



Department of Defense Military Family Readiness Council

September 22, 2020

Agenda

- **Call to Order**
- **Welcome & Opening Remarks – Chairman**
- **Administrative Items**
- **Written Public Submissions**
- **FY2020 Recommendations, Discussion, & Voting**
- **FY2021 MFRC Focus Areas, Discussion, and Selection**
- **Closing Remarks – Chairman**
- **Meeting Adjourned**

DoD MFRC Today

Mr. William G. Bushman
Chairman

17 Council Members
1 Unavailable

Support Team

Mr. William Story	Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
Mr. William Hampton	Alternate DFO
Ms. Melody McDonald	MFRC Human Resource Liaison & Logistics
Mr. Frank Emery	MFRC Travel & Logistics



Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. William G. Bushman
Chairman

Administrative Items

General Meeting Guidance

1. DoD MFRC Council

- Congressionally mandated, non-discretionary Federal Advisory Committee
- Provides independent advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Defense
- MFRC must follow guidelines established by:
 - *Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972*
 - *Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976*
 - *DoDI 5105.04, DoD Federal Advisory Committee Management Program, August 6, 2007*
- Public may provide written statements for review and consideration
- MFRC documents are available for review on the MFRC webpage

2. MFRC membership

- 18 Council Members
- 10 USC 1781a(b) (as amended)
- Only Members may deliberate and vote
- A formal motion must be made to bring an issue to a vote

3. Participation

- MFRC meetings are open to the public
- Meetings are not Town Halls unless specifically announced as such
- Advisors, substitutes for Members, and others if called upon by the Chairman

How to Contact the Military Family Readiness Council

eMail:

osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.family-readiness-council@mail.mil

Mail:

Office of Military Family Readiness Policy
Attn: Military Family Readiness Council
4800 Mark Center Drive
Suite 03G15
Alexandria, VA 22350-2300

MFRC Webpage:

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/web/mos/military-family-readiness-council>

Written Submissions

SUBJECT

FROM

[Non-DoD Source] Sgt Singh Rajinder

Rajinder Singh

Procedural Guidance

MFRC DFO

- Presentation and Voting Procedures
- Setting Priorities and Choosing Primary Offices of Responsibility
- Fiscal Year 2020 Recommendations
- Fiscal Year 2021 Focus Areas

Members Presentations, Discussion & Selection

- **10** Proposed FY2020 Recommendations for SECDEF
- **17** Proposed FY2021 Focus Area Topics

Fiscal Year 2020 Recommendations

Recommendation Presentations

1-2 Minutes per recommendation

Council deliberation

Voting

Voice Polling

FY2020 Recommendations

	Recommendations	#	Top 5
1	MFRC Response to Written Submissions (Ms. Barron)		
2	Expand the Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC) Pilot (Ms. Waters)		
3	Building Healthy Military Communities (LTG Evans)		
4	Report on Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC) Pilot (Mr. Larry)		
5	Military Childcare in the COVID environment (SMA Grinston)		
6	Changes in Dependent Health Care Systems and Implications for Military Readiness (Ms. Barron)		
7	TRICARE Provider Availability (LTG Evans)		
8	Evaluation of Standardized Healthcare and Travel Screening Processes (Mr. Larry)		
9	Access to health and mental health appointments (Ms. Razsadin)		
10	Military Children and Future Potential Recruits (LTG Evans)		

Recommendation #1: MFRC Response to Written Submissions

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron, AUSA

Recommendation: Demonstrate Council's attention to public submissions by providing dedicated time within MFRC meetings to discuss and take action on select – possibly predetermined - submissions at each meeting.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member's Intent:

Recommend additional MFRC Council meetings per year

- Hold four MFRC meetings per year
- Agenda should provide time to discuss written submissions and emerging issues
- Prior to upcoming meeting DFO will:
 - Select up to three written submission from previous MFRC meeting to discuss
 - Provide background information to inform discussion

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: (TBD)

Recommendation # 2: Expand the Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC) Pilot

Submitted by MFRC Member: Jill Waters

Recommendation: Expand the BHMC Program beyond the pilot states to reach a more encompassing group of remotely stationed soldiers and families.

