



Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 1342.17

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ASD(FM&P)

SUBJECT: Family Policy

- References:
- (a) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Department of Defense Family Policy," January 15, 1988 (hereby canceled)
 - (b) Executive Order 12606, "The Family," September 2, 1987
 - (c) [DoD Directive 4001.1](#), "Installation Management," September 4, 1986
 - (d) DoD Instruction 1342.6, "Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS)," October 17, 1978
 - (e) through (a), see enclosure 1

1. PURPOSE

This Directive:

1.1. Supersedes reference (a) and establishes policies, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures on family policy for DoD military personnel in Active, National Guard, Reserve, or Retired status; civilian personnel; and DoD families.

1.2. Implements family policy-making criteria in reference (b) ensuring that the rights and autonomy of DoD families are considered in the formulation and implementation of DoD policies to the extent permitted by law.

1.3. Does not establish any rights or remedies and may not be relied upon by any person, organization, or other entity in an administrative or judicial proceeding or any other forum.

2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This Directive:

2.1. Applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments (including their National Guard and Reserve components), the Joint Staff, the Unified and Specified Commands, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities (hereafter referred to collectively as "DoD Components"). The term "Military Services," as used herein, refers to the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

2.2. Applies to all military personnel and retirees, their families, and, where specified, to civilian personnel and their families. The term "DoD personnel and their families," as used herein, refers to the aforesaid individuals.

3. DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this Directive are defined in enclosure 2.

4. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

4.1. Family policy-making criteria, as prescribed in E.O. 12606 (reference (b)) be followed, to the extent permitted by law, in formulating and implementing policies that have significant impact on DoD personnel and their families.

4.2. DoD personnel and their families be provided a quality of life that reflects the high standards and pride of the Nation they defend, and that this policy be achieved by working in partnership with DoD personnel and their families, recognizing their role in the readiness of the Total Force.

4.3. DoD personnel, both married and single, bear primary responsibility for the welfare of their families. Nevertheless, the total commitment demanded by military service requires that they and their families be provided a comprehensive family support system. The extent and exact nature of this system shall be based on installation-specific requirements and shall address needs for pre-mobilization indoctrination, deployment support, relocation assistance, information and referral (with follow-up), child care, youth recreation and development, private and public sector employment assistance (including self-employment in Government quarters), special

needs support, family advocacy, foster care, family life education, dependents' education, substance abuse prevention, family health and fitness, spiritual growth and development, emergency services, counseling, support and services for off-base families (outreach), consumer affairs and financial planning assistance, volunteer training and management, separation and retirement planning, family centers, and community development.

4.4. Family support systems be designed to assist commanders in accomplishing installation mission requirements, consistent with DoD Directive 4001.1 (reference (c)).

4.5. Family support systems be allocated resources to accomplish their missions, as prescribed in this Directive.

4.6. Family support system agencies and activities shall collaborate and coordinate with each other and civilian agencies to ensure maximum use of resources.

4.7. Family support systems shall be monitored and evaluated by the Military Services to ensure their accessibility, effectiveness, and responsiveness to the needs of DoD personnel and their families.

4.8. The DoD Family Policy Coordinating Committee shall share and coordinate information on military family issues, research, and programs among the Military Departments and DoD Components.

4.9. Military family research and program evaluation shall be directed toward an increased understanding of:

4.9.1. The relationship between family factors and readiness and retention.

4.9.2. Factors that make a family support system effective and efficient from a command perspective as well as for the individuals being served.

4.9.3. The effect of the mobile military lifestyle on DoD personnel and their families.

4.9.4. DoD personnel and their families; i.e., their strengths, needs, and demographic characteristics.

4.9.5. The impact of mobilization on family support systems, and its effect on DoD personnel and their families.

4.10. DoD family policy, as prescribed in this section, shall be made known to all DoD personnel and their families.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) (ASD(FM&P)), or designee, shall:

5.1.1. Monitor compliance with this Directive. National Guard and Reserve compliance shall be monitored in conjunction with the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) (ASD(RA)).

5.1.2. Ensure that information on military family issues, research, and programs is exchanged by the Military Services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

5.1.3. Chair the DoD Family Policy Coordinating Committee, which shall be composed of senior representatives of the Military Services, Reserve Affairs, and other senior DoD staff representatives selected by the committee chair.

5.2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Heads of the other DoD Components shall:

5.2.1. Ensure compliance with the family policy-making criteria, as prescribed in E.O. 12606 (reference (b)).

5.2.2. Ensure that DoD personnel and their families are informed of the policy, as prescribed in this Directive.

5.3. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall ensure that:

5.3.1. Comprehensive family support systems are developed at DoD installations, based on installation-specific needs and mission requirements.

