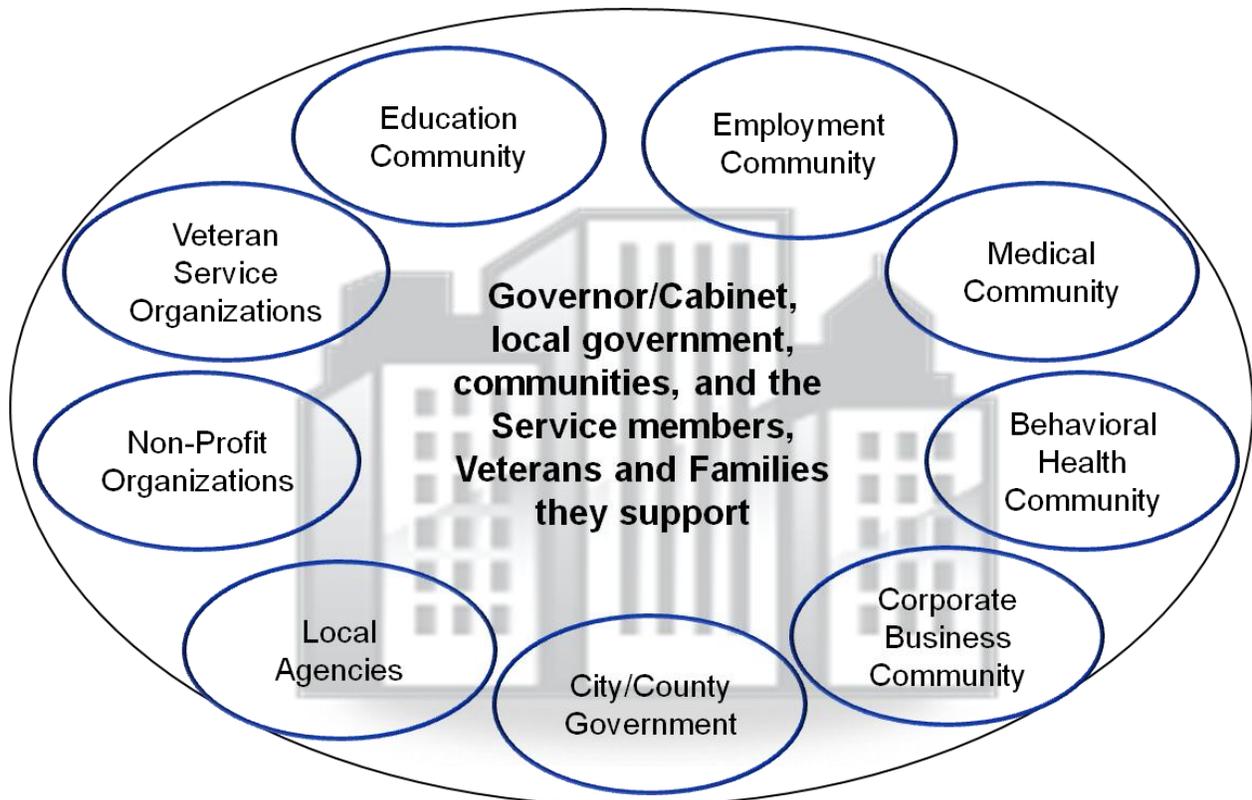


# Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC)



Community Guide

(Version 2, 2011)

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## Introduction

This resource guide on Inter-Service Family Assistance Committees (ISFAC) is to orient and inform community leaders and local commanders across America on how to establish and sustain collaborative community, state and regional ISFACs.

This guide serves as a roadmap to increase the community awareness, build collaboration and deliver support services to military communities closest to where they live. The ISFAC serves as a conduit for information about public, private or military support entities, and ensures the delivery is current, relevant, and far reaching to all members on installations and geographically dispersed Service members and families.

The primary goal of an ISFAC is to develop and strengthen Family assistance delivery systems and increase awareness of networks within the community (civilian and military). Education, employment and wellness are vital to the well being of families and this ISFAC guide will help tie together and grow community resources to empower, mentor and build resilience for members; especially in the event of mobilization, deployment, or natural disaster. By leveraging the resources of all ISFAC members a sense of community spirit is fostered and this can ultimately benefit the entire community population in addition to Veterans, Wounded Warriors, military members and their families.

The Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike H. Mullen, has rightly described the communities across America as being a “Sea of Goodwill.” The ISFAC concept and this guide follow in that same spirit providing a vehicle to direct the support that is so evident and available across America.

The potential of this “Sea of Goodwill” is not just the nation’s government, non-governmental agencies, benevolent organizations, and institutes of higher learning. Its potential is in the heart of our nation’s communities – the citizens of America’s towns and cities. The aim of this” Sea of Goodwill” is matching helpers or donors with the needs of Service members, Veterans, their families, and the families of the fallen.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Major John W. Copeland and Colonel David W. Sutherland, Undated, A White Paper: *Sea of Goodwill Matching the Donor to the Need.*

## Acknowledgements

This guide was originally prepared for the U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command (FMWRC) at Cornell University, by the Family Life Development Center (FLDC) staff located at the College of Human Ecology, under Cooperative State Research Education Extension Service (CSREES), Grant No. 2006-48654-03600 in 2009.

This community guide aims to refresh the community outlook towards supporting military families and acknowledges the unity of effort by all stakeholders within the Department of Defense, the White House National Security Staff, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Guard and Reserve organizations from many states, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor, the National Association of Counties, and many non-governmental organizations.

