

**Family Readiness Group  
Computer-Based Training**

**Module 4: Volunteer Management**



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## MODULE 4 – Volunteer Management

To enable FRG Leaders to demonstrate the performance steps required to identify and recruit FRG volunteers, establish committees, and manage volunteers.

### Module Introduction

Leading an active and effective FRG takes the work of many volunteers, so it's important for you to understand how to recruit, manage, and recognize your volunteers to keep the unit FRG strong.

### Lessons

- Recruiting Volunteers

- Managing Volunteers

- Recognizing Volunteers

In this lesson, we will discuss the following FRG Leader responsibilities:

- Identifying and recruiting FRG volunteers and committees.

- Providing position descriptions.

- Creating volunteer agreements.

- Maintaining a volunteer database.

- Collecting and verifying volunteer hours.

- Assisting in processing volunteer awards.

- Recognizing volunteers.

### **1.1. Recruiting Volunteers**

#### *1.1.1. FRG Team*

Leading an FRG is not expected to be a one-person job. A team of dedicated, caring volunteers are needed to support the FRG Leader in operating a successful FRG. The key is finding creative ways to get everyone involved and excited about participating in the FRG.

#### *1.1.2. Recruiting Techniques*

There are many ways to recruit volunteers, but the most effective way is simply to ask individuals to volunteer. On the Family Readiness Information sheet, family members will have an opportunity to indicate what areas or ways they would be willing to assist the FRG. Another direct approach is to decide who might be best suited to handle a particular task and ask the individual to consider performing the task.

Remember that even individuals who are not located in your geographical area can perform important FRG functions such as serving as a key caller.

During recruiting, individuals may ask “What do I need to do?” and “How long do I need to do it?” Be prepared to provide this information as accurately and honestly as possible. Present a written description so that individuals will clearly know what their duties will be if they accept.

As FRG members step up to volunteer, they need to understand their roles and responsibilities, which can be explained through detailed position descriptions.

The position description should include the following elements:

- Position title
- Supervisor
- Goal
- Responsibilities
- Time commitment
- Qualifications
- Training provided
- Obligation
- Statement of understanding and signature/date

Click on the link to download example position descriptions. Courtesy of the FRG Forum <http://frg.army.mil/>

Standardized FRG job descriptions are available from the Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator and the Operation READY FRG SMART book.

The FRG Leader, Treasurer, and Family Readiness Liaison must have a written appointment letter from the unit commander or RDC stating who holds these positions. The letter signifies that the unit recognizes those individuals as the unit FRG leadership.

### *1.1.3. Volunteer Roles*

To determine what positions are needed to run the FRG, consider:

- The commander’s vision for family readiness
- The deployment timetable
- Any unit specific needs
- The scope of FRG operations to be carried out
- The geographical dispersion of family members.

The following is a suggested list of volunteer positions and chairpersons for committees that can help an FRG run smoothly and effectively. In addition, based on the needs of the FRG and the number of volunteers willing to help, other staff positions may be created.

FRG Leader – The leader can be any family member in the unit whom the commander has appointed and endorsed. It is acceptable and encouraged to have co-leaders to share the leadership and workload.

Treasurer - Serves as the fund custodian for the FRG, keeping accurate records of the FRG funds. This should be someone other than the FRG Leader and should not be a military member.

Secretary – Serves as the recorder for the FRG, maintains accurate records of FRG meetings, and distributes information and correspondence to the FRG Leader and the Newsletter Editor.

Newsletter Editor - Coordinates newsletter preparation, publishing, and distribution.

Key Contact Caller - This is the designated telephone contact volunteer and is a link between the FRG Leader and the group membership. They assist in passing along accurate information and notifying the leadership of problems and issues.

Fundraising Coordinator - Manages internal FRG fundraising activities.

Childcare Coordinator - Ensures acceptable childcare for FRG meetings and special events.

Special Events Coordinator - Plans, organizes, and executes FRG activities and special events.

Refreshments Committee – Coordinates for refreshments to be provided at FRG meetings and special events.

Publicity - Informs all Soldiers and family members in the FRG of all ongoing and upcoming activities.

