Government, in accordance with DOD 4525.8-M."

e. Newsletters containing unofficial information that exceeds 20% of the printed space or increases the printing and mailing costs of the newsletter or includes personal for sale/want ads must be mailed using the FRG informal fund.

f. Copyright Law.

(1) The newsletter content must comply with current copyright laws. Be careful when quoting from published works. Copyright law protects original material such as books and novels, poetry, recorded music, sheet music, photographs — anything that exists as a "tangible medium." Printing any portion of an author's published or unpublished work is a copyright infringement and subject to lawsuit. Permission to quote from any of the above named items requires permission from the author. Simply giving the author credit does not provide protection from copyright infringement.

(2) Some material falls into the category of "public domain," for example, facts discovered in the course of research. This kind of information may be used as long as it is rewritten in the writer's own words.

(3) Under the "fair use" rule of copyright law, limited use of someone's work may be used without getting permission. This includes excerpting from a work to use in a review or criticism, summarizing an article with short quotes in a news report, and limited photocopying for non-profit educational purposes. For more information, check the U.S. Copyright Office at www.copyright.gov.

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10. Mailing the Newsletter.

a. If the newsletter is to be mailed, the bottom half of the last page should be reserved for addressing information. The unit's return address is placed in the upper left hand corner of the page, and is the only authorized return address.

b. Third class mail is used for mailing 200 copies or more of a newsletter. The newsletters must be counted, bundled, and sorted by ZIP code.

c. The unit mail POC must prepare a PS Form 3602. This form and the newsletters are taken to DOIM Postal/Distribution Branch for mailing. The Postal Manager must see one unstapled copy of the newsletter.

d. First class mail is used for mailing less than 200 copies of a newsletter. Newsletters must be placed in regular US Army envelopes with the unit address in the upper left-hand corner. The Postal Manager must see one unsealed copy of the newsletter. Envelopes are metered at the Army postal branch.

11. Files. Hard and soft copies of the SOP's will be maintained by the Commander, Family Readiness Group Deployment Assistant, Rear Detachment, FRG Leader, FRG Secretary, and FRG Treasurer.

12. The point of contact for this SOP is (POC Name, Title, Phone Number, email address).

COMMANDER'S NAME
Rank, Branch, Component
Commanding