The Presidential Report entitled "Strengthening Our Military Families" identified the Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC) as a single place to handle state-wide military family issues<sup>2</sup> This guide is to support all stakeholders, to direct all active-duty, National Guard, Reserve members, Wounded Warriors, Veterans, and their families to the broad spectrum of family services and support (non-governmental organizations, state and federal) that exists in the states, territories and tribes.

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<sup>2</sup> The Presidential Report, Strengthening Our Military Families, Meeting America's Commitment, January 2011, [http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0111\\_initiative/strengthening\\_our\\_military\\_january\\_2011.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0111_initiative/strengthening_our_military_january_2011.pdf)

## SECTION 1: Why Build An Integrated Family Support Network?

In the active-duty, National Guard and Reserve components, military members and their families have made tremendous sacrifices for our nation and they continue to do so. Our most patriotic Americans need to hear from their leaders and from hometown America that their sacrifices are recognized and appreciated. Department of Defense (DoD) and its partners in government and non-governmental organizations must work to coordinate and communicate support tools and systems to our Service members and their families. This community guide is to provide an accurate resource for today's environment and to bridge or deliver the services of current programs to military families. Through an effective ISFAC, those services that will be developed in years to come can be tied in to the network to reach military families. The hope for this community guide is to assist your local ISFAC in filling any gaps on behalf of our military families and to link community resources.

From the time our military members enlist and move through the continuum of their service, DoD aims to sustain them. A coordinated network of support with defined processes will serve the needs of military families where they reside in over 4,000 communities nationwide. As noted in the *Presidential Report on Strengthening Our Military Families*, a state-based or community-based group in the form of an *Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC)*<sup>3</sup> can build a community network of support. This committee can be called by any name their stakeholders select, but, by any name they proceed to coordinate local-support efforts and benefit geographically dispersed Service connected families. While ISFACs are functioning in many states, this guide encourages all stakeholders to rally communities in support of military and family members including Veterans and Wounded Warriors. According to the cited Presidential Report,

“Less than 1 percent of Americans serve in uniform today, but they bear 100 percent of the burden of defending our Nation. Currently, more than 2.2 million service members make up America's all-volunteer force in the active, National Guard, and Reserve components. Since September 11, 2001, more than two million troops have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Fifty-five percent of the force is married and 40 percent have two children. Only 37 percent of our families live on military installations; the remaining 63 percent live in over 4,000 communities nationwide. Multiple deployments, combat injuries, and the challenges of reintegration can have far-reaching effects on not only the troops and their families, but also upon America's communities. These challenges should be at the forefront of our national discourse”<sup>4</sup>

The chief reason for community collaboration is demographic diversity and geographic dispersion of active-duty, National Guard and Reserve components' members and families. Immediate and extended Family members of any given unit will generally outnumber the military members, thus, leaders spend a significant amount of time with Family issues related to productivity on the job, allocation of resources and general quality of life. An ISFAC operates as a grassroots forum and can function effectively at a region, state or local community level to connect all stakeholders in support of the military in their designated area. Many ISFAC's are alive and well in the United States and Territories. An additional benefit of an ISFAC is increased communication of community resources to benefit all community members bringing a sense of increased community cohesion.

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<sup>3</sup> The Presidential Report, Strengthening Our Military Families, Meeting America's Commitment, January 2011, [http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0111\\_initiative/strengthening\\_our\\_military\\_january\\_2011.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0111_initiative/strengthening_our_military_january_2011.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> IBID, pg 1.

## **SECTION 2: What Is An ISFAC?**

An ISFAC is a voluntary military-community cooperative or partnership organized to allow service providers to engage in networking and connect Service and Family members, Veterans, Wounded Warriors with local military and community resources.

The success of an ISFAC is highly dependent on the support of the governor, state legislators and civic leaders. Other vital players include the regional headquarters for the Reserve components, commanders of installations in the given community whether active-duty, National Guard or Reserve, The Adjutant General (TAG) and the heads of each city, county, state, federal and non-governmental agencies within the community.

Sponsorship by the governor promotes the involvement of all citizens, and creates accountability and issues a "Call to Action" for all stakeholders to bridge the local resources to military members within the community. The governor can provide leadership to an ISFAC that will greatly enhance the relationships between the various military and civilian members of the committee and thus communicate a commitment of caring for all citizens.

### **ISFAC Goals**

The primary goal of an ISFAC is to strengthen and develop Family assistance delivery support programs and networks. To leverage the resources of all committee members and organizations in support of military families as they mobilize, deploy, or respond to natural disasters. This ISFAC guide is to increase community capacity and sustainment for years to come. It also promotes a sense of community spirit to support the families of military, Veterans, and Wounded Warriors. Military families contribute to our nation and our communities.

“They support and sustain troops fighting to defend the Nation, they care for our wounded warriors, and they survive our fallen heroes. The well-being of military families is an important indicator of the well-being of the overall force. At a time when America is at war and placing considerable, sustained demands on its troops and their families, it is especially important to address the family, home, and community challenges facing our all-volunteer force. For years to come, military families and Veterans will continue to face unique challenges, and at the same time will also have great potential to continue contributing to our communities and country.”<sup>5</sup>

ISFACs promote a holistic approach to supporting military and family members, Veterans and Wounded Warriors to enable proactive, efficient and effective assistance from the closest support source. ISFACs work to eliminate service and support gaps. Suggested goals for an ISFAC:

- Improve coordination and reduce duplication of support services provided by all government and non-government organizations and community support agencies
- Ensure communication of all services to family members.
- Establish a community contact registry and mapping of community support partners to maintain current information of available support services
- Establish a local charter to institutionalize organizational roles and responsibilities.
- Identify and communicate with community leaders and installation commanders for active-duty, National Guard and Reserve components and anticipate the impact of deployment on the community and its members (before, during and after deployment)

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<sup>5</sup>IBID, pg 1.

