

**STATE OF OHIO
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT
2825 West Granville Road
Columbus, Ohio 43235-2712**

AGO REGULATION
No. 600-12 (Army)
211-1 (Air)

1 December 2003

OHIO NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM

Local supplementation of this regulation is prohibited.

1. REFERENCES.

- a. DA Pam 608-47
- b. NGR 600-12
- c. AGOR 600-8-22 (Army)
- d. AGOR 900-1 (Air)

2. PURPOSE. The purpose of this regulation is to establish policies, procedures, and assign responsibilities necessary to implement, and maintain a working Family Readiness Program for the Ohio National Guard (ONG.)

3. DEFINITIONS.

a. Family Readiness refers to the contractual obligation that the military has to its members and their families, and is provided primarily by uniformed members and civilian volunteers.

b. Family support refers to the help and emotional support that family members provide for each other (the volunteer side of the military/family partnership).

4. SCOPE. This regulation is applicable to all members of the Ohio Army and Air National Guard and their families.

5. OBJECTIVES. The objectives of the Ohio National Guard Family Readiness Program (ONGFRP) are to:

- a. Provide communication between the unit, service members, and their families.

***This regulation supercedes AGOR 600-12 (Army), 1 Oct 99**

- b. Improve awareness and understanding of the military unit, its mission, training and operations.
- c. Educate family members on the benefits and entitlements available before, during, and after mobilization.
- d. Provide assurance to service members that their families will have the support and assistance they may need during their absence.
- e. Provide a network through which families mutually support each other.
- f. Encourage participation of the family members in activities that support the unit.
- g. Provide policy and guidelines to commanders concerning the ONGFRP.
- h. Provide essential services to families upon mobilizations in designated Family Assistance Centers (FACs).
- i. Develop programs that improve the quality of life for the service member and his/her family.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES. a. **Director of Joint Operations.** The Director of Joint Operations shall:

- (1) Provide program guidance and monitor the implementation of the ONGFRP.
- (2) Encourage command support of the ONGFRP at all levels.
- (3) Ensure compliance with NGR 600-12 (Army), 211-1 (Air), the National Guard Family Program, and this regulation.

b. **Family Readiness Officer.** The Family Readiness Officer shall:

- (1) Oversee the overall operation of the ONGFRP within the state.
- (2) Serve as a liaison between the Family Readiness Council (FRC) and the Adjutant General as needed.
- (3) Ensure that fiscal and manpower resource requirements for the ONGFRP are identified.
- (4) Encourage command support of the ONGFRP at all levels of command.
- (5) Establish policies and procedures for the operation of the ONGFRP.

(6) Implement an awards program to recognize the efforts and valuable contributions of volunteers and other personnel who support the program.

(7) Train volunteers to be effective FRG officers and leaders.

c. **State Family Program Coordinator (SFPC).** The SFPC shall:

(1) Oversee and manage the day to day operation of the ONGFRP.

(2) Identify and disseminate information and resource requirements to support the program.

(3) Serve as the ONGFRP liaison to military and civilian agencies involved in providing resources and support for the program.

(4) Evaluate family needs and concerns as identified through command channels, retention, personnel, and family member input.

(5) Serve as the state point of contact for any program requests/updates from higher headquarters.

(6) Manage ONGFRP appropriated funds as the Program Manager. Account for and report all expenditures within the program.

d. **Family Readiness Council (FRC).** Appointed by the Adjutant General, the FRC is an advisory committee comprised of volunteer members and family readiness coordinators representing both Army and Air Guard families. Army Guard FRC members are volunteers who also serve as regional representatives for each of the eight regions as identified on the Army Guard recruiting regional map. Air Guard FRC members are either volunteers or Air Guard Wing Family Readiness Coordinators. Each Army Guard regional representative and Air Guard Wing representative provide the critical link between the FRC and the Family Readiness Groups in their geographic area of responsibility. FRC members shall:

(1) Serve as liaisons between the Adjutant General and the civilian volunteers in the State Family Program.

