

Fundraising and Your Family Readiness Group By Lynn Wright

The Family Readiness Group is a command-sponsored organization of Soldiers, family members (immediate and extended), and community members belonging to a unit that provide mutual support and assistance to each other. The Group also provides a network of communications among the family members, the chain of command, and community resources. Their ultimate goal is to help the unit commander ensure families are prepared for mobilization. Additionally, the Group provides feedback to the command on the state of the unit “family” to help the unit commander address any issues or concerns.

It is important to remember the purpose of the Group is not to raise money, however, fundraising can be done if there is a specific purpose. Also, important to note is that fundraising can only be done internally amongst the Group’s own members. It is called “by us for us” which means within the National Guard property and with National Guard members and families.

What does that really mean? It means you can sell things at the unit, but not set up and sell at Walmart to the general public. For example, some units have sold unit t-shirts or buttons for a small profit amongst themselves. Yes, other family members and friends outside the unit can purchase a t-shirt or button. Guidance is just very specific that FRG members are not to solicit the public.

Here are some good questions for the FRG to always ask before fundraising.

- Why do we need to raise the money?
- Will it benefit the entire FRG membership?
- Does it duplicate other resources within the community?
- Can we get it somewhere else?
- Is it an authorized fund raiser according to guidance?
- Has the commander approved it?
- Has it been discussed with FRG members at a meeting?

Don’t be discouraged that guidance seems to contain many Nots, Must Dos and Shoulds, please note this is for the military, the commander’s and the Family Readiness Group’s protection. Remember the goal of the FRG is not about money. If you have questions regarding any fundraising projects that you would like to do as a Family Readiness Group, please don’t hesitate to contact the State Family Programs Office at 605.737.6728/6089 or familyprograms@sd.ngb.army.mil. Our goal is not to say No (unless it needs to be No), but to advise you about the right way to do it.