Recommended Courses of Action:

1. Invite the Uniformed Services University Consortium for Health and Military Performance, the Defense-State Liaison Office, military service branches and Military OneSource to expand the Total Force Fitness Portfolio beyond the current pilot states. Additional states may be selected based on the number of military service and family members per capita as well as proximity to an active, full service military installation.
2. Promote the presence of military service members and families within civilian communities using the same platforms that are currently being used in the BHMC Pilot.
3. Educate the state and local leaders on the challenges that military service members and families face and what they can do to alleviate these to promote readiness and resiliency.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs:

- The current Building Healthy Military Communities Pilot
- Defense-State Liaison Office

Recommendation #3: Building Healthy Military Communities

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Recommendation: OSD provide a report on the BHMC pilot including approach, objectives, evaluation methods, results, and lessons learned to determine if it warrants placing additional resources and support with the goal to move it towards a permanent force multiplier in all states and territories.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member’s Intent:

- OSD provide a report on the BHMC pilot including approach, objectives, evaluation methods, results, and lessons learned to determine impact on Force readiness and resilience and potential for additional resources and support.
- Based on pilot results and potential outcomes:
- Expand and resource initiative and move it towards permanent force multiplier in all states and territories.
- Continue data collection and evaluate unrealized outcomes.
- Continue to complement and integrate into other DoD and Service readiness efforts.
- Increase awareness of military-connected population and importance of leveraging diverse partnerships.
- Continue to engage states on initiatives and partnerships.
- Continue to work with OSD to address legislative impediments.
- Bi-directional engagement and communication with the Defense State Liaison Office and the Services.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: OASD Manpower and Reserve Affairs, DHA

Recommendation #4: Report on Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC) Pilot

Submitted by MFRC Member: Mr. H.L. Larry

Recommendation:

U.S. Public Health Service provide the MFRC a report by the end of FY2021 that summarizes the abilities of the DoD, the U.S. government, and the private sector to collaborate and address critical issues and optimize Service member readiness and family resiliency.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member’s Intent:

1. Provide the MFRC with a summary of outcomes/recommendations by the end of FY2021 achieved from the BHMC Pilot that has a current expected completion date of Mar 2021.
2. Identify specific, achievable military service-level improvements to enhance outreach messages for delivery of Family Readiness Services and leverage DoD, state, or county resources through enhanced DoD/civilian connections.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: U.S. Public Health Service

Recommendation #5: Military Childcare in the COVID environment

Submitted by MFRC Member: SMA Grinston

Recommendation:

Expand Child Development Center (CDC) capacity to operate under crisis conditions and review cost structure to ensure there is not an increased burden on military families as we navigate the COVID environment.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member’s Intent:

Invite the Services, other agencies, and stakeholders to engage to develop COAs on cost and capacity.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: HQDA, DCS-G9,
AMC

Recommendation #6: Changes in Dependent Health Care Systems and Implications for Military Readiness

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron

Recommendation: Pause the transformation of the Military Health System until a clearer picture of the impact of COVID-19 on health care access can be determined. In addition, support consistency of care for EFMP families as they PCS, especially from CONUS to OCONUS.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member’s Intent:

Congress should direct MHS to study and report on the impact COVID-19 has had on access to care via TRICARE and the MTF’s. This will ensure that any gaps or unforeseen lack of care is captured and dealt with before moving ahead with MHS reform.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: (TBD)

Recommendation #7: TRICARE Provider Availability

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Recommendation: DHA update, improve, and expand TRICARE Specialty Providers especially those needed to meet EFMP Family Member needs when permanently changing of stations and when geographically dispersed.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member’s Intent:

- DHA conduct a comprehensive analysis of EFMP family member specialty care requirements in order to fully understand what is needed in the network and at MTFs to meet Soldier and Family medical needs while simultaneously expanding assignment options for Soldiers.
- DHA improve EFMP referral process and appointment scheduling with specialty care providers for EFMP family members at time of PCS. Reduce any scheduling lag for recurring appointments (e.g., every 30-days) and/or medication needs of EFMP family members at time of PCS.
- DHA conduct an analysis of options to increase and expand TRICARE network capacity to include reimbursement rates and incentives to attract and retain sufficient TRICARE and/or MTF providers to meet EFMP Family needs and geographically dispersed populations.
- DHA develop a simple user dashboard to allow Families to pin-point available specialty care services at any location. Ensure the dashboard has the ability for Families to easily communicate with the medical practitioners and ease appointing prior to permanent change of station.
- DHA provide a report to the MFRC on improvements in specialty care capability matched with EFMP Family member needs.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: Defense Health Agency (DHA).

