

TO THE POINT



Army Emergency Relief Annual Campaign

March 1- May 15th 2018

What is it?

Financial security is a key element of a ready and resilient force. The Army Emergency Relief (AER) Annual Campaign is conducted from March 1 through May 15 in order to increase Soldier awareness of this benefit, as well as to give Soldiers the opportunity to help their fellow Soldiers by donating. Local commanders can adjust their campaign dates as their mission dictates. **STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION AND THE THEME FOR 2018!**

AER is a private nonprofit organization incorporated in 1942 to relieve financial distress of Soldiers and their dependents. Today, AER provides financial assistance to Soldiers, Retirees and their Families in the form of no-interest loans and grants in support of a variety of needs including:

Emergency assistance for rent, food, travel, car repair, funeral, medical and dental expenses, car seats, repair/replacement of appliances and HVAC equipment, rental cars, replacement vehicles, cranial helmets and furniture.

- Children and spouse scholarships.
- Grants to Soldiers medically evacuated from combat theaters.
- Support to Families of fallen Soldiers

The Army supports AER and its annual AER Campaign through mission, installation, and garrison commanders and CSMs personally attending campaign kick-off events to increase awareness and offer Soldiers the opportunity to donate to AER. Stay tuned for the AER Annual Campaigns' 2018 theme!



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West Point Army Community Service



Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention

Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) in October helped to raise awareness of the warning signs of relationship abuse and to help individuals and couples address the problems early before it turns into domestic violence. The ACS/Family Advocacy Program brought awareness of the impact of domestic violence on families by holding DVAM Commander Proclamation signings at West Point, Picatinny and Ft. Hamilton, display tables with information about domestic violence at various locations at the three installations, a 1 mile walk at West Point, and offered stress management and couple's communication classes.

Domestic Violence awareness does not stop with DVAM. Domestic violence is a year round issue of concern.

DID YOU KNOW:

A woman is beaten every 9 seconds in the U.S. If you count to 9, a woman somewhere in the U.S. was just beaten.

1 in 7 men will be victims of severe violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime

1 in 5 women will be victims of severe violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime

2 in 5 gay or bisexual men will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime

Intimate partner violence is the leading cause of female homicide and injury related deaths during pregnancy

Victims are subjected to physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse or a combination of the four

If you or anyone you may know is a victim of domestic violence, you have **two reporting options:**

1. Unrestricted reporting: police and command involvement

2. Restricted reporting: no police and/or command involvement, unless a serious incident that warrants an exception.

If you are experiencing problems in your relationship, whether it be distrust, frequent arguments, stress, anger, financial problems contributing to family discord, take action and seek help through any of the organizations listed below:

Military OneSource- 1-800-342-9647

National Domestic Violence Hotline- 1-800-799-7233

Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC)- 845-219-4199

West Point Victim Advocate Helpline – 609-667-4534

Behavioral Health Family Advocacy – 845-938-3441

Join us in a year round campaign to eliminate domestic or intimate partner violence. Attend the free classes on stress and anger management, parenting, and couples communication at ACS, schedule your Unit trainings on domestic violence and child abuse awareness and prevention. For more information contact the Family Advocacy Program Manager (FAPM) at 845-938-0633.

Five helpful hints for your off-season PCS

For more than 500,000 Service Members and their families, summertime is synonymous with smells of cardboard and paper, and the sound of packing tape ripping in the air. However, many also move between September and April. While PCSing in general can prove difficult, relocating in the fall and winter can present its own unique set of challenges. Here are some tips to help make your off-season PCS go smoothly.

1. Housing

No matter where you go, the housing market is all about supply and demand. During the summer months, there is a high supply and an even greater demand. It's not uncommon to look at upwards of 10 to 15 houses before finally being able to secure one that hasn't been snatched up by someone else.

However, for those relocating during the off-peak season, this can work to your advantage. While the housing inventory may be lower, you will have greater flexibility in choosing your location and can take time to decide which house or village suits you best. Landlords may also be more willing to negotiate to fill a vacant house.

2. Schools

If you have school-aged children, moving during the middle of the academic year can be an emotional and challenging prospect. Being the new kid at the beginning of the year is hard enough, so make the transition easier for your kids and yourself. If you know which school your child will be attending, make contact early and explain the situation. Often, you can find information online, including [registration packets and the required documents](#). If a school physical is necessary, complete it before you move. It'll be one less thing to have to worry about when you get to your destination.

When your child leaves his or her current school, ask teachers to put together a summary of what has been covered in class thus far. It can help your child's new teachers better understand any gaps in curriculum. If you are transferring out of a [DODEA school](#), please be aware that there are specific early withdrawal dates. These are designed to help students not lose credits due to a mid-year move.

