

# Deployment Assistance Program Content Guide

The following established style guidelines reflect the longstanding practices of developers and editors of content for the Relocation Assistance and Deployment Assistance Program area. They are consistent with rules and guidance outlined in the Associated Press Stylebook and reflective of Office of Military Community and Family Policy style and usage preferences.

## Do

- Pay attention to the overall organization and flow of an article. Information and ideas should be logically organized and there should be some sense of continuity across all deployment content on Military OneSource or flow from one idea to the next.
- Avoid redundancy.
- Write in gender-neutral terms, except if appropriate (for example, gender-specific services/groups).
- Write in relationship-neutral terms, such as “partner” or “couple.”
- Flesh out and clarify statements and ideas.
- Ensure that subheads reflect the content of the following text.
- Focus on the positive side of content as much as possible.
- Keep the wide audience range in mind.
- Use “softening” or qualifying words, such as “generally,” “may be,” “can be” or “might” to avoid making blanket statements about how people feel, react, etc. in different circumstances. See the examples below:

**WRONG:** “Deployments are challenging for service members and their families.”

**BETTER:** “Deployments **can be** challenging for service members and their families.”

**WRONG:** “During a parent’s deployment, children struggle with their emotions.”

**BETTER:** “During a parent’s deployment, children **may** struggle with their emotions.”

## Do Not

- Make assumptions.
- Tell people how they feel.
- Tell people what they should/need to/must/ought/can’t/won’t do.
- Tell people what they always/never do.

## Formatting

- “Less is more” — be concise.
- Use bulleted formatting for clarity when appropriate.

## Preferred Terms

Preferred	As opposed to
military life	military lifestyle
some or many	most or all
can or may or might  Use “can” as “is able to,” “may” as “has permission to” and “might” as “perhaps yes or perhaps no.” (Note that, grammatically speaking, “might” is the past tense of “may.”)	will or are
often or generally	always
tend to	usually
partner, spouse	husband, wife
predeployment	pre-deployment
reunion and reintegration	post-deployment

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Family care plan	A document that outlines, on service-specific forms, the person(s) who shall provide care for a service member’s dependent family members in the absence of the service member due to military duty (training exercises, temporary duty, deployments, etc.). The plan outlines the legal, medical, logistical, educational, monetary and religious arrangements for care of the service member’s dependent family members. The plan must include all reasonably foreseeable situations and must be sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide for a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to the caregiver in the absence of the service member.
Military and family life counselors	Master’s- or doctorate-level mental health clinicians, licensed to practice and provide non-medical counseling independently.

Term	Definition
Military Family Readiness	The state of being prepared within the unique context of military service, to effectively navigate the challenges of daily living and military transitions. Ready individuals and families are knowledgeable about the potential challenges they may face; equipped with the skills to competently function in the face of such challenges; aware of the supportive resources available to them; and able to incorporate the skills and supports to achieve and maintain family well-being.
Military Family Readiness System	A system comprised of programs and services operated by the DOD and other federal, state and community-based agencies and organizations to enhance military family readiness and resilience, and promote military family well-being.
Military family resilience	The ability of individuals and families to withstand, recover from, and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands of military life to maintain positive outcomes across the domains of career, social, financial, health and community engagement.
Military family well-being	The ability of individuals and families to maintain positive outcomes across the domains of career, social, financial, health and community engagement.
Mobilization and deployment readiness	The state of being prepared for the challenges of mobilization and deployment, to cope with changes in operational tempo, to address personal and family emergencies and stress in the absence of a deployed family member, and to access appropriate services and support in the event of military service-related injury, illness, or death.
Plan My Deployment (the application)	The DOD developed this online application to assist service members, their families and loved ones throughout the deployment cycle. This online application helps service members, their families and loved ones plan for predeployment, deployment, and reunion and reintegration by providing information, resources and task considerations throughout the deployment cycle.

Term	Definition
Phases of deployment	When describing the phases of deployment, use language consistent with the three deployment phases as described in the Plan My Deployment online application: predeployment (no hyphen, as per AP), deployment, and reunion and reintegration. The three phases are the same for both active component and National Guard and reserves.