Hospitality/Welcome Committee - Contacts and welcomes all new Soldiers and families to the unit and refers them to needed resources.

Comfort or Care Team Roster - In the event of an injury or death in the unit, the FRG may be called upon to provide assistance to a Soldier's family through a Care Team or Comfort Team. Identifying the group of individuals who will be called upon to support a family in the event of these situations is important to do prior to any deployment. Selecting these individuals requires special care. Consideration should be given to factors that include an individual's level of maturity, empathy, ability to show care and concern, and emotional stability. These volunteers will need to

complete specialized training available from the Chaplain or another acknowledged agency prior to the deployment. A roster of volunteers who will perform this role need to be readily available to the FRG Leader and unit commander.

Senior Spouse Advisor (SSA) - The Advisor may be the spouse of the Commander or Sergeant Major and serves in an advisory capacity. This position provides a communication network between the command, the FRG, and families. The Advisor also identifies common problems, concerns, and issues to make recommendations to the appropriate level of command.

#### *1.1.4. Volunteer Training*

As you meet with your volunteers and review the position descriptions, be sure to discuss expectations of serving in a leadership role in the FRG. Be clear about the parameters regarding to what degree, and when, volunteers may act independently. Address important issues such as punctuality, attitude, dealing with the command and families, attire, confidentiality, communication, and reimbursement of volunteer expenses.

Sample talking points on expectations of FRG volunteers:

**Be punctual and dependable.** Volunteers need to be on time and dependable. This is particularly important for Key Callers, who need to make calls to families in a timely manner. When a volunteer cannot carry out a commitment, they must notify the FRG Leader because volunteers should not be expected to make commitments that will put their family's needs at risk.

**Be friendly and courteous.** FRG volunteers should be helpful and maintain a courteous attitude when dealing with the Chain of Command, Soldiers, spouses, and other FRG volunteers.

**Be flexible.** Given the high and changing demands on the military and unpredictable nature of deployments, volunteers need to be able to adapt to change with understanding and calmness.

**Maintain confidentiality.** FRG volunteers deal with problems of a highly personal nature. While it is important to show understanding, compassion, and concern, volunteers must know when to refer individuals to appropriate service agencies who have personnel trained to handle these situations. Also, volunteers should not hesitate to seek guidance and assistance when trying to solve issues outside their realm of knowledge. Remember, gossiping is taboo. While it is important to be respectful of an individual's privacy and sensitive to family problems/issues, keeping the FRG Leader informed of important issues is vital to the FRG being able to help address individual issues, recognize common issues among family members of the FRG, and identify emerging issues of concern.

During your meeting, ensure that all volunteers receive the following:

- A position description.

- A Volunteer Agreement Form, DD Form 2793, in order to register with the local ACS, Family Programs Office, or Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator.

- A form for recording volunteer hours.

- A parental permission form, if the volunteer is a minor.

- Registers with the local Army Community Service, Family Programs Office, or Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator.

It is equally as important to provide training opportunities for the volunteers. Investing time and energy into additional training will not only help your FRG grow and sustain its members but also will help the volunteers grow as leaders.

Training resources and materials available include:

**FRG Smart Book** - The FRG Smart Book contains training materials that may be used by the FRG Leader to provide specific training to FRG volunteers such as Key Callers. In addition, there are resource materials and information sheets, which can be given to FRG volunteers. For example, the FRG Smart Book a Coping with Stress tips sheet that can be given to all FRG volunteers.

**Army Community Service (ACS)** – ACS offers a variety of training to FRG volunteers who are in leadership positions (such as committee chairpersons).

**Child and Youth Services (CYS)** – The CYS Volunteer Child Care in a Unit Setting (VCCUS) program provides training to volunteers so that the FRG can offer childcare at FRG events.

**Reserve Family Program Academies and National Guard State Training Conferences** - These programs provide training for volunteers to become familiar with issues and resources related to Guard and Reserve families.