Recommendation #8: Evaluation of Standardized Healthcare and Travel Screening Processes

Submitted by MFRC Member: Mr. H.L. Larry

Recommendation:

DHA provide the MFRC a report by the end of FY2021 evaluating projected changes to standardize healthcare/travel screening processes for service/family members.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs) – Council Member’s Intent:

1. Provide the MFRC with an evaluation/assessment by the end of FY2021 that shows change progress related to standardization of service delivery and identify the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the improvements.
2. Provide the MFRC a report of customer satisfaction by the end of FY2021 of received healthcare services, both pre- and post-standardization changes that indicates service/family member knowledge of where and how to get services, satisfaction in navigating between on-base MTF services and referrals through Tricare to off-base providers, and timeliness of service.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: DHA

Recommendation #9: Access to health and mental health appointments

Submitted by MFRC Member: Shannon Razsadin

Recommendation:

A comprehensive review of geo-specific wait times experienced by military families when trying to obtain medical appointments (including behavioral health) and distance families must travel to obtain specialty care.

Recommended Courses of Actions (COAs)- Council Member's Intent:

The Department of Defense should work with MTFs, insurers, and providers who accept Tricare and US Family Health Plan (through Tricare Prime) and dental to evaluate the time lapse between when an appointment is requested and when an appointment/preventative screening is available across all types of health care.

Briefings:

- Government Accountability Office: Authors of the following study, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/707262.pdf>
- Defense Health Agency, personnel responsible for contractor oversight
- Defense Health Agency, personnel responsible for provider screening/reimbursement rates

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: OSD, MC&FP

Recommendation #10: Military Children and Future Potential Recruits

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Recommendation:

DoD continues to look at implications of current policies that affects decisions of one of our most valuable resources (military children), as it relates to medical care, records and current policies on accessions.

Recommended Courses of Action (COAs):

- Request DoD establish an expert working group to review implication of current policies and incorporate current science to inform policy while addressing the following questions:
 - a. Do current polices recognize the unique strengths of military children or do they overly scrutinize those military children who could thrive in military service?
 - b. Do current policies reflect realities associated with increasing diagnosis of mental health and developmental disorders?
 - c. Do current polices reflect an understanding of the longitudinal course of childhood illnesses or their impact on young adult functioning?
 - d. Could current polices using children's medical records to determine fitness-for duty discourage parents from seeking help for their children?
 - e. Do historical medical records provide reliable information about prior diagnoses and accurately identify individuals who are not capable of effectively serving.

Recommended Office of Primary Responsibility for COAs: OASD Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Fiscal Year 2021 Focus Areas

Presentations

1-2 minute explanations

Discussion & selection of focus areas

FY 2021 Focus Area Topics

	Topics	#	
1	Diversity and Inclusion (CMSgt (ret) Kelly)		
2	Impact of COVID-19 on Military Child Education (Ms. Barron)		
3	Child Care for Geographically Dispersed Service Members and their Families. (LTG Evans)		
4	Lack of Progress on Implementation of Recommendations Offered by the National Academy of Sciences Report: Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society (Ms. Barron)		
5	Impact of COVID-19 on Military Child Care (Ms. Barron)		
6	Education of Military Affiliated Children (LTG Evans)		
7	Assess department-wide service delivery pivots in relation to a national pandemic/emergency (Mr. Larry)		
8	Family Support Services in the COVID-19 Environment (RDML Browne)		
9	How is COVID-19 affecting Military Families? What steps have the Services taken to mitigate and address the effects? (LTG Evans)		
10	Military Housing Privatization Problems (Ms. Barron)		
11	Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) Progress Report (LTG Evans)		
12	Spouse Education and Employment Opportunities(LTG Evans)		

FY 2021 Focus Area Topics

(continued)

