MILITARY ONESOURCE

Plan My Deployment Checklists

Predeployment Checklist

☐ Communication planning

- Plan how you'll communicate with family members, friends and loved ones during deployment, being aware that communication may not be guaranteed. Consider how often and through which methods you'll stay in touch, accounting for time zones and availability.
- Practice a "dry run" before you go if you are using an app or software for the first time to ensure everyone is comfortable using the technology. Keep mission information secure and disable all geolocation features and functionality on both non-government and government-issued devices to ensure operational areas are not revealed.
- Stay emotionally present with honest conversation, share your feelings openly and listen actively to support each other. Use these tools and tips to stay connected while managing a deployment.

☐ Emergency planning

- Discuss how you and your loved ones will get in touch in case of an emergency.
- Make sure all important emergency contact information is up to date and that family members and loved ones are pre-authorized for emergency assistance.
- It is mandatory for service members, civilian employees, and contractors — and any family members — overseas to account for themselves in the event of a natural or human-made disaster.
    - Ensure your contact information in your profile is up to date by accessing the ID Card Office Online.
    - Know how to account for yourself and others before something happens, and be familiar with the accountability tool your component uses.

- Take the “Personnel Accountability” course found in MilLife Learning.

☐ Employment protection for National Guard and reserve service members

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- Explore reemployment, health insurance and protections under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.
- Learn more about the unique aspects of National Guard and reserve deployment, including employment, health care coverage, financial changes and access to Family Assistance Centers for you and your loved ones.

☐ Family care plan

- Create a family care plan. This is essential if you have dependents or children. Your family care plan will act as a guide for caregivers on important details including child care, school, medical care and family activities.
- Be sure your plan includes child care, school arrangements, health care and emergency contacts. Review with designated caregivers and ensure the plan is clearly communicated with your family and loved ones.

☐ Family support and self-care

- Focus on spending quality time with your friends and loved ones.
- Create a list of activities you look forward to doing when you return.
- Address your feelings around deployment. Talk to a loved one or chaplain, or consider confidential counseling or peer-to-peer support.
- Hear from peer-to-peer counselors about how to address common deployment concerns, including preparation strategies, self-care tips and the benefits of peer-to-peer counseling.
- Take steps to support your children through the deployment cycle and create a customized plan to support your family.

☐ Financial planning and tax support

- Consider working with a Military OneSource financial counselor, or tap into your installation personal financial management services to help with the financial considerations listed in this section.
- Review your Leave and Earnings Statement and military pay distributions. Ensure you understand any additional pay like special and incentive pay and family separation allowance that may apply during deployment.
- Create a financial plan.
    - Document recurring monthly expenses.
    - Set up autopay.
    - Review past spending habits.
    - Set financial goals for saving, investing or debt repayment during your deployment.
- Take advantage of deployment-related benefits like the Thrift Savings Plan and the Savings Deposit Program to save and invest extra income from tax-exempt pay or allowances.
- Familiarize yourself with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, which offers financial protections such as reduced interest rates on debts, foreclosure postponement and tax deferrals during deployment.
- File your taxes for free with MilTax and get tips for filing military taxes while you or your loved one is deployed.

☐ Health care

- Ensure you and your family are properly enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, or DEERS, and TRICARE via the MilConnect website.
- Confirm all information is up to date for both you and your family members.
- Review your TRICARE options for health care during deployment.

☐ Home and vehicle maintenance

- Discuss how to manage home maintenance during deployment and review your budget to determine if you can hire help for tasks like lawn care, house cleaning or other shared chores.
- Decide if you should terminate your lease or make a plan to maintain your home while

you are away.

- Reach out to your local housing office with additional questions about on- and off-base housing preparation.
- Designate someone to handle your mail, and update the U.S. Postal Service with forwarding details.
- Decide what to do with your vehicles during deployment. Consider options like storage facilities or friends and family.
- Talk to family members or loved ones who may be using your vehicle, and share upcoming maintenance needs. Fill out this vehicle maintenance guide for them to reference during your deployment.
- Determine if you need to end your car lease before deployment. In addition to lease protections, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act can help service members and families with a number of financial considerations, including deferred income taxes, eviction prevention, small-business protections and more.

☐ Information, records and legal support

- Use this must-have document checklist to review and update contact information and important documents. Review all legal and tax documents with someone you trust before deployment.
- Use this account and passwords guide to keep important account and password information in a centralized location.
- Store all important documents in one location and keep several copies for you and your loved ones.
- Contact your installation legal services office for assistance with designating and creating your power of attorney, living will, and last will and testament.
- Explore estate planning essentials, including how to settle your property, investments and belongings, care for children and more.
- Update your DD Form 93, the Record of Emergency Data, and communicate changes or updates with your loved ones.
- Take the “Making Your Final Wishes Known” course found in MilLife Learning.

☐ Military ID

- Make sure everyone in your family has a valid military ID. Military ID cards allow family members to access important services and privileges, like TRICARE health insurance and the on-base commissary and exchange.

- Make a plan to update your ID card if it expires during deployment.

☐ Personal security and unit to-dos

- Complete required tasks from your unit's checklist, including predeployment health assessments.
- Share what details you can about deployment orders with your loved ones. Discuss each other's needs and concerns for the approaching time apart, including how to handle daily demands and potential emergencies as well as ways to establish a household budget and how to communicate during deployment.
- Connect your spouse or loved ones with unit contact information and your Military and Family Support Center. Service members and military families can access support for all phases of deployment, financial readiness, confidential individual and family counseling, and more — in person, by phone and online.
- Follow operations and personal security guidelines at all times. Inquire with your unit about any family OPSEC briefings or critical information that needs protection, and ensure family members and friends are aware of these rules to maintain safety.

☐ Pet care

- Ensure someone is designated to care for your pets.
- Update pet records and provide the caretaker with necessary veterinary contact info.
- Explore pet boarding options through your installation's veterinary services program.

☐ Voting

- Submit a Federal Post Card Application. It serves as both your voter registration and a request for an absentee ballot. You have the right to vote in your home state — either electronically or with an absentee ballot — even if you're deployed during an election.
- Learn more about absentee voting and service branch voter assistance, and listen to this podcast about absentee voting assistance for military spouses.