- Build awareness about Service-connected family continuum of services needs to include quality of life issues, urgent life needs, and contingency plans for natural disasters.

## **ISFAC Structure**

ISFACs are organized geographically by any region or area involving government, non-governmental agencies, benevolent organizations, and institutes of higher learning to increase community capacity of support services.

## **ISFAC Strategic Communications**

Strategic communications have a dual purpose. First, it serves as a vehicle for disseminating information on family support initiatives, programs and resources to internal and external audiences through a variety of means. For example:

- Social media
- Military command media outlets (newspapers, websites, etc.)
- External media (television, radio, newspapers, websites, etc.)
- Town hall meetings and speeches by a range of spokespersons using accurate talking points on family support programs (commanders, civic leaders, key influencers in the local community)

The second purpose of strategic communication is to influence the perception of how well the community is getting the word out about family support assistance available to those who need this assistance. This favorable perception reinforces the community's efforts to spread family support information.

Another strategic communication method that can be helpful is to establish an ISFAC logo or icon to market support services from all community partners thus serving to coordinate communication and reduce communication overload or confusion.

Successful reintegration of a Service member back into their family and community is an important part of the deployment cycle. Mobilization and deployment is just as important and may have a larger impact on community resources. Returning Service members and their families can benefit significantly from coordinated support between military and community services.

Every effort should be made to streamline or consolidate gatherings for support such as Yellow Ribbon events held within a community. An Integrated Family Support Network or ISFAC is designed to orchestrate the use of the available resources and services for all.

## **SECTION 3: Example of an ISFAC Charter**

**Insert date here**

### **INTER-SERVICE FAMILY ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE CHARTER**

This Charter supplements the Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee Memorandum of Understanding (ISFAC MOU) completed (month and year). This collaborative organization shall be called as determined by participating members. (Examples of ISFAC names: Arizona Military Family Coalition, KY-ISFAC, MS-ISFAC, or other name)

#### **ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP**

ISFAC is composed of primary and alternate representatives designated by the ISFAC MOU. A chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary will be established by committee vote and will serve two-years.

#### **ARTICLE II: MEETINGS**

A primary or alternate representative stakeholder will attend each meeting. Committee meetings will follow parliamentary procedure. The consensus of the committee on an issue will be established by non-binding, plurality vote only among representatives present or virtually attending a meeting.

The committee will meet (monthly, quarterly or other frequency) and be hosted by an ISFAC representative. In an emergency or other unforeseen circumstance, the chairperson may communicate with and poll the membership electronically or virtually.

#### **ARTICLE III: RECORDS**

The ISFAC will maintain records of meetings and communications. In order to ensure coordination and communication with the military end-users of services, and records and minutes of meetings will be shared with military leadership in the region covered by the ISFAC (i.e.; National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, Regional Reserve Headquarters and active-duty component installations). Each Federal ISFAC member shall be governed by the Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, and applicable record management directives.

#### **ARTICLE IV: MEETING MINUTES**

The secretary will furnish meeting minutes to the members within 30 days of all meetings.

#### **ARTICLE V: MISCELLANEOUS**

ISFAC is a non-federal entity for purposes of DoD 5500.7-R, the Joint Ethics Regulation. Participation by primary and alternate representative must be approved as provided therein.

Opinions, comments, or positions expressed by ISFAC as a body do not necessarily represent the view of the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security or the military departments or any other state government office.

## **INTER-SERVICE FAMILY ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

1. **Purpose:** This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) describes the principles by which all military services (active, Reserves, and National Guard) will cooperate, as members of an Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC), to maximize Service member and Family readiness for purposes relating, but not limited to, deployment, mobilization, isolated and other arduous duty assignments, disaster relief and other emergency response operations.
2. **Background:** This ISFAC, established *DATE INSERTED HERE*, was created to strengthen inter-service cooperation among military Family assistance providers in the community. This ISFAC serves as the community forum to support military families living across the applicable region or area and is an unofficial working group of military organizations and partners (state, federal and community) that deliver or provide access to Family assistance services. The ISFAC does not act as a policy advisory committee.
3. **Objectives:** The objectives of this ISFAC are to:
  - a. Strengthen existing Family Center networks,
  - b. Provide training to ISFAC members;
  - c. Provide training and assistance to Service members and their families;
  - d. Enable faster access to and more efficient delivery of Family assistance services when and where needed; and
  - e. Reduce gaps in and duplication of services.
4. **Undertakings:** In furtherance of the above objectives the ISFAC members will:
  - a. Communicate openly and regularly
  - b. Work cooperatively and supportively, as provided in the ISFAC Charter
  - c. Share resources as allowed by law and applicable directives
  - d. Promote the well being of all Service members and their families
  - e. Improve the availability and quality of Family assistance services

### **5. Definitions:**

Family Center: A place where family assistance services are provided, including Army Community Service Centers, Air Force Family Support Centers, Navy Fleet and Family Support Centers, Coast Guard Work-Life Program outlets, National Guard Family Program and Family Assistance Centers, Army and Air Force Reserve Family Readiness Program outlets, and other military organizations serving the individual needs of Service members and their families.

Deployment: Movement of forces into theaters of operation.

