

THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR

## Military Community and Family Policy

# Counseling Quick Reference Guide



Quality of life policies and programs that help our service members, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.

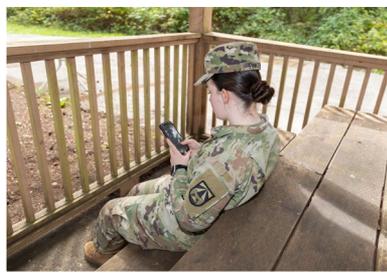
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## Introduction

Counseling can help service members and spouses identify and solve problems before they escalate into more significant conditions. Military OneSource and Military and Family Life Counseling Program counselors are trained to provide counseling support for military-specific issues like moving and deployments. Using a prevention-based, problem-solving approach, counseling encourages individuals to seek help by increasing access to licensed counselors trained to work with the military community. These services are intended to reduce stigma associated with seeking help and promote a culture that enhances readiness and resiliency for service members and their families.

Confidential counseling is available at no cost to active-duty service members, National Guard and reserve service members (regardless of activation status), their families and survivors. These services are easily accessible to help service members and families maintain healthy relationships and mission-readiness.



# Counseling Overview

Counseling services, available through Military OneSource and the Military and Family Life Counseling Program, help to prevent the development or exacerbation of military-life conditions that may compromise military and family readiness. All counselors possess a master's or doctorate degree in a mental health field and are licensed and trained to provide support for military-specific issues.

The following individuals are eligible to receive counseling:

- Active-duty service members of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and Coast Guard
- National Guard and reserve service members and Coast Guardsmen (including members of the Individual Ready Reserve), regardless of activation status
- Retired, separated or honorably discharged service members for up to 365 days following their end of tour of service, retirement date or discharge date, including service members on the Temporary Disability Retirement List
- Designated department expeditionary civilians, as defined by Directive-Type Memorandum-17-004, "Department of Defense Expeditionary Civilian Workforce," during deployment, the 90 days prior to deployment and the 180 days following deployment
- The immediate family members of the above individuals
- Surviving spouses (who have not remarried) and the children of deceased active-duty, National Guard, Coast Guard and reserve component service members, regardless of activation status or the cause of death
- Anyone who has legal responsibility for a service member's children during deployment or separation from the family, as long as the service requested clearly benefits the child
- Extended family members who are seeking assistance on behalf of their service member



## Issues amenable to counseling

Counseling sessions are confidential and designed to address issues that don't require long-term support. Potential options for support include, but are not limited to:

- Communication issues
- Adjustment to situational stressors
- Stress management
- Decision making
- Grief and loss
- Life skills
- Blended-family issues
- Parenting-skills issues
- Military-specific concerns, such as relocation, separation, deployment and reintegration

Counseling is available for 12 sessions per issue, per eligible family member, and those seeking support can request counseling for more than one issue.

## Inappropriate counseling referrals

Counseling is not available for long-term support or to treat diagnosed addictions or issues that require medical treatment.

Individuals seeking support for issues that are not included within the scope of counseling services receive appropriate referrals for their needs.

Inappropriate issues for counseling include, but are not limited to:

- Active suicidal or homicidal thoughts
- Sexual assault
- Child abuse
- Domestic violence
- Alcohol and substance abuse
- Active Family Advocacy Program cases
- Mental health conditions that require recurring in-patient hospitalizations

## Accessing counseling support

Support those you lead by directing your military members and their families to conveniently access military-focused counseling professionals in their local community through Military OneSource or the Military and Family Life Counseling Program.

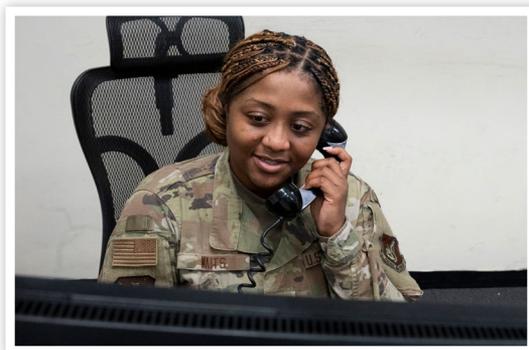
Service members and their families can schedule sessions through Military OneSource by calling 800-342-9647 or clicking on <https://www.militaryonesourceconnect.org/chat.html>.

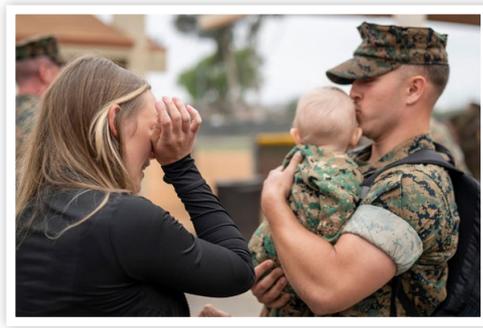
Sessions are available:

- Face-to-face
- By telephone
- Via secure online chat
- Through secure live video

Service members and their families can access Military and Family Life Counseling Program confidential counseling by:

- Visiting their installation's Military and Family Support Center in person or at <https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/>
- Contacting their unit commander
- Contacting various National Guard and reserve family programs





## **Military OneSource Program**

Military OneSource provides service members and their families with comprehensive information and support programs that address every aspect of military life. In addition to counseling services, Military OneSource offers several other options for support, including coaching and consultations that cover a variety of helpful topics and a 24/7 contact center for support anytime, anywhere.

### **Confidential counseling**

Confidential counseling through Military OneSource is available to service members and their families to discuss a variety of issues pertaining to military life. Counseling can help service members and spouses identify and solve problems before they escalate — providing expert, solution-based advice and support.