(2) Identify resource requirements and training needs and report them to the SFPC.

(3) Keep FRGs informed and provide training and assistance to the FRGs as needed.

e. **Commanders.** Command support is essential for the success and advancement of the ONGFRP.

- (1) Commanders at all levels shall:
 - (a) Implement the program.
 - (b) Appoint, in writing, a unit Family Readiness Liaison Officer (may be an officer, warrant officer, or non-commissioned officer).
 - (c) Ensure that Family Care Plans are completed as required.
 - (d) Ensure that DD Forms 1172 are completed and dependent ID cards (DA Forms 5431/AF Form 441 or DD Form 1173-1) are issued to family members.
 - (e) Invite family members to attend the annual unit mobilization briefing.
 - (f) Emphasize the importance of the family and the FRG to unit readiness and retention.
 - (g) Seek the input of the FRG leader, and treat the FRG leader as part of his/her special staff.
 - (h) Support FRG activities listed on AGOH Form 600-12, ANNEX A.
 - (i) Submit an annual report, NLT 1 FEB to the SFPC (see ANNEX A).
- (2) Commanders are authorized to support the unit FRG by providing:
 - (a) Office space, including a desk, office supplies, use of copiers, official telephone lines, stationery supplies, typewriters, computers, and dining facilities.
 - (b) Use of the armory for FRG meetings and official ONGFRP functions. Since the FRG is an authorized function of the National Guard, the use of the armory is authorized without rental costs or liability insurance, with approval of the Armory Board. Some restrictions apply.
 - (c) Access to mailing/alert rosters for official business.
 - (d) Postage and mail supplies for official correspondence.
 - (e) Bus support, if available and approved by the unit and battalion commander.
 - (f) Recognition of volunteers. Recognition may include, but is not limited to, awards such as the Ohio Commendation Medal, Certificates, coins of excellence, etc.
 - (g) Authorization and support for off-site activities which includes the entire family unit.

f. **Family Readiness Liaison Officer (FRLO).** The FRLO shall:

- (1) Serve as the family readiness point of contact for the unit commander.
- (2) Coordinate all military support required by the FRG for special activities and programs.
- (3) Report to the commander on FRG activities, concerns, and issues.
- (4) Inform the FRG of the commander's guidance and decision concerning support initiatives.
- (5) Prepare and distribute FRG officer appointment memoranda.

g. **National Guard Members.** National Guard members shall:

- (1) Provide the unit information concerning the status of their family.
- (2) Keep appropriate mobilization documents and required emergency data updated in the unit personnel files.
- (3) Support the ONGFRP by keeping their family members informed of unit activities, training, and deployments.

h. **Family Readiness Groups (FRG's)**

(1) FRGs are officially sanctioned organizations of officer and enlisted personnel and their family members that use volunteers to provide information. FRG comprises a support network to provide information and prepare families for times of separation due to mobilization. The FRG is a program for families and should be managed by families with command approval and support. All members are equal in the FRG, without regard to the military rank structure of their spouse. Effective communication between the military chain of command, the Family Readiness Program Office, Regional Representatives or Wing Coordinators, and Family Readiness Groups is essential to the success of the program.

(2) Organization. The internal organizational structure and management of a unit FRG shall be at the discretion of its members, with command input. The FRG should be a well-designated and carefully organized operation that is not dependent on one or two volunteers to develop and maintain the program. Preferably, the FRG officers (i.e. leader, secretary, treasurer, etc.) are elected by the group members. However, the unit commander may choose to appoint and/or remove FRG officers as he or she deems necessary. Terms of one or two years should be defined prior to holding an officer election. Preferably, the number of terms that a volunteer may serve will not be limited.

(3) Membership. Membership is voluntary. Members may include the Guard member's spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, boy/girl friends, etc. Guard members, retirees, and community members are highly encouraged to participate in the FRG, but may not hold appointed or elected officer positions. Anyone who supports the unit can join the FRG. Although some family members may choose not to participate directly, they shall be kept informed by command letters (newsletters), telephone, or outreach visits to ensure contact.