Mobilization: Under the law cited below, the President of the United States can authorize the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to order members of the Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve to augment the active forces for any operational mission or to provide assistance as appropriate for a period of 365 days. (See *Title 10, Section 12304*, entitled “Selected

*Reserve (National Guard and Reserve) and certain Individual Ready Reserve members ordered to active duty other than during war or national emergency.”).*

Isolated and other arduous duty assignments: Assignments to places at which Service members and their families have limited or no access to Family assistance services.

Disaster relief and other emergency response operations: Operations responding to natural disasters and other mass casualty incidents (e.g., outbreaks of pandemic disease, wildfire, nuclear, chemical and biological incidents, transportation mishaps) when additional assistance is required to alleviate suffering.

**6. Miscellaneous:** This MOU may be modified by mutual consent of all parties. Any party may terminate its ISFAC membership at any time upon written notice to all other parties. Nothing in this MOU shall require the obligation or expenditure of funds in violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act, 31 U. S. Code § 1341.

**Potential Stakeholder List (i.e.; for membership or signature):**

Listed Alphabetically:

- Adjutant General
- Chamber of Commerce
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Governor
- Installation Commanders
- Local Community Leaders
- Local Employers
- Lieutenant Governor
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Regional Commanders
- State Education Office
- State Employment Office
- State Family Program Director
- State Parks and Recreation
- State Public Health Office
- State Veterans Office
- U.S. Air Force (Active, Guard, Reserve)
- U.S. Army (Active, Guard, Reserve)
- U.S. Coast Guard (Active, Reserve)
- U.S. Navy (Active, Reserve)
- U.S. Marine Corp (Active, Reserve)
- Veterans Service Organizations

## **SECTION 4: How To Establish An Effective ISFAC Collaboration**

**Step 1: Gain Leadership Support:** Coordinate with civic and military leaders to garner their support (i.e.; governor, state, county or city leaders, and military commanders at local installations and other regional commanders).

**Step 2: Starting Up an ISFAC:** Survey the area of responsibility (region, state, county, city) for potential stakeholders (military installations, civic offices and leaders, and non-governmental organizations). Reach out to stakeholders and invite them to the first meeting of the ISFAC at a specified meeting location, time, and date.

**Step 3: Identifying Military Family Needs:** In order for the group to address military family needs, they must understand the issues being faced by active-duty, Guard and Reserve families. Issues such as frequency and size of deployments/mobilizations, distance from existing resources, and awareness of available services. For Family members who do not live close to an installation, this is a particularly critical assessment. One of the first agenda items for a new ISFAC is to share information among all committee members.

**Step 4: Assessing How the Family Support System Addresses Family Needs:** By understanding shared needs, the ISFAC can examine what current Family programs exist, the available supports and how the different agencies might contribute to closing any identified gaps. For instance, Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) services are for both Children and Adults. It would be important to add ISFAC members that can address these needs (i.e.; national and local organizations, such as Easter Seals or the local “ARC” group).

**Step 5: Developing and Evaluating the Family Support Plan:** Once an assessment is completed, a family support plan can be developed (or added to) depending on the extent of existing collaboration. ISFACs are also encouraged to use the shared network to develop contingency plans for deployments/mobilizations, natural disasters, medical epidemics, etc. Communicate the local family support plan template with all partners.

### **Shared ISFAC Practices:**

- **Fort Minnesota, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon (BTYR) Community Campaign:** This movement establishes enduring and robust community-based support networks for Service members and military families. It connects existing organizations, agencies, and programs and leverages available resources and the ground swell of support for our military. <http://www.btyr.org/home>
- **Massachusetts Deployment Cycle Support (DCS) Operations:** All Yellow Ribbon (YR) activities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are “joint service” in nature which means that all branches of the military participate together. The Adjutant General and the Governor’s Veterans Advisory Council fully use the DCS/YR staff.
- **The Arizona Coalition for Military Families (ACMF):** An innovative public/private partnership focused on building Arizona’s statewide capacity to serve and support all Service members, Veterans, their families and communities. The ACMF is a centralized entity that engages key stakeholders and partners from the military, government agencies and all sectors of the community, with a focus on best practices and fostering cross-sector collaboration in support of military and Veterans. <http://arizonacoalition.org/>

- **New Hampshire Deployment Cycle Support Program:** A unique public/private, military/civilian partnership that provides comprehensive, pro-active support to Service members and their families through the deployment cycle. This program recognizes that for military families, in particular, Guard/Reserve there are a host of challenges, clinical and logistic, associated with deployment.
- **Ohio Inter-Service Family Assistance Committees (ISFACs):** These are voluntary state partnerships (some regional) between the military and community designed to strengthen and integrate existing family assistance delivery systems to help members and families effectively handle the stress of mobilizations, contingency deployments or natural disasters. ISFACs facilitate ongoing communication and sense of community among all military components and military/civilian community resource providers. [www.homefront.ohio.gov](http://www.homefront.ohio.gov)
- **Maryland's Partners in Care:** The "Partners in Care" program is an initiative of the Maryland National Guard Chaplain's office to unite the needs of Guard members and their families with the resources of faith communities in the state. Support is offered to all referred Guardsmen and families from the faith communities free of charge and without regard to the recipient's religious affiliation. <http://www.partnersincare.org/>
- **California's Operation Welcome Home:** A comprehensive reintegration initiative that aggressively seeks out recently returned veterans to connect them with benefits and services. This interagency effort should reach all combat veterans at least four times during their first year of separation. It is comprised of over 300 State Employment Development Department employees who all are recently separated veterans themselves. <http://www.veterans.ca.gov/>

## **Section 5: Increase Community Capacity: Networking with a Local Commander and providing a Family Support Tool Kit**

### **Governmental and Non-Governmental Sources**

Community leaders and local commanders can build a relationship and discuss the opportunities between governmental and non-governmental resources. Next a network can be created to bring together all community resources that are available in what has been called a “Sea of Goodwill.” This network will be comprised of the many people and organizations seeking to help in some way within the local community. When generating the Local Family Support Tool Kit, community leaders and commanders should work closely to examine the population of military families and the support services. In building a family support resource center and guide, ensure resources have been vetted and/or validated.

