



Key Quality of Life Issues Supporting Service Members and Families (For 2011)



- 1. Increase Key Support for Guard and Reserve Members and Their Families:** The high deployment levels of the Guard and Reserve necessitate a reciprocal level of support for the needs of our service members and their families. The desired outcome is that states provide important support elements which should be common throughout the states.
- 2. Ensure Deployment Separation Does Not Determine Child Custody Decisions:** Extended separations due to military service necessarily alter short-term custody/visitation arrangements and can have long-term consequences. The desired outcome is for states to appropriately balance the interests of service members while preserving the best interests of the child; address delegation of visitation rights; and expedite court dockets and use electronic communications to accommodate military demands.
- 3. Increase Access to Quality, Affordable Childcare for Military Families:** Demand for child care continues to outpace capacity. The desired outcome is that states integrate DoD standards into their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) for child care programs. Through statewide QRISs, DoD can identify providers eligible for 'approved' status (subsidized care) and partner with other providers to help them reach that status.
- 4. Minimize School Disruption for Military Children During Transition and Deployment:** Military life creates challenges for children who attend an average of 8 schools in 12 years plus endure the anxiety of parental separation during deployments. The desired outcome is that states participate in an interstate compact which establishes common guidelines for handling issues (class and course placement, records transfer, immunizations, graduation, and extra-curricular opportunities) that impact military children transitioning between schools.
- 5. Remove Licensure Impediments for Military Spouses and Service Members Leaving the Military:** State licensing and professional credentialing requirements can limit career options for frequently relocating military spouses and separating/retiring Service members. The desired outcome is that states offer alternative certification and credentialing options and streamlined licensing procedures to support the unique needs of working military spouses and separating Service members.
- 6. Provide Unemployment Compensation Eligibility for Military Spouses:** Frequent moves substantially impact the income of our Service families. The desired outcome is that states recognize that, unlike the private sector, a move mandated by military orders is not 'voluntary' and therefore, the accompanying spouse should qualify for unemployment compensation if otherwise eligible.
- 7. Promote Consumer Protections and Enforcement of the Predatory Lending Regulation:** Service members and their families are vulnerable to unscrupulous practices. Additionally, some lending practices create a cycle of debt for service members and their families, thus detracting from quality of life and military preparedness. The desired outcome is for states to work with the military community to identify consumer concerns and to fully enforce DoD Regulation on payday, vehicle title, and refund anticipation loans.
- 8. Improve Absentee Voting for Military Members and Their Families:** Citizens need assurance their vote will be counted. The desired outcome is that states authorize flexible processes for absentee voters in the areas recommended by the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office.
- 9. Comport State Laws with DoD Rules on Disposition:** Many states require disposition of remains be determined through state-specific documentation or by a priority sequence of next of kin. The desired outcome is for states to recognize the person authorized to direct disposition (PADD) selected by the service member on DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data), in accordance with Federal law.
- 10. Coordinate State-wide Public-Private Support:** Some issues require a comprehensive approach, best facilitated by state governments. Efficiently supporting military families requires coordination. Establishing long-range plans for foreign language development to support national objectives requires collaboration between public and private entities. The desired outcome is for states to mobilize resources, and create committees that can facilitate state-wide coordination and long range planning.

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