5.3.2. Family support systems are allocated the resources required to accomplish their missions, as developed by installation commanders in coordination with subclaimants, major commands, and Military Department Headquarters.

5.3.3. Family support system agencies and activities collaborate and coordinate with each other and civilian agencies to make maximum use of allocated resources.

5.3.4. Family support systems are monitored and evaluated to ensure that they are accessible, effective, and responsive to the needs of DoD personnel and their families.

5.3.5. Military family research and program evaluation are conducted, as prescribed in this Directive.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) (ASD(FM&P)) shall use the DoD Family Policy Coordinating Committee and its subcommittees to share information and coordinate decisions on military family issues, research, and programs among the DoD Components.

6.2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Heads of the other DoD Components shall ensure that the Statement on DoD Families (enclosure 3) is prominently displayed at all DoD installations and activities.

6.3. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall ensure that:

6.3.1. Documents implementing family support systems follow community development principles, as defined in this Directive.

6.3.2. Program Objective Memoranda (POM) address Military Service family support system funding requirements.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective immediately. The Military Departments shall forward two copies of implementing documents to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) within 120 days.

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

William H. Taft, IV
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Enclosures - 3

- E1. References, continued
- E2. Definitions
- E3. Statement on DoD Families

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES, continued

- (e) Public Law 95-561, "Defense Dependents' Education Act of 1978," November 1978, as amended (Sections 921-932 of title 20, United States Code)
- (f) [DoD Directive 1342.16](#), "Provision of Free Public Education for Eligible Dependent Children Pursuant to Section 6, Public Law 81-874, as Amended," October 16, 1987
- (g) [DoD Directive 6400.1](#), "Family Advocacy Program," July 10, 1986
- (h) [DoD Instruction 6400.2](#), "Child and Spouse Abuse Report," July 10, 1987
- (i) [DoD Directive 1010.10](#), "Health Promotion," March 11, 1986
- (j) [DoD Instruction 1342.12](#), "Education of Handicapped Children in the DoD Dependents Schools," December 17, 1981
- (k) [DoD Instruction 1010.13](#), "Provision of Medically Related Services to Children Receiving or Eligible to Receive Special Education in DoD Dependents Schools Outside the United States," August 28, 1986
- (l) [DoD Directive 1010.4](#), "Alcohol and Drug Abuse by DoD Personnel," August 25, 1980
- (m) DoD Instruction 1010.6, "Rehabilitation and Referral Services for Alcohol and Drug Abusers," March 13, 1985
- (n) [DoD Directive 1400.33](#), "Employment and Volunteer Work of Spouses of Military Personnel," February 10, 1988

E2. ENCLOSURE 2

DEFINITIONS

E2.1.1. Child Care. Child care is designed to protect the health and safety of children and promote their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. Child development centers, family day care homes, and other Military Service child care options provide hourly, part-day, and full-day programs.

E2.1.2. Child Development Center. An installation facility or part of a facility used for child care.

E2.1.3. Community Development. A process involving the assessment of military installation family support needs and identification of available and required resources to meet those needs. Allocation, coordination, and programming for resources is based on installation priorities established by the commander in coordination with installation residents, activities, and family support program managers. Unresourced requirements are forwarded through subclaimants and major commands to Military Department Headquarters.

E2.1.4. Consumer Affairs and Financial Planning Assistance Program. A program that assists members and their families in keeping their personal financial affairs in order. The program provides basic money management and consumer education classes, counseling, and information.

E2.1.5. Counseling. Intake and support activities for individuals, families, and groups.

E2.1.5.1. Intake Counseling. Includes collecting and processing case history data, assessment, and personal interviewing to determine the problems presented by clients. Determinations are made whether to refer the individual or family for support counseling.

E2.1.5.2. Support Counseling. Counseling provided after intake counseling, addressing a wide range of personal, marital, and parent-child problems.

E2.1.6. Dependents' Education. As defined in DoD Directive 1342.6, P. L. 95-561, and DoD Directive 1342.16 (references (d) through (f)).

E2.1.7. Deployment Support. Helps single and married Military Service members and their families to manage successfully the challenges of mobilization and

deployments before, during, and after they occur. Deployment support programs help reduce personal and family emergencies and stress during deployments and assist members and families in dealing with separation. The goal is to increase individual and family morale, unit cohesion, and operational readiness by keeping Military Service members on station and functioning well during deployments and mobilization.

E2.1.8. Emergency Services. Non-medical social services (food, clothing, shelter, transportation, child care, and financial assistance) that provide immediate response and attention to individual and family crises. These services involve social and emotional assessment, intervention, referral, and follow-up activities.

E2.1.9. Employment Assistance. A program conducted by specially trained counselors who help military spouses, other family members, and active duty members find public and private sector employment during relocation, separation, or retirement. The program includes, but is not limited to, workshops, career counseling, self-employment skills, job referrals, and guidance on self-employment in Government quarters.