Example of a vetted process: Recognized Veterans Service Organizations under the authority granted in Section 5902 of Title 38, United States Code; Veterans Affairs (VA) may recognize organizations for the purpose of assisting claimants for VA benefits in the preparation, presentation, and submittal of their claims. VA has implemented this authority in Section 14.628 of Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, which prescribes the application requirements. A complete list of the organizations recognized by VA is available through the Office of the General Counsel of Accreditation at <http://www.va.gov/ogc/recognizedvsos.asp>

Commanders should provide family members with evaluation tools offered through organizations like the Better Business Bureau <http://www.bbb.org/> or Charity Navigator <http://www.charitynavigator.org/>.

Team building between agencies should include non-profit and for profit services and they should always encourage family members to conduct research on services to ensure they are appropriate for their particular needs.

### **Family Support Services to Address**

There are dozens of possible services that a military family could utilize. Community leaders should work closely with local commanders to evaluate the needs when generating the Local Family Support Tool Kit.

Listed here are some of the categories of services available. Identified are potential organizations within local governments and associations to explore opportunities of support services:

- DoD Resources
- Service Specific Resources
- State and Local Government Resources (*State Secretary of State, State Legislators, County Commissions, Mayors, Chambers of Commerce, etc.*)
- Family and Recreation
- Career and Education (*State Education Networks, Department of Labor, Military Transition Assistance Managers, State Veterans Affairs Networks, State Teachers Associations, etc.*)
- Health and Relationships (*State Health Care Networks, National Association of Counties, American Heart Association, Pediatrics' Association, etc.*)
- Military Life and Deployment (*Veterans Service Organizations, National Guard Associations, Reserve Component Associations, Active Duty Associations, etc.*)
- Financial and Legal (*State Treasurer, Attorney General, Financial Associations, Legal Associations, etc.*)
- Crisis (*Emergency Managers Networks, Local Associations providing support, etc.*)
- Religious services (*State Faith Based Associations, Military Chaplain networks, etc.*)

- Childcare (*State Childhood/Youth Networks, Daycare and Learning Centers Associations, etc.*)
- School Locators (*State Education Networks, etc.*)
- Benefits information
- Stress Management/Suicide Prevention
- Employment Resources (*Transition Service Members/Military Spouses, Department of Labor, County Veterans Support Networks, etc.*)
- Any additional resource identified by key stakeholders at the Command

### **Engaging with State and Local Governments**

Every State has local support programs and local resources for active, Reserve and National Guard members and their families. Each governor may identify a liaison officer who can assist with locating local resources. Each state is structured differently with community leaders and local commanders. Knowledge of community networks within each state is important.

The Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC) is a voluntary military and community partnership organized to provide multi-service networking for training and assistance to ensure the well-being of military families from all branches of the Service.

## **Section 6: Suggested Templates for ISFAC Collaboration**

Coordination and scheduling are important elements to a successful ISFAC. The following resources and templates are provided to help the ISFAC make appropriate arrangements.

There may be instances when an ISFAC might be contacted to assist family support providers in other geographical areas. For example, a Georgia ISFAC might be approached to aid in responding to a hurricane in Florida. Based on response needs, the Georgia ISFAC might offer to send individual members or agency staff to assist in Florida's relief efforts. Ideally, there are no boundaries (state, regional, county, and city) for those who support military families in need.

It can be valuable to plan for and develop virtual meeting platforms (teleconferencing, video broadcast, webinars, and virtual meetings forums) to engage and educate stakeholders and partners. Explore social media opportunities and develop a unified plan. Development and focus on networking, coordinating, cooperating, collaborating, and integrating will serve to increase community capacity.

**Joining Forces** attends to the special needs and strengths of military families. The link below is designed to inspire, educate and spark action from all sectors of our society to ensure veterans and military families have the opportunities, resources and support they have earned.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces>

**Our Military** is a website to provide information about our military and military families who contribute so much to our communities. It describes the tremendous spirit of support for our military that exists throughout the country. This website features stories of how our communities, non-profit organizations, individuals and corporations support our military in countless ways, and provides information about those organizations that provide such critical support. <http://www.ourmilitary.mil/>

**ISFAC SAMPLE AGENDA**  
(Draft Template)  
**(Inaugural/Monthly/Quarterly)**

Date

08:00–08:15	Introduction/Welcome	ISFAC Chair/Representative
08:15–08:45	ISFAC Goals/Objectives	Facilitator/Convener
08:45–10:00	Briefing by Support Programs	Organizations by Arrangement
	Invited Organization	By Arrangement
	Invited Organization	By Arrangement
10:00–10:15	Break	
10:15–11:30	Event Planning	Facilitator/Convener
11:30–12:00	Light Lunch/Snacks	Brown bag or hosted
12:00–12:45	Issues/Areas of Concern	Facilitator/Convener
12:45–01:00	Plan Next Meeting	Facilitator/Convener

# INFORMATION PAPER

(Draft/Template)

*Organization*

*Day/Month/Year*

SUBJECT: Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC)