[School liaison officers \(SLOs\)](#) can assist with connecting youth to a local student in the same grade. SLOs can also help connect you to information about events and activities in the community and schools. Request a youth sponsor on the SLO webpage for your installation. Once school starts, student ambassadors are also available in most middle and high schools and some elementary schools to make your transition to the new school easier. Ask the SLO if this is available in your new location. If there isn't a formal program in the school, don't despair! Most guidance counselors will assist with "introductions" to a student with common interests if a request is made. Ask your SLO for help. School Liaison Officers help students make connections for a smooth transition!



Got the PCS blues? Sometimes children may get frustrated with the fact that you had to move, or maybe they just don't feel comfortable yet no matter what you try. There are lots of people and resources ready to help your child cope with the emotional impact of the move!

* [Military Family Life Counselors \(MFLCS\)](#) – provide short term confidential counseling support to military children and families.

* [DODEA school counselors/ psychologists](#)

3. Weather

It's amazing how much of a role weather can play in your move. Periods of bad weather can often delay shipping times, especially with household goods. When prepping your unaccompanied baggage, throw in a few extra blankets if you're moving somewhere cold. Heading to the tropics? Trade the blankets for some beach chairs and towels.

Shipping a vehicle to your destination? If you're heading to frigid climes, be sure to have your vehicle inspected and leave the winter tires on before you ship it.

4. Holidays

The fall and winter are full of holidays — Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas are all within a two-month period. If you have special traditions during the holidays, be sure to set aside a few favorite decorations. You can either send them ahead via the postal service or put them in your unaccompanied baggage. You may not get your household goods for a while, but at least you can still enjoy some comforts of home from your loaner furniture.

5. Pack a little extra patience and creativity

Moving, no matter what time of year, is always challenging. Having extra patience is always easier said than done — especially when your shipment is delayed by an East Coast ice storm or your vehicle isn't equipped with the right tires. Just breathe and remember that sometimes the only thing in your control is your reaction. Don't fret when you realize that your boogie boards are in your unaccompanied baggage to Germany. You've just discovered an awesome way to sled down that sweet hill in your neighborhood.

For more information contact the ACS Relocation Readiness Program at 845-938-3487.





Family Advocacy Program “Wee Read”

Wee Read celebrated its second birthday this past July and continues to meet the first and third Thursdays of each month, 0900-1000, in the Army Community Service (ACS) Resiliency Center, 2nd floor of Building 626 on Buffalo Soldier Field. The program is for children, ages birth through 4 years of age and parent(s) as a time to enjoy a book or two and a related craft activity. A goal of **Wee Read** is to provide an early literacy learning experience for children and helpful tips for parents to continue that learning wherever they may go. Book handling behaviors, talking about the pictures and words in the book and involving children in the story are a few of the ways in which **Wee Read** shares a reading experience. For more information please contact Family Advocacy at (845) 938-3369 or better yet, participate in **Wee Read** - hope to see you there!

The next scheduled dates for **Wee Read** are:

January 4th and 18th
February 1st and 15th
March 1st and 15th



The Power of Play



Free and unstructured play is essential to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children. Here are a few reasons unstructured play is so important:

Play is significant to healthy development of the brain.

Undirected play helps children learn how to work collaboratively, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts, and learn self-advocacy skills.

When play is child-driven, children practice decision-making skills, move at their own pace, discover areas of interest on their own, and ultimately engage fully in the passions they wish to pursue.

Free play offers children the ability to develop creativity, leadership and group skills.

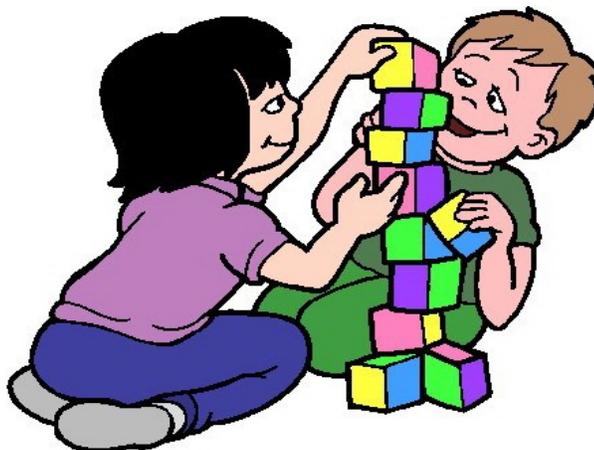
Play offers parents a wonderful opportunity to engage fully with their children and other adults with children of a similar age.