E2.1.10. Family Advocacy Program. As defined in DoD Directive 6400.1 and DoD Instruction 6400.2 (references (g) and (h)).

E2.1.11. Family Center. Army Community Service Centers, Air Force Family Support and Family Service Centers, and Navy and Marine Family Service Centers. The Military Service Family Centers serve as a focal point for information and referral and coordination of family support system-programs and activities.

E2.1.12. Family Day Care Home. Quarters-based child care provided in Government-owned or -leased family housing units. Child care is provided on a regular basis for compensation, usually for more than 10 hours per week, for up to six children, including the provider's own.

E2.1.13. Family Health and Fitness. Includes information and classes about the importance of a healthy lifestyle for members and their families. Programs include assessing, developing, and implementing health promotion, as defined in DoD Directive 1010.10 (reference (i)).

E2.1.14. Family Life Education. Includes prevention and enrichment programs designed for individuals, couples, or families. Prevention and enrichment programs provide knowledge, social relationship skills, and support throughout the family lifecycle by enhancing self-esteem, strengthening interpersonal competencies, and offering preparation activities to individuals and families for their respective roles, tasks, and responsibilities.

E2.1.15. Family Program Evaluation. Systematic, scientific, and ethical assessment of family programs and centers sponsored by the Military Services.

E2.1.16. Family Research. Systematic, scientific, and ethical inquiry sponsored by the Military Services that seeks to do the following:

E2.1.16.1. Identify the relationship between family factors and readiness and retention.

E2.1.16.2. Increase the understanding of DoD personnel and their families; i.e., their strengths, needs, and demographic characteristics.

E2.1.16.3. Identify how the unique stressors of the mobile military lifestyle impact on military families.

E2.1.16.4. Identify the impact of mobilization on family support systems and its effect on DoD personnel and their families.

E2.1.17. Family Support System. The network of agencies, programs, services, and individuals that supports military readiness by preventing or ameliorating family stressors, promoting healthy community environments, and freeing DoD personnel from family worries so they are able to focus on unit missions.

E2.1.18. Foster Care. A voluntary or court-mandated program. The program provides 24-hour care and supportive services for children who cannot be cared for by their natural family or legal guardian.

E2.1.19. Handicapping Conditions. As defined in DoD Instruction 1342.12 (reference (j)).

E2.1.20. Information, Referral, and Follow-up Program. Provides information about installation and community resources. Links Military Service members and families with available and appropriate service providers, and provides follow-up to ensure that services were provided.

E2.1.21. Medically Related Services. As defined in DoD Instruction 1010.13 (reference (k)).

E2.1.22. Mobile Military Lifestyle. Refers to the mobility that is the basis of all military mission requirements, and the cumulative effect of the stressful adjustments that Military Service members and families constantly must make due to frequent relocations, separations, and reunions.

E2.1.23. Mobility. The larger concept that defines the cumulative effect of multiple relocations and frequent family separations and reunions. The demand for constant adaptation to changing environments and circumstances affects every aspect of personal and family life. Mobility is the dominant factor influencing the commitment, readiness, and retention of Department of Defense personnel and their families.

E2.1.24. Outreach. Includes elements of the family support system that link support and services, and inform families of services that are available to them before family concerns and problems reach crisis proportions. The outreach program identifies at risk populations, establishes priorities for services through community needs assessments, and coordinates the delivery of a variety of family support services. Those services include, but are not limited to, life-skills training, such as financial management, coping with the mobile military lifestyle, and newcomer assistance; prevention services, such as community health nursing, parenting education, and stress management; and community information and referral.

E2.1.25. Pre-Mobilization Indoctrination. The family support system plays an important role in mobilization support at the installation level. It addresses command-specific requirements and includes military and other resources in the continental United States (CONUS) and outside continental United States (OCONUS) locations. The objective is to support command efforts to inform Military Service members about their duties and responsibilities, and family members about their roles in the event of mobilization. Family center staff, chaplains, medical personnel, and other designated command representatives must work together to define roles, establish responsibilities, and identify points of contact for specific issues related to command-specific mission and mobilization requirements. Reserve family information needs shall be addressed for the following:

E2.1.25.1. Direct information concerning unit mission.

E2.1.25.2. Mobilization procedures.

E2.1.25.3. Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) benefits, medical benefits, and dental insurance.

E2.1.25.4. Identification cards, wills, powers of attorney, and emergency data requirements.

E2.1.25.5. Pay and allowances, to include direct bank deposits.

E2.1.25.6. Financial assistance.

E2.1.25.7. Family support services.

E2.1.26. Related Services. As defined in DoD Instruction 1342.12 (reference (j)).