1. Purpose: To provide information about Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee(s).
2. Facts:
  - a. An Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC) is a voluntary community and military cooperative or partnership organized to provide multi-service networking for training and assistance to ensure Total Force Family Readiness within the community.
  - b. To engage in multi-service networking to assist to connect Service and Family members, Veterans, and Wounded Warriors to local military and/or community resources.
  - c. ISFACs are organized and based on the needs of the Service members and provide an opportunity for community partners through shared leadership to assist Service members/families within a geographic area or state.
  - d. The success of an Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee is highly dependent on the support of the governor and each state's legislators. Other dependant offices of support might be the Regional Headquarters for a Reserve Component, installation commander (Active, National Guard or Reserve), The Adjutant General and the various agency heads of State, Federal and non-governmental agency within the community.
  - e. Sponsorship by the governor promotes the involvement of all citizens and develops a level of accountability and a "Call to Action" for all stakeholders to bridge or convey local resources to the military families. The governor can provide leadership to foster relationships between the various military and civilian members of the committee and communicate a sense of community and caring for all citizens.
  - f. Most ISFACs meet on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis, most often with rotating meeting locations. Their function is to provide assistance to Service members and their families, Veterans, and Wounded Warriors from the source of support closest to their residence. ISFACs provide an opportunity and a place for Family Programs Coordinators to network and identify care, and for service providers to eliminate a duplication of efforts.
  - g. Another function of the ISFAC is for committee members to anticipate pre-planned events of mobilization or contingency and to interact to provide the best programs for families before, during, and after mobilization or natural disaster.

Prepared by: Name

Approved by: Name

# ISFAC INVITATION

(Draft Template)

Agency Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Date

Agency Official

Organization Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Name:

Please accept this invitation to attend the new, Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC), supporting all Insert name of City/County/Region/State Service and Family members, Veterans, and Wounded Warriors. The Insert Organization will host this first meeting in partnership with Insert Name, Title. This meeting will focus on opening lines of communication between the Insert military installations, governmental and non-governmental agencies. Insert State/Region ISFAC efforts will revolve around the timely delivery of support to Service members and their Families, Veterans and Wounded Warriors regardless of the military component in which they serve.

These support efforts target all active-duty, Guard, and Reserve component Service members who have answered the call to duty in service to our freedoms and our nation. The features and benefits of your organization would certainly contribute to this cause.

Each participating organization will get an opportunity to briefly discuss their support capabilities as part of this first meeting. A discussion on successful ISFAC implementation will follow. The meeting will be held at the Insert Address on Insert Date and Time and will include a catered lunch (OR Insert other arrangement). We are honored to have Insert Name open our first meeting.

Please RSVP to Insert Name and Contact Information no later than Date.

Directions and a final agenda will be emailed prior to Date.

Please direct questions on this initiative to Insert Name and Contact information.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Office

# ISFAC REGISTRATION

(Draft Template)

Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC) CONFERENCE

Day/Month/Year

Address

Location

The Insert Name ISFAC is a community initiative and a partnership between all branches of the military and other organizations that broadly touch and assist Service members and their families, along with Veterans, and Wounded Warriors as described in the invitation. Please understand that this meeting is for organizations that have regional or statewide delivery systems for services. If your organization does not meet these criteria, you are still welcome, but may not have an opportunity to speak about your organization during this first meeting. Please review the attached agenda for more information.

Registration forms are being accepted via email or U.S Postal Service. Please send to Insert e-mail and mailing address.

Any updated information on the Insert Day/Month meeting will be posted on the following website Insert web site address.

If there will be more than one person attending with you, representing the same organization, please submit the registration in one email so that we may capture it as a group of attendees.

## REGISTRATION FORM

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Name:

Organization:

Address (mailing):

Home Phone:

Office or Cell Phone:

E-mail (confirmations will be e-mailed only):

Emergency Contact (Name/Relationship and phone number):

Submitting Slides?

Any other pertinent info?

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# ISFAC LEADERSHIP INVITATION

(Draft Template)

Office Of

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Month/Day/Year

Office of the

Name

Organization Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Insert Name:

Please accept this invitation to attend the new, Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC), supporting all military Service and Family members, Veterans, and Wounded Warriors. The Insert Office will host this first meeting in partnership with Insert Name, Title. This meeting will focus on opening lines of communication between community military services and governmental and non-governmental agencies. Insert Name ISFAC efforts will revolve around the timely delivery of support to Service and Family members, Veterans, and Wounded Warriors regardless of the military component they serve or where they reside in the community.

These support efforts target all Service members.

Each participating organization will get an opportunity to briefly discuss their support capabilities as part of this first meeting. A discussion on ISFAC implementation will follow. The meeting will be held at the Insert Location, Address on Insert Month, Day, Year at Time and will include a light lunch.

We are honored to have as our presenter, Insert Name of Guest Presenter, open our first meeting.

Please RSVP to Insert Name, e-mail address no later than Insert Date.

Directions and a final agenda will be emailed prior to Insert Date.