	Topics	#	
13	Limited TRICARE Network in Geographic Dispersed Communities. (LTG Evans)		
14	Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) in Metropolitan Areas – Geographically dispersed. (LTG Evans)		
15	Military Family Food Insecurity (Ms. Razsadin)		
16	PCS Out of Pocket Expenses Have Sky-Rocketed During COVID-19 (Ms. Barron)		
17	Supporting Military Families through PCS transitions in EFMP families and in families with grade school children (Ms. Waters)		

Focus Area #1: Diversity and Inclusion

Submitted by MFRC Member: CMSgt (ret) Ericka Kelly, ROA

Background:

Because of the ongoing conversations in our country and our military regarding Diversity and Inclusion or the lack of, it is imperative we address the situation head on with leadership, members and their families being valued, inspired, and empowered.

Requested Briefing:

1. Invite the Services and other agencies to review, educate, and inform this council on their Diversity and Inclusion programs at the following points:
 - a. Commonalities in the different programs
 - b. Financial consequences of discrimination or perceived unfair judgement
 - c. Discipline disparities | Promotion differences
 - d. Recruiting and Retention
2. Create an evaluation and assess the effectiveness of the programs. If needed, improve interagency collaboration in the overall Diversity and Inclusion program.

Focus Area # 2: Impact of COVID-19 on Military Child Education

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron

Background: Military children face substantial challenges related to education due to COVID-19. Lack of uniformity across the country has led to confusion and frustration. Whether enrolled in DoDEA, U.S. civilian or international schools, nearly all of DoD's 1.65 million school-age military children have been adversely affected by COVID-19. Unable to attend brick-and-mortar classrooms, military children have lost the opportunity to interact with peers and receive in-person instruction from their teachers. Military parents, often already overstretched, have taken on additional educator responsibilities. This responsibility also affects female military service members and single military parents. Further, many families—particularly those moving to a new duty station—face unknown circumstances as the next school year approaches, and the threat of COVID-19 continues. While DoD provides resources to help parents supplement their child's education, such as free virtual one-on-one tutoring through Tutor.com, families are not always aware of accessing these materials. Additionally, added expenses to provide a safe learning space for a child at home increase military families' financial burdens.

Requested Briefing: Are there tools and best practices provided by DODEA, the Military Child Education, the Department of Education that can be combined to support military parents and students during the COVID -19 crisis? What is the future of tutor.com as a tool for all military family members? Is there any discussion on a COVID-19 stipend that can issued for at-home education expenses?

Focus Area # 3: Child Care for Geographically Dispersed Service Members and their Families

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- Meeting the demand for child care is a complex, multifaceted challenge, not only for military Families, but for the nation as a whole.
- Geographically dispersed service members and their Families are having difficulty finding affordable, quality child care in communities away from installations.
- DoD must continue to address child care access, especially for those who are not on or near installations. This might include higher levels of fee assistance, military Family prioritization, and/or incentives for non-DoD providers to increase their standards to meet DoD certification levels.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 4: Lack of Progress on Implementation of Recommendations Offered by the National Academy of Sciences Report: Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society (Patricia Barron)

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron

Background: The modern military family is complicated. Despite a robust portfolio of well-funded support programs provided by DoD and their agency partners, military families do not fall neatly into a single category. Two-parent married families are still the norm among military families but activated National Guard, and Reserve families face unique issues, women in the military represent between 15% and 20% of the overall military population, single-parent families represent over 5% of the current military population (Hosek, 2011) and unmarried Service Members remain a largely understudied and potentially misunderstood population. The bottom line, much like the Service Member's choice of who is their Principle Next of Kin (PNOK), "family" is whom each Service Member identifies.

Requested Briefing:

Has there been any progress in implementing any of the recommendations from the report from the National Academy of Sciences: Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society.

Focus Area # 5: Impact of COVID-19 on Military Child Care

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron

Background: Lack of military child care installation spaces and off installation options decrease military readiness. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem. Child care has always been one of the top Quality of Life issues raised to senior military leaders from within the ranks. It impacts readiness, contributes to the high percentage of military spouse unemployment, and can decrease morale. The COVID-19 pandemic has made access to installation-based care very difficult. The priority placement for children of essential personnel and dual military couples makes sense; however, as a vaccine for COVID-19 is still months away, female soldiers and employed military spouses continue to have few options. The burden of caregiving falls on them. There have been a steady decrease in Family Child Care (FCC) homes across the services. COVID-19 has all but eliminated this option. Civilian communities are also facing a child care crisis. COVID-19 has caused havoc on availability. Center for Disease Control guidelines and business closures have created a sharp decline in options. Therefore, military families also face a lack of child care outside the gate.

