



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

01 APR 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: **Army Directive 2019-17** (Changes to the Soldier and Family Readiness Group Program)

1. References.

- a. Title 10, United States Code, section 1588 (Authority to accept certain voluntary services).
- b. Department of Defense Instruction 1342.22 (Military Family Readiness); July 3, 2012; Incorporating Change 2, April 11, 2017.
- c. Department of Defense 5500.07-R (Joint Ethics Regulation); August 30, 1993; Incorporating Change 7, 11/17/2011.
- d. Army Regulation (AR) 11-7 (Internal Review Program), 29 March 2017.
- e. AR 1-100 (The Army Gift Program), 7 February 2019.
- f. AR 600-20 (Army Command Policy), 6 November 2014.
- g. AR 600-29 (Fund-Raising Within the Department of the Army), 7 June 2010.
- h. AR 608-1 (Army Community Service), 19 October 2017.

2. Purpose. This directive establishes policy changes to fundraising, reporting, and informal funds activities for the Soldier and Family Readiness Group (SFRG) Program.

3. Applicability. This directive applies to the Regular Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and U.S. Army Reserve, unless otherwise stated. It also applies to Army retirees and Army appropriated fund and nonappropriated fund employees.

4. Policy. Effective immediately, the following policy supersedes Family Readiness Group (FRG) Program policy currently published in AR 608-1, Appendix J.

- a. **FRGs will be referred to as SFRGs**, and commands will take appropriate steps to correct the name in all program communications. Changing the name critically links the Soldier's readiness to the Family. It also ensures that commanders incorporate all unit

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personnel, including single Soldiers and their Families, into the communication activities and community network of the SFRG. The SFRG remains a unit commander's program formed in accordance with reference 1g and established at the company level.

b. The primary goals and expectations of SFRGs are to:

- (1) act as an extension of the unit command in providing official and accurate command information to Soldiers and their Families,
- (2) connect Soldiers and Families to the chain of command and provide support between the command and SFRG members,
- (3) connect SFRG members to available on- and off-post community resources, and
- (4) offer a network of mutual support.

c. SFRGs may conduct support and recognition activities that benefit members, such as births, birthdays, postdeployment recognition, and other social activities that benefit the SFRG. These activities greatly enhance Soldier and Family camaraderie, relieve stress, and reduce feelings of anxiety and isolation.

d. The unit will have a standard operating procedure that:

- will include an up-to-date alert roster and communication procedures.
- may include additional information such as frequency of staff and committee meetings and an outline of the unit communication network (including social media), control measures for informal funds, audits, and fundraising approval procedures. Commanders will not add additional reporting requirements to the operation and execution of SFRGs.

Commanders may consider an alternative naming convention for their SFRG provided the SFRG and its standard operating procedure meets the requirements and intent of Army policy and regulations and is approved by the next higher commander.

e. SFRGs, at all levels, are encouraged to maximize the use of social media to meet the goals of the SFRG, in accordance with paragraph 4b. Commanders must ensure SFRG social media communication complies with social media policies at <https://www.army.mil/socialmedia/> and reference 1f.

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f. Informal Funds

(1) Authority. Commanders may authorize their SFRG to maintain one informal fund for non-mission-essential activities (reference 1c) in accordance with this directive. No more than one SFRG informal fund may be authorized for a unit. SFRG informal funds are held in trust by Army personnel acting in their official capacities or by designated volunteers.

(2) Restrictions. Appropriated funds will not fund social activities. SFRGs are not established solely to raise funds, solicit donations, or manage large sums of money. SFRG informal funds may not be deposited or mixed with appropriated funds; unit morale, welfare, and recreation funds; the unit's cup and flower funds; or any individual's personal funds. Unauthorized use of SFRG informal funds includes, but is not limited to, purchasing items or services that should be paid for with appropriated funds (for example, Government supplies and equipment, and postage for official command communication); purchasing traditional military gifts, such as Soldier farewell gifts unrelated to Family readiness; and donating to a charity or providing financial assistance to an SFRG member in need. SFRG informal funds will not exceed a cap of \$10,000 at any given time in a calendar year from all sources. Brigade or equivalent commanders have the authority to grant an exception for an increase up to \$25,000 for a period not to exceed 3 months. Brigade or equivalent commanders can renew this exception once every 6 months.

(3) Fund Custodian. The unit commander will designate in writing a primary and alternate fund custodian. The primary and alternate fund custodian may be a Soldier or volunteer, but may not be the unit commander, first sergeant, the Soldier Family Readiness Liaison, or the SFRG leader. The fund custodian and alternate must not be scheduled to deploy for more than 30 days within a 12-month period. Commanders will ensure that custodians will, at a minimum, receive informal fund training and additional training as needed.

(4) Reporting. Reporting informal funds is limited to the following: A report on the SFRG informal fund activity is required and will be provided to the unit commander, or designee, in the unit's chain of command no later than 30 days after the end of the calendar year. An informal fund report is also required when a change of command or change of custodian occurs. Commanders may request an audit of a unit informal fund at their discretion in accordance with reference 1d.

g. Fundraising. SFRG fundraising will be approved at the battalion level (or equivalent), after consultation with the local ethics counselor. A copy of the approval (memorandum or email) will be forwarded to the garrison commander. SFRG fundraising is authorized near the installation's officially sanctioned commerce (for example, Army and Air Force Exchange Service). By exception, off-post fundraising

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may occur with the approval of the garrison commander after consultation with the local ethics counselor. Fundraising for reserve component SFRGs is authorized proximal to the armory or readiness center or within the local community after consultation with the local ethics counselor and upon approval by the O-6 commander in the chain of command.

(1) SFRGs may not engage in external fundraising with commercial or private entities and may not solicit gifts and donations. However, in accordance with reference 1e and with the advice of an ethics counselor, commanders may, in response to an appropriate inquiry, inform potential donors of the needs of the Army in relation to assisting Army Families.

(2) SFRGs may not enter into commercial sponsorship agreements. Commercial sponsorship is an agreed upon arrangement under which a business provides assistance, funding, goods, equipment, or services in exchange for public recognition or other promotional opportunities on the installation.

5. Quality Assurance. An inspection of the unit SFRG as part of a Command or an Organization Inspection Program is not required.

6. Proponent. The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) is the proponent for this policy and will approve exceptions to the policy in this directive. The Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management and the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 will incorporate the provisions of this directive into AR 608-1 and AR 600-20 within 2 years of the date of this directive.

7. Duration. This directive is rescinded upon publication of the revised regulations.



Mark T. Esper

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