Please direct questions on this initiative to Insert Name, Title, e-mail address, phone number.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

# **Putting It All Together: ISFAC Working Group Procedures Summary**

## **Objective:**

- Review needs of Service members and their Families
- Review needs of Veterans, and Wounded Warriors
- Participate in group decision-making to prioritize issues to be addressed
- Anticipate issues in needs analysis and prioritization process

## **Data Collection & Analysis:**

- Review civilian and military resources
- Record your findings on the Issue Analysis Worksheet
- Does this information need to be on the ISFAC Priority list?
- Can community strengths and resources be identified that can be helpful in dealing with this information?
- What other data (if any) should be collected?
- Consider a mapping tool for all stakeholders to analyze families to support services

## **Prioritization:**

- Report your findings within your workgroup
- Record notes on Issue Analysis Summary Worksheet
- Identify priority risk factors, if any
- Identify community strengths that may be used to address needs
- Identify additional data to collect

## **Report:**

- Report the findings of your workgroup to the ISFAC

## **Section 7: Websites Recommended for Possible Inclusion**

The Tool Kit should include local and national resources available to service members and their families. Websites listed on the community leader and commander's Tool Kit should be authoritative and/or vetted by the commander or local DoD family support service center. When listing websites, ensure they are categorized as mentioned in section six. This will help guide Family members, community leaders and commanders seeking specific types of assistance online.

The following are key websites that should be included. A brief description of the website will be helpful to your family members:

### **Federal Resources (General):**

**MilitaryHOMEFRONT:** <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil>

The official Department of Defense website for DoD Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) provides program information, policy and guidance designed to help leaders, and service providers.

\* The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) is directly responsible for programs and policies which establish and support DoD community quality of life programs for Service members and their Families worldwide. To learn more, go to the MilitaryHOMEFRONT website.

**MilitaryOneSource:** <https://www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx>

MilitaryOneSource offers guidance on education, relocation, parenting, stress management, as well as many other pertinent topics pertaining to military members and their families. Available by phone or online, the service is completely private and confidential. MOS free service is provided by the Department of Defense for active-duty, Guard, and Reserve Service members and their Families.

**Department of Veterans Affairs:** <http://www.va.gov/>

The Department of Veterans Affairs provides support services for service members and their families through all phases of their career. The VA has programs for active-duty, Reserve and Guard, Wounded Warriors and their dependents/caregivers, transitioning Service members, and Veterans. The VA website has information on general benefits, disability compensation, pension, GI Bill, vocational rehabilitation and employment, dependents' education assistance, survivor benefits, home loans, life insurance, traumatic injury insurance, health and well-being information, suicide prevention, PTSD, TBI, burials, memorials, certificates, flags, and eBenefits inquiries. The website will help you find a VA facility and appropriate VA toll- free numbers.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Each State and Territory has specific entitlements and benefits for its citizens.

<http://www.va.gov/statedva.htm>

### **Service Specific Resources and Websites:**

- **Marine Corps:** Marine Corps Community Services <http://www.usmc-mccs.org>
- **Army:** Army One Source <http://www.myarmyonesource.com>
- **Air Force:** USAF Services - Combat Support and Community Service <https://www.usafservices.com>
- **Navy:** Fleet and Family Support <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>
- **NGB:** The National Guard Bureau Joint Services Support Gateway <http://www.jointservicesupport.org>

- **Coast Guard:** Office of Work-Life <http://www.uscg.mil/worklife>

### **Health Promotion and Wellness:**

- **TRICARE:** <http://www.tricare.mil/> The health care program serving uniformed Service members, retirees and their Families worldwide
- **MHS:** <http://www.health.mil> Department of Defense Military Health System
- **USAPHC:** <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/> U.S. Army Public Health Command
- **NMCPHC:** <http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/> Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center
- **OPM:** U.S. Office of Personnel Management WORK/LIFE page [http://www.opm.gov/Employment\\_and\\_Benefits/worklife/](http://www.opm.gov/Employment_and_Benefits/worklife/)
- **VA Mental Health:** Mental health support and resources for Veteran.. [www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov)

### **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):**

- **America's Heroes at Work:** A Department of Labor program that addresses the employment challenges of returning Service members and Veterans living with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and/or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). <http://www.americasheroesatwork.gov>
- **DCoE:** The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury: DCoE assesses, validates, oversees and facilitates prevention, resilience, identification, treatment, outreach, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs for psychological health (PH) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) to ensure the Department of Defense meets the needs of the nation's military communities, Wounded Warriors and Families. DCoE partners with the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs and a national network of military and civilian agencies, community leaders, advocacy groups, clinical experts, and academic institutions to establish best practices and quality standards for the treatment of Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury. <http://www.dcoe.health.mil>
- **The Department of Veteran Affairs Mental Health:** VA Mental Health provides services, support, and resources for Veterans. <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/> or <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

### **Wounded Warrior Specific Resources**

**WWCTP:** The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy (WWCTP) ensures recovering wounded, ill, injured, and transitioning members of the Armed Forces receive equitable, consistent, and high-quality support and services. The Department of Veteran Affairs manages the care of Wounded Warriors once the member transfers from active-duty. <http://warriorcare.dodlive.mil>

**National Resource Directory:** <http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov>

The National Resource Directory (NRD) is a website for wounded, ill and injured service members, Veterans, their Families, and those who support them. The NRD provides access to services and resources at the national, state, and local levels that support recovery, rehabilitation and community reintegration.