Play allows for peer interactions, an important component of social-emotional learning.

Free, child-driven, creative play protects against the effects of pressure and stress.

And play is fun!

Army Community Service provides an opportunity for children and parents to play, learn and make new friends in a safe unstructured play environment. Join us at **Wee Ones Open Play Group** every Monday 9:30-11:00 AM at the Youth Center, Building 500. Find the latest information on www.facebook.com/ArmyCommunityService or call Family Advocacy on (845) 938-3369 for more information.





ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN IS YOUR VOICE FOR CHANGE- COMMUNITY MEMBERS USE AFAP TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE AT WEST POINT

The Army Family Action Plan makes improvements to the West Point Community and the Army at large.

Three active issues were reviewed at the Commander's Steering Committee meeting held on 16 October 2017. One new issue was prioritized for adoption into the AFAP process for this year.

ISSUE UPDATES:

Issue 16-01, Dog Park for residents of Stony Lonesome II: Residents of Stony Lonesome II have requested a dog park to be made available for animals of residents in this housing area. The Family members, who reside at the top of the hill, stated it is difficult and inconvenient to drive the children and the Family pet to dog parks on lower post to allow their dog's free time to exercise. A community grant was received in 2017 in the amount of \$13,000 and will be used to upgrade the larger dog park located near K Lot on lower post off Washington Road. FMWR is researching the costs of additional staffing to maintain an additional dog park the Stony Lonesome housing area and financial considerations would need to be reviewed with the feasibility to maintain another dog park. The Garrison Commander stated to keep this issue open and add to consideration if funding becomes available.



Issue 14-02, Living Conditions in the Single Soldier barracks: This issue concerns the current living conditions for Single Soldiers residing in the barracks. Building 624 is currently in contract and the contractor for the HVAC work is expected to be completed on 23 October. The Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Maintenance office will sweep the building following contract work to address maintenance items prior to the single Soldiers re-occupying the barracks. The plan is to move the Single Soldiers from Building 620 and consolidate them into

Building 624 with a target move date of the first week of December 2017. Building 620 is in the design phase and RCI will work with DPW to determine the usage of the building based on needs and demands.

Issue 11-07 (DA Issue 679), Creditable civil service career tenure requirements for Federally employed spouses of service members and Federal employees: This issue was forwarded to the DA for resolution. In July 2015, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) concurred with this issue. The OPM policy has been changed and the result is if the Civilian employee has a break in service, both military spouses and Federal employees will still get credit for the time serviced and this time can be utilized for them to be eligible for career employment tenure. The new regulation was completed and guidance removing the 30 day gap in service was removed by OPM and was published. This issue has expanded to all Federal employees in the U.S. Government and all branches of service. OPM has published changes in the Federal Register for comment. The changes were published in the first quarter of FY17. This issue was closed as completed at the AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) Meeting held on 20 July.

UPDATE

NEW AFAP ISSUE:



Issue 18-01. Outdoor swimming area on West Point - Usage of Delafield Pond area: FMWR stated there are two courses of action for funding a swimming area on West Point. Military construction (MILCON) funds could be sought to pay for a new fitness center/aquatics center on lower post. Fort Bliss and Fort Benning have both developed indoor year round swimming areas combined with a fitness center. The second course of action could be seeking Non-appropriated Funds (NAF) major construction funds to cover the costs of the project. This option is not viable as there is not enough funding across the enterprise to support such a large NAF project. The Garrison Commander recommended to enter this issue into the AFAP process and review long term options of partners and funding to support this project.

Be an agent of change!

Submit your recommendation for how West Point and the Army can improve quality of life.

All success stories originated as an idea that someone decided to pursue. To submit an issue for AFAP or for more information on the AFAP Program, please call Jen Partridge, the Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator at (845) 938-3655 or email: Jennifer.partridge@usma.edu

Military Saves Week

February 26—March 3, 2018



What is it?

It is an annual opportunity for installations and organizations to promote good savings behavior and a chance for service members and their families to assess their own saving status.

How can you participate?

Set a Goal: What to Save For

Saving money, improving your financial life, building wealth. It all starts when you set a goal and make a plan to reach that goal. So what is your goal? Set up an emergency cash fund? Get out of debt? Make a down payment on a car or home? Sock away money for college or retirement?

Make a Plan: How to Save

When it comes to saving money, the sooner you start, the better. It's not an act that's accomplished overnight, but a process that happens gradually and grows over time. Just remember, Start Small, Think Big.