(4) The ONGFRP, by ensuring FRGs exist and that FRG leaders are trained, can:

(a) Foster communication between families and military members. This lends a sense of security that there is help available to the families in times of separation or crisis.

(b) Increase family knowledge about the mission of the unit, the service member's duty, the military way of life, and the benefits of military service.

(c) Provide feedback from the families to the unit, and provide information to families regarding mobilization and what to expect from the military.

(5) Objectives of a FRG should be to:

(a) Provide a network through which families mutually support each other.

(b) Provide communications between the unit, service members, and their family members.

(c) Improve awareness and understanding of the military unit, its mission, training, and operations.

(d) Educate family members on the benefits and entitlements available before, during, and after mobilization.

(e) Encourage participation of the family members in activities that support the unit and community.

(f) Provide assurance to service members that their families will have the support and assistance they may need in their absence.

(g) Assist in providing outreach and information to unit family members in the event of deployment.

(h) Be prepared for mobilization.

i. **Volunteers & FRG Officers.** The FRG only exists and functions because of volunteers. The volunteer is the only resource without which the FRG can not operate.

(1) The unit commander will ensure that volunteers fully understand the job for which they have volunteered, and approve the appointment or election of FRG officers through a memorandum.

(2) Individuals volunteering for positions within the FRG will complete a Volunteer Agreement Form to be kept on file at the unit.

(3) Copies of the above documents will be forwarded to the SFPC to be maintained in the ONGFRP files.

(4) Officer positions within the FRG preferably include, but are not limited to, Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor. A brief duty description of each officer position is provided in Annex B. Fulfillment of these duties will vary dependant upon the time the volunteers have to invest in the program. The position duty descriptions in Annex B are guidelines and may be adapted to each FRGs needs.

7. NEWSLETTERS AND TRAINING. Knowledge and information about the ONG is the most frequently expressed concern of Guard families. A well-informed family is committed and supportive of the Guard member. Educating families is the foundation and framework for establishing and maintaining a quality citizen/service member and family in the ONG.

a. Newsletter. Each unit, either individually or through its FRG, will publish as a minimum, a quarterly newsletter to be mailed to each member's home. The newsletter should provide information relating to the family care plans, DEERS enrollment, family tree, upcoming unit events, training requirements, family briefings, FRG activities, etc. Commanders are encouraged to assist FRG's in publishing FRG newsletters by providing mailing lists, postage, command articles, etc. In the event a unit is mobilized, the FRG will publish active duty benefits, updates, and changes necessary to keep families informed.

b. Training. The State Family Readiness Office and the FRC will conduct training through seminars, workshops, and conferences at unit, area, or state level, contingent upon budget constraints. Topics covered should include, but are not limited to:

- (1) FRG organization and operation.
- (2) Volunteer management.
- (3) Readiness Issues: Family Care Plans, DEERS enrollment, Family Tree.
- (4) Community resources, guest speakers.
- (5) Benefits; education, retirement, social security.
- (6) Recruitment of new family members to participate in FRG functions and unit affairs.

(7) Resources and key personnel available to FRGs.

8. **AWARDS.** Outstanding and dedicated service toward the advancement of the ONGFRP and unit FRG'S should and will be recognized. Family members, Guard members, retirees, and other committed individuals often selflessly give their time and energy in support of the ONGFRP. Such generous individuals must be identified and properly recognized. Therefore, a Family Readiness Awards Program to recognize such individuals at the state level will be enforced. Family Readiness award descriptions can be found in AGOR 600-8-22 (Army), AGOR 900-1 (Air). Nominations are due annually, on February 1. Each company, battalion, and/or wing should also strive to recognize valuable volunteer participants as well. The State Family Readiness Office alone cannot identify and properly recognize all who deserve recognition. It is imperative that we acknowledge volunteers at every level.