### **Service Specific Wounded Warrior Programs:**

- U.S. Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR)  
[www.woundedwarriorregiment.org](http://www.woundedwarriorregiment.org)
- U.S. Navy Safe Harbor, to include the U.S. Coast Guard  
[www.navysafeharbor.navy.mil](http://www.navysafeharbor.navy.mil)
- U.S. Air Force Wounded Warrior (AFW2)  
[www.woundedwarrior.af.mil](http://www.woundedwarrior.af.mil)
- U.S. Army Warrior Transition Command (WTC)  
<http://www.wtc.army.mil>
- U.S. Army Wounded Warrior (AW2)  
Severely Wounded, Ill, and Injured Soldiers  
<http://www.aw2.army.mil>

**VA VETSUCCESS:** The Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment VetSuccess Program [www.vetsuccess.gov](http://www.vetsuccess.gov), commonly referred to as the Chapter 31 Program, assists Veterans with service connected disabilities to prepare for sustainable jobs. Regional VA Employment Coordinators can link employers with Wounded Warriors at [www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/emp\\_resources.htm](http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/emp_resources.htm)

**VA Internship (Non Paid Work Experience):** The VA Funded Internship Program is available for disabled Veterans at no cost to the employer. Contact your local VA Employment Coordinator for more information. Call (202) 461-9600 or email: [vetsuccessonline@vba.va.gov](mailto:vetsuccessonline@vba.va.gov) (Sponsored by VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment)

### **Employment Information for Spouses, Transitioning Service Members, and Members of the Reserve and National Guard:**

- **Local Military Family Employment Assistance Center:** Family support service centers offer local and online employment assistance services to include resume' writing.
- **Department of Labor Veterans Employment & Training Service:** <http://www.dol.gov/vets> DOL provides Service members and Veterans assistance in preparing them to obtain meaningful careers to maximize their employment opportunities and protect employment rights.
- **Transition Assistance Program (TAP):** <http://www.turbotap.org> TAP was developed to assist transitioning military personnel and Family members who are returning to civilian life and members of the Reserve and National Guard seeking employment. TURBO Tap is a lifelong online employment assistance tool that can be utilized over and over again.
- **ESGR:** <http://esgr.org> A Department of Defense national committee that works with employers, reservists, Guardsman, military leadership, and volunteer committees to promote cooperation and understanding between reserve component members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment.

### **Examples of Other Related Community Programs:**

**American Red Cross:** The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement, will provide relief to victims of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies. <http://www.redcross.org/>

**Buffalo’s Veterans Treatment Court – Addressing Adverse Actions through Mentorships:**

Veterans and Service members experience life-changing events, some of which may cause them to react in adverse ways and get into trouble with the law. The Veterans Treatment Court in Buffalo, NY provides an effective model for addressing these transgressions, one that can and should be replicated across the country. Keys to the success of a Veterans Treatment Court include: 1) a judge who understands the unique issues that Veterans and Service members face and that specialized treatment may be needed, and 2) a mentor system comprised of mentors who understand the Veteran experience firsthand. Buffalo’s Veterans Treatment Court meets both of these criteria. [http://www.erie.gov/veterans/veterans\\_court.asp](http://www.erie.gov/veterans/veterans_court.asp)

**National Military Family Association:** The National Military Family Association is an organization with strong grassroots support balanced with professionalism that makes them a leader in the field. Not only do they support military families – they are military families. Spouses, parents, and Family members make up the staff and board of directors. They speak on behalf of military families and empower husbands, wives, and children to understand and access their benefits. <http://www.militaryfamily.org/>

**Operation Homefront:** Operation Homefront provides emergency financial and other assistance to the families of our service members and wounded warriors. Types of assistance include rent/mortgage payments, utilities, car payments and repairs, emergency food, emergency baby items, and transitional housing for Wounded Warriors. Operation Homefront provides assistance in the form of grants, not loans, paid directly to service providers like mortgage lien holders, utility companies and car mechanics. A national nonprofit, Operation Homefront leads more than 4,500 volunteers across 25 chapters and has met more than 400,000 needs since 2002. A four-star rated charity by watchdog Charity Navigator with an A rating by the American Philanthropy Institute, 94 percent of all donations to Operation Homefront goes to its programs. For more information about Operation Homefront, please visit [www.operationhomefront.net](http://www.operationhomefront.net)

**Warrior Gateway:** A nonprofit, privately funded web portal created to connect the military community with the “Sea of Goodwill”. It provides access to the largest directory of service organizations, national to local, and enables Service members and their Families Wounded Warriors, Veterans, caregivers and families of the fallen to search for services by category or location, including zip code. It also allows users to provide comments and feedback, both good and bad, on organizations and services included on the site. [www.warriorgateway.org](http://www.warriorgateway.org)

**Vets4Vets - Peer to Peer Mentorship:** Vets4Vets is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to helping Iraq and Afghanistan-era veterans to heal from the psychological injuries of war through the use of peer support. The primary goal is to help these veterans use peer support to express their emotions, manage their challenges, and ease their reintegration into society. [www.vets4vets.us](http://www.vets4vets.us)

**Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW):** Since 2004, the VFW Unmet Needs Program has dispensed more than \$4 million in grants to help 2,700 military families through emergency financial situations. The program encompasses all service personnel to include those veterans who were honorably discharged within the past 36 months. In addition, the VFW has provided more than 5.2 million free phone connections to deployed personnel and their families since 2006 and hosted 2 million military families to farewell, homecoming and other troop support events since 2007. More information can be found on the Troop Support or Family Assistance web pages at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org)

**United Service Organization (USO):** The USO is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to support the troops by providing morale, welfare and recreation-type services. The USO is a

congressionally chartered, private organization. The USO relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations, and corporations to support its activities. The USO is not part of the U.S. government, but is recognized by the Department of Defense, Congress and President of the United States, who serves as Honorary Chairman of the USO. <http://www.uso.org/>

### **WEBSITES ARE NOT ENOUGH!**

Ensure the commander lists local and national hotline phone numbers, to include suicide prevention, family crisis, domestic abuse, sexual assault, and additional services determined by key stakeholders. Commanders should research and post national and local support hotlines with ‘as of’ dates – and ensure that updates are done systematically.