

# Military Family Readiness Council (MFRC)

## Bylaws

### Section I: Purpose

The purpose of the Military Family Readiness Council (MFRC) is to:

1. Review and make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense regarding the policy and plans;
2. Monitor requirements for the support of military family readiness by the Department of Defense; and
3. Evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the military family readiness programs and activities of the Department of Defense.

### Section II: Authority

The MFRC is established under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. § 1781a and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (5 U.S.C., Appendix, as amended).

### Section III: Membership Selection

The MFRC shall be comprised of no more than 18 members appointed as follows:

1. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, who shall serve as chair of the Council or her representative if she is not available.
2. One spouse or parent of a member of each the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. (2 active, 2 reserve)
3. One representative of each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense\*.
4. Three individuals appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among representatives of military family organizations, including military family organizations of families of members of the Active duty components and of families of members of the Reserve components\*\*.
5. The senior enlisted advisors of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, or the spouse of a senior enlisted member from each of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.
6. Director of the Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs

\*The individual representatives of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force shall be regular government employees, and are appointed by the Secretary of Defense based upon their ex officio position in the Department of Defense.

\*\*Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1781a(b)(C), the term of office for those individuals appointed by the Secretary of Defense from military family organizations shall be three years.

*Note:* Council members appointed by the Secretary of Defense, who are not full-time or permanent part-time employees of the federal government, shall be appointed as experts and consultants under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 3109 and, with the exception of travel and per diem for official travel, they shall serve without compensation. These experts and consultants shall be considered Special

Government Employees, and their appointments, regardless of their term of office, shall be renewed by the Secretary of Defense on an annual basis.

#### **Section IV: Meeting Procedures**

The Council shall meet at the call of the Council's Designated Federal Officer (DFO), in consultation with the chairperson. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1781a(c), the Council, as a minimum, shall meet twice a year.

- A. **Agenda** - The DFO will approve the agenda for all meetings. OSD/PR will distribute the agenda to the members prior to each meeting and will publish an outline of the agenda with the notice of the meeting in the Federal Register. Items for the agenda may be submitted in writing to the DFO by any member of the Board. Items may also be suggested in writing, by non-members, including members of the public.
- B. **Minutes & Records** - The Board's DFO will prepare minutes of each meeting and will distribute copies to each Board member. Minutes of open meetings will be available to the public upon request. Minutes of closed meetings will also be available to the public upon request, subject to the withholding of matters about which public disclosure would be harmful to the interests of the Government, industry, or others, and which are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The minutes will include a record of the persons present (including the names of Board members, names of staff, and the names of members of the public from whom written or oral presentations were made) and a complete and accurate description of the matters discussed and conclusions reached, and copies of all reports received, issued or approved by the Board.
- C. **Open Meetings** - Unless otherwise determined in advance, all meetings of the MFRC will be open to the public. Once an open meeting has begun, it will not be closed for any reason. All materials brought before, or presented to, the Board during the conduct of an open meeting, including the minutes of the proceedings of an open meeting, will be available to the public for review or copying at the time of the scheduled meeting. Members of the public may attend any meeting or portion of a meeting that is not closed to the public and may, at the determination of the Chairman, offer oral comment at such meeting. The Chairman may decide in advance to exclude oral public comment during a meeting, in which case the meeting announcement published in the Federal Register will note that oral comment from the public is excluded and will invite written comment as an alternative. Members of the public may submit written statements to the MFRC at any time.
- D. **Closed Meetings** - Meetings of the MFRC will be closed only in limited circumstances and in accordance with applicable law. In addition, requests for closed meetings must be approved by GSA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) 30 days in advance of the session. Where the DFO has determined in advance that discussions during a Board meeting will involve matters about which public disclosure would be harmful to the interests of the government, industry, or others, an advance notice of a closed meeting, citing the applicable exemptions of the Government in the Sunshine Act (GISA), will be published in the Federal Register. The notice may announce the closing of all or just part of a meeting. If, during the course of an open meeting, matters inappropriate for public disclosure arise during discussions, the Chairman will order such discussion to cease and will schedule it for closed session. Notices of closed meetings will be published in the Federal Register at least 15 calendar days in advance.

## **Section V: Voting**

When a decision or recommendation of the MFRC is required, the Chairman will request a motion for a vote. Any member, including the Chairman, may make a motion for a vote.

## **Section VI: Role of the Board Officials**

**Chairperson:** The Chairperson works with the DFO to establish priorities, identify issues which must be addressed, determine the level and types of staff and financial support required, and serves as the focal point for the Board's membership. In addition, the Chairperson is responsible for certifying the accuracy of minutes developed by the Board to document its meetings.

**Designated Federal Officer:** The DFO serves as the government's agent for all matters related to the Board's activities. By Law, the DFO must: (1) approve or call the meeting of the Board; (2) approve agendas; (3) attend all meetings; (4) adjourn the meetings when such adjournment is in the public interest; and (5) Chair meetings of the Board, when so directed by the Administrator of General Services, or his designee.

In addition, the DFO is responsible for providing adequate staff support to the Board, including the performance of the following functions: (1) Notifying members of the time and place for each meeting; (2) Maintaining records of all meetings, including subgroup or working group activities, as required by Law; (3) maintaining the roll; (4) Preparing the minutes of all meetings of the Board's deliberations, including subgroup and working group activities; (5) attending to official correspondence; (6) maintaining official MFRC records and filing all papers and submissions prepared for or by the MFRC, including those items generated by subgroups and working groups; (7) acting as the Board's agent to collect, validate and pay all vouchers for pre-approved expenditures; and, (8) preparing and handling all reports, including the annual report as required by FACA.

## **Section VII: Expenses and Reimbursement**

Expenses related to the operation of the MFRC will be borne by the Department of Defense. Expenditures of any kind must be approved in advance by the DFO.

Federal government employees serving on the MFRC are not eligible for any form of additional compensation. The government will pay travel and per diem for non-government members at a rate equivalent to that allowable for federal employees.

## **Section VIII: Additional Information**

The Department of Defense, through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall provide support as deemed necessary for the performance of the Council's functions, and shall ensure compliance with the requirements of 5 U.S.C., Appendix, as amended.

The Council shall operate under a Fiscal Year, rather than a Calendar Year to coordinate with funding and reporting requirements.