9. **FUNDRAISING.** FRG's are encouraged to conduct fundraising events to raise funds to support the financial goals of the group. Preferably, the funds raised by the FRG should be used to support morale-building events for both service members and family members.

a. The Federal Tax Exempt number for the Ohio National Guard may be used to purchase items that are being released directly to the family members and/or service members. However, tax exemption does not apply to items being purchased to support fundraising activities. For example, a FRG can use the tax-exempt number to purchase items for a "free" hot dog stand at range fire, whereby the FRG is supporting troop morale. If the same FRG wants to set up a hot dog stand for the purpose of selling hot dogs to make a profit, they may not use the tax-exempt number.

b. FRG funds are not considered "not for profit" and should be managed as "informal funds" as outlined in DA Pam 608-47. The guideline established for "informal funds" also apply to Air National Guard FRG's as well.

c. The FRG fund will not exceed \$1,000 unless designated and budgeted for a special event, such as a deployed unit homecoming party, and approved in writing by the battalion commander. If the battalion commander provides a special approval for funds that exceed the \$1,000 ceiling, the FRG treasurer should assure that those funds are spent not later than thirty days from the day the event is held. (Note: FRG must not develop the mindset of holding money in the FRG account just for a rainy day. The reason for fund raising activities is to conduct programs, activities, and training for unit family members to prepare them for times of separation due to mobilization. Putting money in an "old sock" and just keeping it there is NOT the function or goal of the FRG.)

d. At least two different family members should be listed on the signature card for each FRG bank account. Financial reports should be given each FRG meeting. The FRG members should collectively agree when, where, and how the fund raising dollars will be spent.

e. Individual families may not benefit from the FRG funds. Outside agencies are available to assist individual hardships. The unit may choose to announce unusual circumstances (i.e. a

household fire whereby the family loses everything and had no insurance) and offer to “pass the hat” or donate to that individual situation. This should not be done, however, without prior consent from the family in need.

10. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.** The ONGFRP will be free of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religious or political preference of affiliation, sex, age, or handicap. Family members who believe they have been discriminated against are urged to contact the State Family Readiness Office or Human Relations/Equal Opportunity Office to pursue appropriate recourse.

11. **RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR QUESTIONS.** Recommendations for improvement to or questions about the ONGFRP should be directed to: The Adjutant General of Ohio, ATTN: AGOH-JO-FR, 2825 West Dublin Granville Road, Columbus, Ohio 43235-2712, or telephone 800-589-9914, (614) 336-7192, or DSN: 273-7192.

AGOH-JO-FR

BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR:



JOHN H. SMITH
Major General
The Adjutant General

ANNEX A – AGOH FORM 600-12, FAMILY READINESS ANNUAL REPORT
ANNEX B – POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

DISTRIBUTION:
AD

Annex A

FAMILY READINESS ANNUAL REPORT

UNIT _____ BATTALION/BASE _____ DATE _____

COMMANDER'S NAME _____

FAMILY READINESS GROUP (FRG) LEADER'S NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE _____

MILITARY LIAISON, RANK, NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE _____

DATE OF LAST FAMILY READINESS BRIEFING _____

NUMBER OF ASSIGNED UNIT MEMBERS _____

NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS _____

NUMBER OF UNIT MEMBERS REQUIRING FAMILY CARE PLAN _____

FRG SECRETARY'S NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE _____

FRG TREASURER'S NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE _____

LIST YOUR UPCOMING FRG EVENTS (DESCRIPTION, DATE, TIME) _____

WHO IS YOUR REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE? _____

WHAT IS THE CURRENT BALANCE IN YOUR FSG FUND? _____

HAS THE COMMANDER RECEIVED AN ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FROM THE FRG IN THE LAST YEAR? _____

PLEASE LIST FRG MEMBERS THAT HAVE BEEN AWARDED OR ACKNOWLEDGED FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION WITH YOUR UNIT 2002: _____