**Army Family Team Building (AFTB) Program/ Guard Family Team Building (GFTB)** - This three-level training program comprises 43 classes. Level I is designed for those new to military life. Level II is a basic leadership skills program with a focus on management skills. Level III has advanced leadership courses for those serving in leadership roles. The training program is available online and can be used to help any FRG volunteer become familiar with the military and in developing particular skills. (<http://www.myarmylifetoo.com>).

## **1.2. Managing Volunteers**

### **1.2.1. Team Management**

As the FRG Leader, there are many elements associated with managing an FRG. With the amount of paper work that needs to be organized, it is recommended that you create a volunteer administrative file.

This file should include the following forms and documents:

- Volunteer position descriptions
- Volunteer Agreement Form, DD Form 2793
- Volunteer hours forms –
- Volunteer Service Record, DA Form 4162R
- Volunteer Daily Time Record, DA Form 4713R
- Parental permission form, if the volunteer is a minor
- Blank volunteer forms
- Sample letters of appreciation
- Requirements for awards
- Sample letters of recommendation

### *1.2.2. Volunteer Records*

Volunteer work can provide valuable experience and can be included on resumes and job applications. Managing volunteers involves a lot of paperwork from volunteer agreement forms to volunteer hours to position descriptions.

It is recommended that you establish a volunteer administrative file and database to keep track of your members and the appropriate forms. It is encouraged that you use the Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS). The Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) is a tracking system for volunteer information to be entered for Army Volunteer Corp (AVC) volunteers. AVC Regional Managers can invite Army Volunteer Corp Coordinators (AVCCs) to the system as well as view real-time reports on hours and volunteer count for their region.

As an Army Volunteer Corp Coordinator in the system, you have the ability to authorize new volunteers, add volunteer organizations and designate Organization Points of Contact (OPOCs) have the authority to approve volunteer hours as well as post new opportunities in the system.

At the end of the month, you should collect and verify the hours of your FRG volunteers, update your database, and then submit the hours to the Volunteer Coordinator at ACS. As you collect the volunteer hours, cross-reference the volunteer hours with the unit activities and encourage your volunteers to keep a copy of the forms for their personal records.

## **1.3. Recognizing Volunteers**

### *1.3.1. Recommendation*

Volunteer recognition is an integral part of FRG leadership and is an important aspect to maintaining a group of enthusiastic and committed volunteers who support the FRG. Creating an environment in which FRG volunteers are recognized and feel supported by the FRG and company leadership can be a motivating factor for family members to volunteer in the future.



As the FRG Leader, you see first hand the participation of the volunteers in the unit, and you have every right to recommend names to the unit commander for official recognition. In fact, when approaching the commander, provide background information on the volunteer such as:

- How they have contributed to the FRG

- Activities they have volunteered for

- Number of volunteer hours

- Anything else they have done that the commander should be aware of for the recognition.

**Ideas for formal recognition:**

- Unit certificate of appreciation

- Volunteer of the month award

- Volunteer of the quarter award

- Department of the Army and Major Army Command (MACOM) level awards (see AR 672-20, Incentive Awards, Chapter 9, "Public Service Awards")

- National Volunteer Week

But don't wait until your volunteers PCS or a special event to recognize them. Here are some ideas you can do all year long!

**Ideas for informal recognition:**

- Public praise at any FRG meeting or event

- Newsletter articles

- Thank you notes

- Special luncheon, party, or FRG meetings

- Announcements on bulletin boards (including e-mail)

- Media coverage to include - local and installation newspapers/publications

#### **1.4. Summary – Key Points for Volunteer Management**

##### **Recruiting Volunteers –**

Leading an FRG is not a one-person job. A team of volunteers is needed to operate a successful FRG and this section covers many different positions that are available to reach out to those who are interested in serving the Soldiers and families of the unit.

##### **Managing Volunteers –**

There are many elements associated with managing an FRG and it is important to keep the paperwork of your volunteers well organized. Keeping documents organized will help when it comes time to recognize your volunteers for all the time and effort they gave to the group.

##### **Recognizing Volunteers –**

Volunteer recognition is important in maintaining the motivation and enthusiasm of the group. Acknowledging the hard work and effort your volunteers contribute to the FRG shows that you value them personally and appreciate their service to the unit.