

Who Needs a Family Care Plan?

To maintain readiness among Airmen in today's Expeditionary Air Force, each member has to be deployable 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To meet this challenge, all members must be prepared to ensure adequate care of their families while we are deployed. This task is especially challenging for military members married to military members and single-parent military members with minor children. This is why members in these categories must have a Family Care Plan, a requirement for all active duty members, Guardsmen and active or inactive Reservists.

The family care plan provides guidance for caregivers during mobilization. It helps guardians and others with care for financial, legal and medical needs. Family Care Plans alleviate some of the pressures involved in deployment, mobilization, training and other situations that take military members away from their families. These plans also include forms, instructions for care, legal authorizations and information on the people involved in making the plan work. With no time to prepare a Family Care Plan in the midst of departure, it is essential to have a plan ready before mobilization, temporary duty or a deployment occur.

Active duty members, guardsmen or active or inactive reservists in any branch of service who are married to someone in any of these categories, this requirement are required to have this plan on file. It also applies to those who are single military parents of minor children. With the ever-increasing power of MilPDS, commander's support staff now has visibility over all guardsmen and geservists. This allows first sergeants to determine who requires a Family Care Plan. For questions, contact your first sergeant.

Proportional per diem rates explained

BY 1ST LT. MICHELLE L. GOMBAR

377th Comptroller Squadron

The proportional per diem rate for Air Force temporary duty travelers continues to be audited by the Audit Agency with unfavorable findings. PPD was implemented to simplify the travel process and was created to bring uniformity between officers and enlisted per diem, remove meal counting for determining per diem and to coincide with a reduction in surcharge at military dining facilities. PPD is approved by the orders approving official, based on the availability of government meals at the TDY location. The orders must state the payable meal rate. If the order does not state the payable rate then the member is reimbursed the locality full per diem rate.

For officer and enlisted military members:

Review your orders prior to your TDY to verify available and authorized meals for your particular location. Many installations allow officers and enlisted to eat at the dining facility when TDY. You can check these rates on an Air Force published directory that provides a listing of installations and the availability of Government Mess. The web site is www.dtic.mil/perdiem/afman34-255-c.pdf.

For approving officials and military members: (further references AFI 65-103 - Temporary Duty Orders)

Much of the responsibility rests with approving officials. Ensure the PPD information is being checked before signing travel orders. Great news for Kirtland AFB is that the Defense Travel System allows you to cut down on inaccurate payments and enforces the use of proportional per diem. The system automatically places members at proportional per diem unless changed for mission requirements. But the member must be sure to select the military installation where they are going TDY rather than the city.

An excellent link for additional proportional per diem is www.dtic.mil/perdiem/propfaq.

Here is additional information on which finance has received many inquires:

AFI65-103 23 FEBRUARY 2001 - Attachment 2: Proportional Per Diem Guide (page 65).

Civilians may not be required to eat in a military dining facility but may eat in dining facilities if they wish. Their per diem is reduced to the PPD rate or the government rate if they consume meals in a government mess and they must claim the meals on their travel voucher.

Both civilians and military are subject to lower per diem, as applicable, if meals are provided in conjunction with a conference, exercise or deployment. If all three meals are provided, the incidental rate applies.

Highland Cluster Schools District parent survey results released at town hall meeting

BY MAJ. LISA MCCOLGAN

377th Comptroller Squadron

Senior Kirtland AFB leadership will join with principals from the Albuquerque Public Schools Highland Cluster to present the results of a recent parent survey to TEAM KIRTLAND. A Town Hall meeting will be held Sept. 22 at 6 p.m., in the Rio Grande Community Center to discuss areas of parental interest and the way ahead.

The survey was conducted in July and August to provide insight to the perceptions of parents with students attending or living within the Highland Cluster district. Survey analysts said responses,

1,078 mail and 309 online, showed parents provided high-quality input.

The results showed parents focused mostly on "academic rigor," safety and discipline policies and communication. Communication challenges hinder positive dialogue and information exchanges which result in parents relying on perceptions and word of mouth to guide much of their decision-making on education. The town hall will showcase the district's ongoing strategies in parents' areas of concern, as well as future plans to improve communication and better informing parents about matters including safety and academics in the Highland Cluster.

Remember rules regarding political activities

Military people and civilians are reminded by Defense officials in this election year to observe rules regulating their involvement in political activities.

Two sets of rules help keep the military out of partisan politics and ensure the workplace is politically neutral:

- DOD Directive 1344.10 for active-duty military
- The Hatch Act for federal civilians

Both groups can:

- Register to vote as they choose
- Urge others to vote
- Sign nominating petitions for candidates

- Express their personal opinions about candidates and issues only if they don't do so as representatives of the armed forces

All DOD workers are prohibited from:

- Using their position to influence/benefit from elections
- Engaging in political activity on the job, in a government vehicle or while wearing an official uniform

Beyond these general guidelines, the list of restrictions varies widely, depending on whether the employee is on active duty, is a rank-and-file civil servant, is a political appointee or is in the career senior executive service.



Courtesy photo

Generals Jumper and Martin at AF Lab exhibit

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper, left, pauses with Air Force Materiel Command commander General Gregory "Speedy" Martin in front of the Air Force Research Laboratory corporate exhibit during the Air Force Association's annual exhibition in Washington D.C. this week. State of the art technologies were showcased at the Research Laboratory's exhibit including research ongoing at Kirtland AFB by the Directed Energy and Space Technology Directorates, two of the nine directorates that were present at the event.

Trespass notice for Kirtland AFB firing ranges

The following areas are **OFF LIMITS** to all personnel at all times unless on official business by Kirtland Air Force Base personnel **ONLY** coordinated through Combat Arms.

The Combat Arms facility (including a 850 meter Surface Danger Zone) is located at Bldg. 706, South gate road located near the south gate of Kirtland AFB.

The Security Forces special weapons range is located in Frustration Canyon approximately 2 miles Southeast of the Star Fire Optical Center in the Coyote Canyon area including the 4300m Surface Danger Zone around the impact area of Mt. Washington (includes the Manzano Fire Lookout Tower.)

CAUTION: All hikers and bike riders entering the Surface Danger Zone during weapons firing are at risk from potential life threatening hazards caused by secondary fragmentation. All entrances and boundaries are marked with signs trespassing signs.

Privately owned weapons are not allowed in these areas. Anyone illegally entering these areas will be held liable for their actions. Trespassing is not only illegal but is also extremely dangerous due to no-notice live firing and hazards inherent to ranges.

If any questions please contact Combat Arms at 246-6102.

(Courtesy of the 377th Security Forces Squadron)