PLEASE INDICATE IF YOUR FAMILY READINESS GROUP SPONSORS:

_____ TELEPHONE TREE

_____ SPONSORSHIP FOR
NEWCOMERS

_____ ANNUAL BRIEFING

_____ READINESS CHECKLIST

_____ MILITARY LIAISON

_____ FRG EVENTS

_____ TREASURER

_____ FUND RAISERS

_____ FAMILY READINESS GROUP
LEADER (CHAIRPERSON)

_____ ANNUAL TRAINING SOCIAL
FUNCTION

_____ NEWSLETTER

_____ E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

_____ DEPLOYMENT WELCOME/
SEND-OFF

_____ WEB PAGE

_____ FAMILY DAYS

_____ FAMILY READINESS
CONFERENCE

_____ BENEFIT BRIEFINGS

**IG CHECKLIST: DO YOU HAVE THE
FOLLOWING ON FILE?**

_____ IDENTIFYING RETENTION
ISSUES

_____ NGR 600-12

_____ UNIT OPEN HOUSE

_____ AGOR 600-12

_____ ADVERTISING &
AWARENESS

_____ DD 1172s for Dependents

_____ RECRUITING MEMBERS

_____ DA PAM 608-47 (for Army)

PLEASE LIST OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT YOU HAVE SPONSORED IN THE PAST YEAR THAT
ARE NOT ON THE CHECKLIST:

Military Family Support Liaison Officer
Signature

Family Readiness Group Leader
Signature

ANNEX B

Family Readiness Group Position Descriptions

The following position descriptions best define the rolls of each volunteer officer selected within the Family Readiness Group. These position descriptions should be thought of as a working document and may be tailored to each individual group to some measure. Key roles and responsibilities however, should remain with the leadership position as stated below. Additional committees are encouraged, and may be formed to facilitate special events, such as a holiday party or a unit welcome home.

Leader (FRGL)

- Create meeting agendas prior to scheduled meetings.
- Act as the communication link between the FRG and the military liaison.
- Facilitate the meetings.
- Secure the meeting time, place, and space.
- Identify and secure support resources for FRG meetings/activities.
- Provide commanders' guidance/intent to the FRG.
- Attend annual training workshops, and/or regional workshops.
- Promote volunteer recognition at the unit level.
- Promote family member education and communication.
- Communicate with Regional Coordinator and/or Family Assistance Center POC.
- Promote awareness of the FRG and your leadership position with the soldiers.
- Promote a positive/professional image of the National Guard to the community.
- Display a positive/professional image of self to unit, family members, and community.
- Ensure the annual report is turned into Family Readiness Office, NLT 1 Feb.
- Email address is necessary for current and up to date information during deployments.
- Familiarize self with program regulations.

Secretary (FRGS)

- Keep the family phone tree up to date.
- Keep Privacy Act (PA) release statements of unit personnel on file at the unit.
- Forward copy of privacy act release statements to the State Family Readiness Office.
- Create, edit, publish, and mail/distribute the unit FRG newsletter. (unless you have a newsletter editor appointed.)
- Record and publish meeting minutes for each FRG meeting.
- Mail/email any special events, publications, etc.

Treasurer (FRGT)

- Open/establish informal fund bank account with two FRG signatures and easy accessibility.
- Maintain records clearly showing fund raising, expenditures, and misc expenses.
- Provide statement of account to commander annually, FRG monthly.
- Keep and balance FRG account statements for review/audit at the discretion of the commander.
- Be familiar with DA PAM 608-47, 3-7.
- Count cash collections, on site, with two additional FRG members as witnesses.
- Provide balance of FRG account annually to FRGL for inclusion into the annual report due to the state program office, NLT 1 Feb.

Newsletter Editor (FRGE)

- Create, edit, publish, and mail/distribute the unit FRG newsletter.
- Release quarterly newsletters during peacetime, monthly newsletters during deployment.