

## **ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN (AFAP)**

- **BLUF**: AFAP is the Army's grassroots process to identify and elevate the most significant quality of life issues impacting Active and Reserve Component Soldiers, Retirees, Department of Army (DA) Civilians, and Families to senior leaders for action.
- Leaders believe improving standards of living for Soldiers and Families directly influences recruitment and retention decisions and makes the Army a better place to live and work.
- The AFAP creates an information loop between the global Army Family and leadership and is a powerful tool for Soldiers, Retirees, DA Civilians, Families and leaders.
- Information provided through the AFAP process gives commanders and leaders insight into current satisfaction detractors, quality of life needs, and expectations of Army constituents. Leadership uses the information to effect changes that improve standards of living and support programs. These changes foster a satisfied, informed, and resilient Army Community.
- AFAP engages Army leadership at all levels. The AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) consisting of General Officer and Senior Executive Service Army members serves as the review board to ensure that AFAP issues are thoroughly worked to resolution by the appropriate functional proponent. The GOSC is chaired by the Vice Chief of Staff, Army (VSCA) who leads discussion, and determines the final issue resolution.
- Results include 123 legislative changes, 172 Army and Office of the Secretary of Defense policies changed, and 192 changes to programs and services.

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- At the January 2010 HQDA AFAP Conferences, delegates from all Army demographics reviewed 64 issues and identified 16 for adoption into the AFAP. The 5 top issues as voted by the delegates:
  - Provide a monthly stipend to ill/injured Soldiers for non-medical caregivers.
  - Fund service dogs for Wounded Warriors.
  - Provide for behavioral health services shortages by increasing the number of readily available behavioral health providers and services and the use of alternative methods of delivery such as tele-medicine.
  - Authorize Family Readiness Groups to fundraise in public places external to National Guard armories, Reserve centers, and military installations.
  - Authorize reserve-component Soldiers enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program.

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**Q: Is there a way for Soldiers and their Families to raise issues about their quality of life to Army leadership?**

**A:** The Army Family Action Plan is a year-round process that begins at the installation or unit level to identify, prioritize, and resolve issues impacting quality of life in the Army. The AFAP process allows Soldiers and Families to tell leadership what is working, what is not - AND what they think will fix it. It is the preeminent means for commanders at all levels to learn of and seek solutions to the concerns of their communities. The Army is the only Service with a program like AFAP.

**Q: Where can I learn about AFAP?**

**A:** Each component and command has an identified program manager who monitors the solutions to issues. The [www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com) website contains the latest issue updates, in the “Family Programs and Services” section.

**Q: Why does the Army invest in a program like AFAP?**

**A:** Leadership supports AFAP because they see that the issues that go through the process have a direct impact on the Total Army Family and the current environment. Leaders believe that improving standards of living directly influences recruitment and retention decisions, and makes the Army a better place to live and work.

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### **Q: What are some results from the AFAP process?**

**A:** A few examples are: Pay table reform (Soldiers), Dental and Vision Insurance Coverage for Federal Employees (Civilian Employees), Family Readiness Group Support Assistants, TRICARE for Life (retirees), Teen Program Standardization (teens), and Surveillance Equipment in Childcare Centers. Specific Public Law (PL) changes include: PL 110-314 (Higher Education Opportunity Act) Mandates states charge no more than in-state tuition rates for military personnel and their dependents, effective July 2009, PL 110-245 (Heroes Earning Assistance and Relief Act of 2008) Tax credit for employers who pay a salary differential to mobilized reservists, Executive Order (spouse employment) Noncompetitive appointment authority for spouses of active duty (AD), disabled service members (SM) and unremarried widow/widower of a SM killed on AD, Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 Distribution of Montgomery GI Bill benefits (MGIB) to dependents MGIB for Veterans Education Assistance Program Era Soldiers MGIB expiration date, FY09 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Paternity leave Chiropractic treatment for active duty Professional weight allowance for military Spouses Education and training for portable careers for military Spouses.

### **Q: Who can submit issues?**

**A:** Issues come from Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, Retirees, Family members, and DA Civilians.

### **Q: How Does AFAP Work?**

**A:** At installations and local levels, AFAP forums identify issues they believe are important to maintain a good standard of living. Some issues can be resolved by local commanders. Those beyond their control are sent to command AFAP conferences and then to HQDA, where delegates from across the Army prioritize issues to be worked toward resolution by Army staff and DoD agencies. AFAP is a year-round process; issues are continually being monitored and worked toward resolution at local levels, Army Commands, Army Service Subordinate Commands, Direct Reporting Units, and HQDA.

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### **Q: Who is accountable for the resolution of these issues?**

**A:** At installation level, the Commander's Steering Committee reviews the progress of AFAP issues on a semi-annual basis. At the HQDA level, a board of key DoD and Army staff General Officer and Senior Executive Service Army members provides guidance and direction to the AFAP process. This board, the AFAP General Officer Steering Committee, reviews the progress of AFAP issues and determines their status as active, completed, or unattainable.

### **Q: How many issues have been processed through the HQDA AFAP?**

**A:** To date, AFAP results include 123 legislative changes, 172 Army and Office of the Secretary of Defense policies changed, and 192 changes to programs and services.