Requested Briefing:

An update from the services on the status of military child care is needed. Is there an option to use Fee Assistance dollars for nannies or au pairs? Additionally, a presentation from Child Care Aware of America on the future status of child care availability would be beneficial to set the stage and guide the conversation.

Focus Area # 6: Education of Military Affiliated Children.

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- DoDEA is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating, and managing prekindergarten through 12th grade educational programs on behalf of the Department of Defense.
- They ensure that all school-aged children of military families are provided a world-class education, through the 160 schools they operate.
- DoD, in coordination with the Services, needs to clarify the roles and responsibilities of DoD and the Military Services as it relates to the education of military children who do not attend DoDEA schools.
- Federal Impact Aid for Education is underfunded and not necessarily used in direct support of students it's intended to support.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 7: Assess department-wide service delivery pivots in relation to a national pandemic/emergency

Submitted by MFRC Member: Mr. H.L. Larry

Background: Develop a quantitative analysis, including customer perspectives related to knowledge of availability and access to Family Readiness Services as a result of a national pandemic and/or emergency that sustains across time.

- Varied responses to COVID-19 and HPCON implementation shifted the paradigm of traditional brick and mortar facilities providing Family Readiness Services and introduced a majority of virtually offered services
- Analysis should include a review of all DoD policies/instructions that incorporate public law into requirements and further DoD mandates to ensure military services retain flexibility in service delivery shifts brought on by a national level disaster that is longitudinal in nature (e.g. COVID-19)
- Investigate forward-looking hybrid models of service delivery, such as bolstering departmental IT platforms or online service delivery capabilities, and synchronize an education culture for recipients of Family Readiness Services to enhance service/family member readiness/resiliency

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 8: Family Support Services in the COVID-19 Environment

Submitted by MFRC Member: RDML Browne

Background: Military families serve right along with their military member and it is very important to empower families with access to support programs and services, when they need them. This is especially important during the COVID-19 crisis. Access to services such as non-medical counseling and Psychological Readiness resources are critical when in-person services are unavailable at local Family Support Centers.

Requested Briefing:

Invite the Services and other agencies to educate and inform the MFRC on the virtual services developed to support military families in the COVID-19 environment.

Information should include the following topics:

- a. COVID-19 Resources
- b. Virtual Classes
- c. Counseling Services
- d. Children/Youth Services
- e. Exceptional Family Members Services
- f. Morale Welfare and Recreation
- g. Fitness and Nutrition
- h. Lessons Learned and Best Practices

Focus Area # 9: How is COVID-19 affecting Military Families? What steps have the Services taken to mitigate and address the effects?

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- Understand the long term effects of the national crises on the health of Military Families due to the novel coronavirus pandemic.
- Share best DoD and Service specific
- It is seldom mentioned, but Military spouses and Family members have been subject to the same job losses, mental and financial wellbeing, virtual education, and limited child care options as other Americans amid this pandemic. All of this has only been heightened by the loss of local social connections due to frequent moves, separations, and normal hardships that Military Families experience as part of military life.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 10: Military Housing Privatization Problems

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron

Background: In December of 2018, the issue of unsafe military housing exploded in the media and on Capitol Hill. As a result, all the Service Secretaries, Service Chiefs of Staff, and heads of the companies involved in the Military Housing Privatized Initiative were called by Congress to fix the problem. Although much has been accomplished military families continue to face difficulties with accepting homes sight unseen, lack of providing maintenance records to the prospective renter before signing a lease, signing non-disclosure agreements as part of the rental agreement, and more importantly, living in military housing that contains mold and other health hazards.

Requested Briefing:

Ask the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for Sustainment to brief the MFRC on the MHPI Tenant Bill of Rights status and provide examples of where it has been successful and where challenges remain.