Children ages 6-12 can see a family counselor, but a parent must be available at the start of each counseling session to give consent. Children and youth ages 6-17 may attend counseling sessions with a parent or caregiver present. This is considered a family session. Children under age 5 aren't eligible for counseling through the Military OneSource program.

## Coaching and consultations

Service members and their families can also conveniently access Military OneSource coaching and consultations at no cost to keep them headed in the right direction. Military OneSource offers coaching and consultations for the following areas:

1. Adoption
2. Eldercare
3. Education
4. Health and wellness coaching
5. Peer-to-peer support
6. Special needs
7. Spouse relocation and transition
8. Wounded warrior
9. Building healthy relationships
10. Financial counseling
11. New MilParent
12. Transitioning veterans

Coaching and consultations are convenient and accessible since they are held over the phone or, in some cases, through live video sessions.

## 24/7 contact center

Military OneSource is available via phone, toll-free and 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year long. A trained master's-level consultant can offer instant confidential support and provide a referral for the next step. Just call 800-342-9647.

## Other resources

The following resources are also available through Military OneSource for additional support:

1. Document translation
2. Information and referral
3. Financial counseling
4. Tax services
5. Language interpretation services
6. Spouse Education and Career Opportunities
7. Mobile resilience tools and apps

## Military and Family Life Counseling Program Overview

The Military and Family Life Counseling Program also provides confidential counseling to active-duty service members, National Guard and reserve members, Department of War Expeditionary Civilian workforce members and the immediate family members and survivors of all the aforementioned groups.

Available in person at installation Military and Family Support Centers, service members and their families can rely on military and family life counselors to rapidly respond when they need it most. These counselors, who are on rotational assignments or embedded in units, are available for confidential face-to-face counseling, as well as to provide briefings and presentations to staff or units.

### Adults — military and family life counselors

These counselors provide briefings, presentations and private sessions for service members and their adult family members, addressing a variety of short-term issues, including, but not limited to:

- Anger management
- Communication
- Conflict resolution
- Deployment
- Grief and loss
- Marriage and relationships
- Parenting
- Return and reintegration
- Stress management



## **Child and youth behavioral — military and family life counselors**

Child and youth behavioral counselors understand the issues military children face. Counselors provide support to meet the individual needs of military children, particularly during challenging periods. These counselors provide briefings and presentations for service members and their families, addressing issues including child development and military-related issues. You can reach a child and youth behavioral military and family life counselor through a child development center, school or military youth summer camp. Typical support includes:

- Social skills
- Academic issues
- Parent-child relationships
- Deployment-related issues
- Conflict resolution
- Grief and loss
- Transitions and relocations
- Stress management

## **Child and youth camp support**

Child and youth camps offer military children the opportunity to come together and share their experiences. Child and youth behavioral military and family life counselors are available to provide counseling support at camps, which can cover a wide variety of themes, such as deployment and bereavement. Camps include, but are not limited to:

- National Military Family Association Operation Purple camps
- National Guard and reserve camps
- Operation: Military Kids camps

## On-demand support

Military and family life counselors are available to give on-demand support at events that occur off installation. Sample events include:

- Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Programs
- Drill weekends
- Family events
- Annual training
- Marriage retreats

Service providers can request on-demand support for one to three-day events through the Resource Request System located at <https://supportrequest.militaryonesource.mil>. Requests for support must be submitted at least 15 business days before the event date and meet the minimum attendance requirement of at least 50 eligible individuals.

## Surge support

Surge support is a flexible and timely support option that is tailored to specific situations as they arise. Military leaders can request surge support for service members and their families for issues or occasions where immediate or additional support is necessary. Counselors assist service members and their families to enhance operational and family readiness during challenging times. Potential issues necessitating surge support may be:

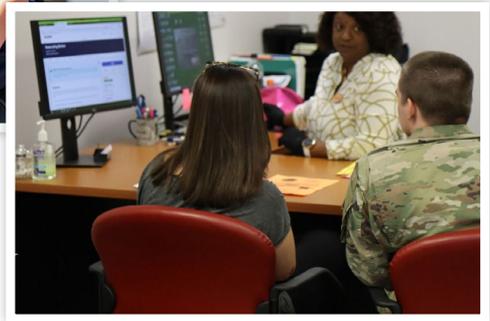
- Deployment-related reintegration challenges
- Military contingencies
- Natural disasters or crises
- Grief and loss

Surge support is provided in targeted locations for a few weeks to several months. The number of counselors provided depends on the size of the population affected and the severity or nature of the event prompting the request. Contact your military service headquarters to request surge support.

## Counseling: In Review

Qualified counselors are available to help members of the military community through life's challenges — both big and small. With the wide range of options available for targeted, confidential and no-cost support, there's no need for service members or their families to struggle alone.

Connect your military community to confidential counseling options through Military OneSource and the Military and Family Life Counseling Program to ensure a mission-ready force.



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Fill out the On-Demand Resource Request form at <https://supportrequest.militaryonesource.mil> and schedule a briefing to learn more about the resources available. You can also use this link to request additional rotational or surge support.

Refer service members and their families to military and family life counselors through the MFLC Locator at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/tools/mflc-locator/>.





**Mission statement.** The Office of Military Community and Family Policy contributes to force readiness and quality of life by providing policies and programs that advance the well-being of service members, their families, survivors and other eligible members of the military community.



U.S. Department of War

Information in this guide may not be current due to policy or program changes which may have occurred since it was published.

Send questions to <https://public.militaryonesource.mil/feedback>.



Brought to you by the Military Community and Family Policy  
Office of Military Community Outreach



Quality of life policies and programs that help our service members, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.