

**SOUTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD
FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM
-COMMANDER'S GUIDELINES-
Revised: 7/2009**

I. **Introduction.** The following is provided as guidance to assist commanders in developing and sustaining a Family Readiness Program within their unit(s). For further guidance/direction refer to Operation Ready, the Family Readiness Handbook and the Treasurer's Handbook found on the website <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil>, then the Family Readiness link or contact the State Family Readiness Office at 1-800-658-3930 // familyprogram@sd.ngb.army.mil.

II. **Major Duties and Responsibilities.**

A. **Requirements.**

1. Include Family Readiness activities and projects in yearly training plan.
2. Recruit a family member to serve as the lead volunteer for the unit's Family Readiness Group and appoint them on a memorandum.
3. Include the Family Readiness Group Lead Volunteer as a part of your special staff by seeking their counsel and inviting them to attend staff meetings (at least annually).
4. Complete a sanction (agreement/by-laws) for the unit's Family Readiness Program with the help of the Family Readiness Group's Lead Volunteer.
5. Complete a Statement of Approval (Statement included in the FRG Sanction (Item #3 B), recognizing the Family Readiness Group and giving them permission to operate and function as part of your special staff.
6. Appoint a service member (on a memorandum). They will serve as your liaison with the Family Readiness Group and lead volunteer, as a Unit Family Readiness Representative.
7. Encourage the Lead Volunteer and Unit Family Readiness Representative to attend Family Readiness training to aid them in managing your unit's program.
8. Ensure the Family Readiness Group Telephone Tree is maintained.
9. If the Family Readiness Group has a Checking Account, ensure the following:
 - a. A treasurer and an alternate treasurer are appointed on a memorandum.
 - b. Funds do not exceed the \$10,000 annual income cap.
 - c. Checking account has 2 signers.
 - d. Checking account has an Employer Identification Number (EIN #) assigned by the IRS.
 - e. Annual Treasurer Reports (quarterly reports if unit is deployed) have been filed with the State Family Readiness Office & a copy filed in the unit's Family Readiness Binder.
 - f. Ensure FRG Standard Operating Procedure for FRG informal funds is included in the FRG sanction (Item #6 – see sanction template) - FRGs with an informal fund must have an organizing SOP.
 - g. Ensure donations are limited to \$1000 **per** donation and do not exceed the \$10,000 annual income cap.

- h. Ensure SDNG Form 600-29 is completed for each donation.
- 10. Encourage participation of service members in the Family Program.
- 11. Establish an atmosphere of care and concern for service members and their families.
- 12. Provide opportunities for service members and their families to network through unit functions, newsletters, and Family Readiness training.

B. Support.

- 1. Schedule conference time quarterly with the Unit Family Readiness Representative and lead volunteer.
- 2. Provide adequate space in the armory for Family Readiness Volunteers to store items and information.
- 3. Provide postage for mailings to families and service members as unit budget allows.
- 4. Provide administrative supplies for accomplishment of Family Readiness activities as resources allow.
- 5. Ensure availability of copier and computer for use by volunteers in accomplishment of Family Readiness activities when resources allow.

C. Maintain Information.

- 1. Ensure Lead Volunteer has the needed information to maintain the telephone tree for family members.
- 2. Ensure family preparedness through completion of personal affairs.
- 3. Anticipate and address the needs of unit service members and their families through command letters, pre-mobilization briefings, and distribution of Family Readiness information and materials.
- 4. Ensure the unit's Family Readiness Group sanction (by-laws) is updated as changes occur and proper distribution is made. Copies are maintained at the unit in the unit's Family Readiness binder and at the State Family Readiness Office.

III. Benefits.

- A. Ensures families' mobilization readiness.
- B. Improves retention rate of service members.
- C. Provides a clear understanding of families' needs and concerns.
- D. Provides knowledge that families' needs/concerns will be handled in service members absence conserving commander's time allowing more time for other issues.

IV. Chain of Concern. Unit Commander, Unit Family Readiness Representative, Family Readiness Group Lead Volunteer, State Family Readiness Director