E2.1.27. Relocation Assistance. Provides support, information, preparation, and education for managing the demands of the military mobile lifestyle. The program provides continued support throughout the entire assignment process. Essential components include, but are not limited to, the following:

E2.1.27.1. Counseling before and after moving.

E2.1.27.2. Welcome kits.

E2.1.27.3. Sponsorship.

E2.1.27.4. Briefings, workshops, and support groups.

E2.1.27.5. Basic household loaner items.

E2.1.27.6. Support to bicultural families.

E2.1.27.7. Services to separated families and families with special needs, as defined in paragraph E2.1.30.

E2.1.27.8. Emergency services.

E2.1.28. Retirement and Separation Program. Provides preparation for eligible Military Service members to retire or separate, well in advance of the event, with emphasis on prospective retirees' rights, benefits, and privileges. The focus is on making a smooth transition by assisting Military Service members to prepare for a second career, cope with the stresses involved, and adjust to civilian life.

E2.1.29. Special Education. As defined in DoD Instruction 1342.12 (reference (j)).

E2.1.30. Special Needs Support Program. Uses a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach in providing medical, educational, and community support; housing; and personnel services to families with special needs (e.g., those affected by family violence, Service members having a family member with a disability, single parents, dual-career military couples, and foreign-born spouses). Supports families who, due to their particular circumstances, may require some form of special assistance. Types of assistance include, but are not limited to, the following:

E2.1.30.1. Information on the availability of special education and medical support services at different duty stations.

E2.1.30.2. Quality child care.

E2.1.30.3. Respite care.

E2.1.30.4. Housing.

E2.1.30.5. Physical accessibility to facilities.

E2.1.30.6. Cultural acclimatization.

E2.1.30.7. Counseling.

E2.1.30.8. Support groups.

The program ensures that active duty Military Service members who require specialized types of support services are able to pursue a military career at levels of performance and readiness consistent with the Military Services' missions. This program also provides medically related and other related services as part of the special education program for handicapped children in the DoDDS, as those terms are defined in DoD Instruction 1342.12 (reference (j)).

E2.1.31. Spiritual Growth and Development. Includes, but is not limited to, pastoral care, counseling and support, guidance focusing on the entire family unit, premarital and marital counseling and seminars, family enrichment and growth programs, religious education and worship opportunities, community building, and other chapel-sponsored family activities for DoD personnel and their families.

E2.1.32. Substance Abuse Program. As defined in DoD Directive 1010.4 and DoD Instruction 1010.6 (references (l) and (m)).

E2.1.33. Volunteer Management. A system to enhance effective recruitment, reimbursement, training, supervision, recognition, logistical support for, and use of, volunteers on an installation. See DoD Directive 1400.33 (reference (n)) for additional policy guidance.

E2.1.34. Youth Recreation and Development. Promotes the total development of youth up to age 18 by offering quality programs and information that foster social and recreational skills, and otherwise promote personal growth of youth.

E3. ENCLOSURE 3

STATEMENT ON DoD FAMILIES

E3.1.1. DoD personnel and their families are the most valuable resource in support of the national defense. DoD families serve as a force multiplier, contributing to the readiness and retention of quality personnel. The goal is a combat-ready force supported by families whose quality of life reflects the high standards and pride of the Nation they defend. That goal may be best achieved by working in partnership with DoD personnel and their families, recognizing their role in the readiness of the Total Force. The support they receive and the success of the global mission are directly related.

E3.1.2. For these reasons, the Military Departments shall maintain a wide range of quality of life programs to further the DoD mission. Those programs are contributing greatly to the lives of our personnel and their families, and must continue to be enhanced. Comprehensive family support systems within each Military Service must be further developed and institutionalized.

E3.1.3. These systems must address installation-specific needs, and strive to include pre-mobilization indoctrination, deployment support, relocation assistance, information and referral (with follow-up), child care, youth recreation and development, private and public sector employment assistance (including self-employment in Government quarters), special needs support, family advocacy, foster care, family life education, dependents' education, substance abuse prevention, family health and fitness, spiritual growth and development, emergency services, counseling, support and services for off-post families (outreach), consumer affairs and financial planning assistance, volunteer training and management, separation and retirement planning, family centers, and community development. Family support systems must address the mobile military lifestyle over different stages of family life and career development.

E3.1.4. The Military Departments must train and develop leaders and supervisors who are sensitive to the pivotal role families play in readiness and retention. These leaders must be supported by responsive family programs that are properly staffed, funded, and evaluated. Toward that end, all Military Service policymakers, commanders, and supervisors must consider how their programs, policies, and practices affect DoD families.

E3.1.5. As long-range plans are developed, each Military Service must ensure that our personnel and families receive the support they need to meet the present and future challenges of our demanding military life. The Department of Defense and its Components shall continue to support initiatives that contribute to the well-being of DoD families.