Focus Area # 11: Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) Progress Report

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- DSLO provide updates on the progress made of key issues and priorities of the current and future years with special emphasis on spouse license reciprocity.
- MFRC, DoD and Services continue work with DSLO on key issues.
- Although we have made great progress, there is much more work to be done. Our Military Service members and Families should not be negatively impacted by state boundaries and state laws as they PCS from one duty station to another.
- DSLO should continue to work with states and other direct services organizations that can assist and support our efforts, focus on issues that affect Families.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 12: Spouse Education and Employment Opportunities

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- DoD and Services must continue to work and collaborate to break down barriers that limit spouse education and employment opportunities for military spouses at all locations.
- DoD must continue to address professional licensing and credentials that are used by many of our military spouses as they PCS with their Service member.
- Continue to examine educational benefits to gain a deeper understanding of how they affect Service and Family member readiness.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 13: Limited TRICARE Network in Geographic Dispersed Communities

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- Geographically dispersed Service members and their Families report that an increasing number of physicians and specialists are not accepting TRICARE, especially in rural areas. It is attributed to a low reimbursement rate.
- This becomes a readiness issue if Soldiers and Families are not able to get the quality of care they need and deserve.
- TRICARE must explore ways to maintain/increase their provider base and acceptance level, especially in areas away from installations and rural communities.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 14: Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) in Metropolitan Areas – Geographically dispersed

Submitted by MFRC Member: LTG Evans

Background:

- Geographically dispersed service members and their Families report the current BAH is not covering their housing, especially those stationed in metropolitan areas away from installations.
- DoD must ensure that the DoD BAH covers adequate, safe housing for service members and their Families.

Requested Briefing: TBD

Focus Area # 15: Military Family Food Insecurity

Submitted by MFRC Member: Ms. Razsadin

Background:

Assess food insecurity force-wide by evaluating active duty military families' ability to obtain enough food for the whole family unit, including all military dependents.

Requested Briefing: The DoD should revisit food insecurity among military families and optimize/develop support services accordingly. Invite the following offices to brief:

- USDA (Matthew Rabbitt, Ph.D., Economist): Understanding the USDA Six-Item Short Form Food Security Scale and identifying a path forward for accurate measurement of food security among actively serving military families, as well as determining the impact of food insecurity on decisions to reenlist.
- DHA: Update on DHA's exploration of food insecurity among service members.
- MC&FP: Use of food pantries and food services at MWR locations.
- DoDEA: How DoDEA is tracking military-connected student enrollment in free and reduced- price meals programs
- Evaluate where military families fall on the poverty line by including total dependents

Focus Area # 16: PCS Out of Pocket Expenses Have Sky-Rocketed During COVID-19

Submitted by MFRC Member: Patricia Barron

Background: According to a national Military Advisory Network report, military families spend an average of \$5,000 on out of pocket expenses for a PCS move. During COVID-19 these expenses have increased. Families tend to pay additional costs due to quarantine requirements, shipping of household pets using pet shipping companies (airlines are not allowing pets to travel with their families), pre-move in fees before moving into rental homes when on-post housing availability is low (perhaps caused by SM's opting to stay in place for an additional year due to COVID-19) and so on. On top of all these challenges, reimbursement of authorized PCS expenses continues to be slow.

Requested Briefing:

What is being done by DFAS to speed up reimbursement of authorized PCS expenses, and is it possible to add a COVID-19 stipend of some amount to families who PCS during the pandemic? (make it retro-active).

Focus Area # 17: Supporting Military Families through PCS transitions in EFMP families and families with grade school children

Submitted by MFRC Member: Ms. Jill Waters

Background:

- 1. Supporting EFMP families through PCS** -Point of Contacts, liaisons or other ways to assist with finding providers/therapies to streamline the transition to a new duty station, assist with school advocacy (IEP, 505 plans) and avoid interruptions in these areas.
- 2. Easing transitions for grade school children during PCS** -children attending school off post have difficulties from enrolling to transferring curriculum. School districts require different documents for enrolling, have vastly differing curriculum and parents are often trying to overcome these hurdles mid school year. How can we help with this transition?

Requested Briefing: TBD



Closing Remarks

DoD MFRC Chairman

Next Meeting

December 2020