

FAMILY READINESS GROUPS (FRG)

- **BLUF: FRGs are critical to maintaining the strength, morale, and information chain for Soldiers, Families, and Commands.**
- FRGs are integral to the morale and support of Soldiers and Families before, during, and after deployments.
- Is a unit commander's program that includes unit Soldiers, Civilian employees, Family members (immediate and extended), and volunteers IAW AR 600-20, Army Command Policy.
- Provides mutual support and assistance and functions as a communications mechanism, bringing accurate information to the Families from command, and serving as an informal chain of concern to bring issues back up to command.
- Structured by the needs of the unit, some FRGs are large, very active, and all encompassing while others are small, tailored only to the immediate requirements of a non-deployed unit.
- An official Army program, FRG mission essential tasks are funded with mission APF. FRG mission activities and APF expenditures are subject to the DoD 7000.14-R, DoD Financial Management Regulation, the Anti Deficiency Act, the Joint Ethics Regulation, and all other applicable regulatory restraints on official activities, use of APF, and fundraising.
- FRG informal funds are authorized by commanders for specific planned purposes. Limited to \$10,000 annually, these funds may be used for social activities, holiday parties, food, FRG parties, and outings.
- FRGs may also receive financial assistance from the Garrison's FRG Supplemental Mission Account. This account is established to receive unsolicited donations from organizations, individuals, or businesses. Monetary donations are deposited into this supplemental mission account to support FRGs.

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- ACS Mobilization/Deployment Readiness Program Manager provides FRG subject matter expertise, training, meeting space as required, and facilitation of video-teleconferences with deployed Soldiers, upon request.
- FRGs leaders are statutory volunteers that provide services to the unit commander in furtherance of the FRG mission. The entitlements and roles of statutory volunteers can be found at AR 608-1, para 5-4c; 10 U.S.C. §1588. Statutory volunteers are required to have a job description, and to be supervised like an employee (AR 608-1, para 5-9k).
- Family Readiness Support Assistants (FRSA) provides administrative and logistical support to the volunteer FRG leaders. Primary missions of FRSAs are coordination of training for Rear Detachment Commanders (RDC) and FRG leaders, maintaining the critical communication link between RDCs and FRG leaders, and ensuring the responsiveness of established community resources.

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Q: What is available at the unit level to assist Families during extended periods of separations due to multiple deployments?

A: The FRG is a command sponsored organization that provides mutual support and assistance.

Q: What is the purpose of the FRGs?

A: Primary purpose of the FRG is to serve as a conduit for information, mutual support, and concern and will assist unit commanders in meeting military and personal preparedness and enhance Family readiness of the unit. FRGs serve as a link between the unit and Soldiers' Families, whether those Families remain at the home station or move to another location.

Q: Who can belong to the FRGs, and do you have to have an ID card to belong?

A: The unit's Soldiers, civilian employees, and Family members, both immediate and extended (parents, siblings, fiancée, and other loved ones designated by the Soldier), may belong to the FRG. There is no requirement that FRG members have to be ID cardholders.

Q: Who supports the FRG operations?

A: The FRG is an official Army program and its mission essential tasks are funded with the unit's mission APF. As a commander's program, the FRG receives its logistical and financial support from the unit commander and Rear Detachment Commander (RDC). The ACS Mobilization and /Deployment Readiness Program Manager also actively supports FRGs. Family Readiness Support Assistants (FRSAs) provide administrative support to the volunteer FRG leaders and RDC.

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Q: What type of functions can an FRG conduct, and what funding is available to support these functions?

A: APFs may be used to support meetings, provide equipment, and print newsletters and materials necessary to carry out the meeting activities. All refreshment or luncheon costs may be paid using the FRG's informal fund or the ACS supplemental mission account intended for FRGs, if money is available. APF monies cannot generally be used for food or refreshments.

Q: Can the FRG accept donations?

A: Yes. The FRG may accept unconditional donations of \$1000 or less into the FRG's Informal Fund from an individual, business, or private organization, after gaining approval from the unit commander and unit or garrison ethics counselor, IAW AR 1-100. The FRG informal fund account may not exceed \$10,000 income per year, nor shall it exceed \$10,000 balance at any time. Donations count towards these maximums. FRGs may not accept donations that exceed \$1,000. The Garrison Commander may accept donations, including those that exceed \$1,000 for the ACS supplemental mission account. The ethics counselor should be consulted before any donations are accepted.

Q: What are Family Readiness Support Assistants (FRSA)?

A: The primary mission of the FRSA is coordination of training for FRG leaders, maintaining the critical communication link between RDCs and FRG leaders, and ensuring the responsiveness of established community resources. Army Commands funded these GS temporary civilian or contract positions at the brigade or battalion level with Supplemental Funding (GWOT). In FY10 these positions will become part of the base funding requirement.

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Q: Under what specific conditions is reimbursement granted for volunteers?

A: AR 608-1, para 5-10g covers the reimbursement criteria for volunteers, provided the commander has approved the expenditure and funds are available. It is recommended the unit commander have an SOP which informs the volunteers what funds are available, and how to request reimbursement.

Q: Can unit commander pay the cost for a FRG leader to attend Family support training, and what funds are authorized?

A: The unit commander uses APFs to pay for this expenditure. Statutory volunteers may be sent on Invitational Travel Orders to training. If the FRG leader is the unit Commander's Family member, the unit Commander must send the request to authorize travel to the next higher level officer in the Commander's chain of command, to avoid potential violation of the JER, conflict of interest provisions.