



# DIRECTORATE OF PREVENTION, RESILIENCE AND READINESS

## QUALITY OF LIFE TASK FORCE

# FACTSHEET



## 1. Overview

In 2020, at the direction of the secretary of the Army, the Army established a task force to improve the quality of life and readiness of Soldiers and Families. The Quality of Life Task Force (QOL-TF) conducts recurring monthly meetings-in-progress reviews to assess the QOL portfolio, its goals and objectives, outcomes and strategic messaging.

The re-missioning of the task force includes emerging priorities of the Army's secretary and chief of staff, such as economic security, support for Families with special needs, and upstream primary prevention and reduction of harmful behaviors.

## 2. Quality of Life Task Force Lines of Effort

The Army QOL TF is focused on meeting the emerging priorities of the service's senior leaders with 10 lines of effort that have a strategic view of issues that affect the total force. The lines of effort are as follows: housing, health care, child and youth services, spouse employment, permanent-change-of-station moves, support and resilience, the Exceptional Family Member Program, financial readiness and economic security, Army Community Service and the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program. The QOL TF coordinates with headquarters staff, the Department of the Army and command subject-matter experts (AMC, FORSCOM, TRADOC, AFC, USARPAC, USAR and Army NG) to address initiatives expediently.

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## Quality of Life Task Force

### 3. Accomplishments/Milestones

#### ▪ Housing and Barracks

- o The Army invests billions of dollars for safe, secure on-base housing to provide service members around the globe with a better quality of life.
- o A Tenant Bill of Rights outlining Soldier and Family protections is in force at 44 housing installations.
- o Change-of-occupancy inspections and assurance checks on life, health and safety work orders have been fully implemented.
- o Along with the Army Housing Online User Services mobile app, Soldiers have access to 24/7 hotlines for information on housing.

#### ▪ Child, Youth and School Services

- o As required, the Army is providing care to meet 80 percent of demand.
- o Since 2004, the Army has had a robust fee-assistance program and never had a waiting list for it, demonstrating the service's support for community-based programs.
- o This year, the provider rate cap was increased to \$1,800 per child to address care affordability.
- o For fiscal year 2023, staff compensation for entry-level direct childcare rose from \$16.70 to \$17.39 per hour and jumped to \$18.21 in January 2024. (There are variations by location.)

#### ▪ Spouse Employment

- o The Justice Department sent a letter to all state licensing authorities on July 13, 2023, to reinforce the provision of professional license portability for service members and their spouses to assist them in their careers when they relocate due to military needs.
- o The U.S. and Italy exchanged letters to allow American dependents in Italy with a mission visa to work remotely for U.S. employers.
- o An online Employment Guide for Military Spouses & Veterans was published.

#### ▪ Permanent Change-of-Station Moves

- o On June 23, 2023, the services approved a pet reimbursement policy update to the Joint Travel Regulations. The policy, which was effective on Jan. 1, reimburses service members for travel expenses for a single pet (cat or dog) up to \$550 for moves within the continental U.S. or \$2,000 for moves outside of the continental U.S.

#### ▪ Support and Resilience

- o Improved QOL for Remote and Austere Installations
  - » Nonappropriated funds major construction projects: Fort Johnson: Alligator Lake recreation park and recreational vehicle park: \$3.6 million in fiscal year 2023
  - » Improved MWR and communal gathering facilities at Fort Wainwright, Fort Johnson and Fort Irwin

### 4. Way Ahead

#### ▪ Exceptional Family Member Program

- o Implement Standardized Process for Respite Care:
  - » The Office of Special Needs is standardizing the criteria and level-of-needs assessment for all services. Headquarters Department of the Army, G-9, is overseeing this task for the Army as well as providing training to stakeholders and key EFMP staff. Army-wide implementation is expected by August 2024.

#### ▪ Financial Readiness and Economic Security

- o DCS, G-9, is working with the Office of the Secretary of Defense on a University of Georgia research study of the effectiveness of financial readiness programs.
- o R2I is incorporating financial readiness resources into wellness checks.