Making ends meet can be a challenge. And in today's tough economy, you may wonder how it's possible to spare anything. But any amount saved - a quarter, a dollar - is progress. Those quarters and dollars add up. As you get into the habit of routinely "paying into your savings" you'll see the money you're setting aside grow.

FOUR Saving Strategies:

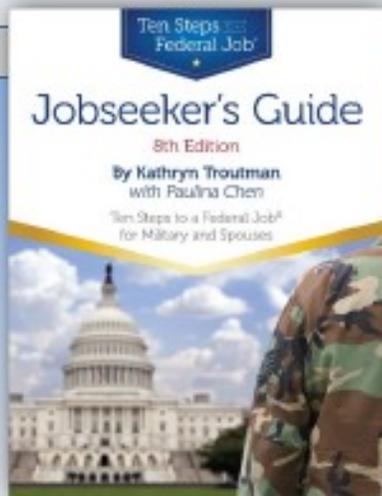
- 1. Save for emergencies:** Having an emergency savings fund may be the most important difference between those who manage to stay afloat and those who are sinking financially.
- 2. Pay off High Cost Debt:** The best investment most borrowers can make is to pay off consumer debt with double-digit interest rates. For example, if you have a \$3,000 credit card balance at 19.8%, and you pay the required minimum balance of 2% of the balance or \$15, whichever is greater, it will take 39 years to pay off the loan. With accumulating interest, you will pay more than \$10,000 in interest charges.
- 3 Save automatically using an allotment with myPay:** These savings will provide funds for emergencies, future consumer purchases, home purchase, school tuition, or even retirement (also see Tip #4). You can use one (or more) of your six discretionary allotments to automatically transfer funds monthly from your into a savings account. Saving automatically is the easiest **and most successful** way to save. What you don't see, you will probably not miss.
- 4. Participate in the Thrift Savings Plan:** The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a retirement savings and investment plan for Federal employees and members of the uniformed services, including the Ready Reserve. It was established by Congress in the Federal Employees' Retirement System Act of 1986 and offers the same types of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans.

****This information was gathered from militarysaves.org**



Employment Readiness Program Schedule

January – March 2018



10 Steps to a Federal Job

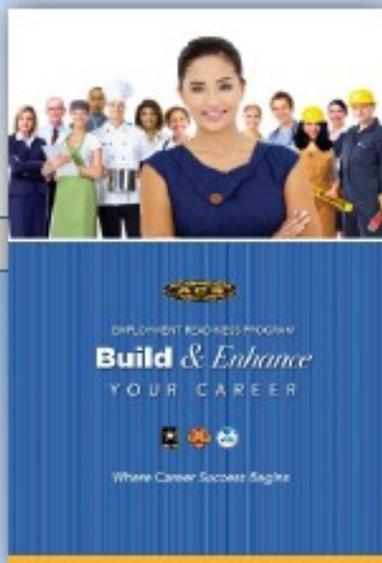
January 31 & March 28, 9am-12pm

This class will cover, in detail, the federal job application process to make it much more manageable! RSVP to reserve your seat and a free copy of Kathryn Troutman's "Jobseeker's Guide" 8th Edition, then leave inspired for your federal job search.

Military Spouse Preference Information

February 28, 9-11am

Calling all Military Spouses! Did you know there are preferences for Military Spouses when applying for federal positions? Come learn the ins and outs of Military Spouse Preference.



One-on-One Career Counseling

Available Upon Request

Do you need help with your resume? Not sure what career path you want to pursue? Need to prepare for the big interview? Sign up for an appointment and get that one-on-one attention. Just set up an appointment and we will take it from there!

Workshops take place at Army Community Service (ACS), Bldg. 622 unless otherwise noted. Schedule is subject to change at any time. Please call (845) 938-5658 or visit our web page at <https://westpoint.armymwr.com/programs/employment-readiness> or contact: Ryan Yarnell, Employment Readiness Program Manager at (845) 938-5658 or Ryan.Yarnell@usma.edu



Staffing Agencies

Staffing agencies can be a great solution for you if you have recently moved and are searching for a job. At the least, staffing agencies can provide you with a temporary job and, if you've moved recently, an opportunity to expand your professional network in a new location. You may even land a permanent position!



How Staffing Agencies Work

Recruiting and hiring employees can be costly for employers. Rather than handling the process internally, many companies turn to staffing agencies to fill their open positions. In a way, staffing agencies are like an external human resources department. When a company that works with a staffing agency has an opening, they will alert the agency, providing information about the type of candidate they want to fill the opening. A recruiter from the agency will search for potential candidates and line up the best candidates to interview directly with the company. Staffing agencies earn their profits from the companies they work with, not from the job candidates. If a staffing agency charges job candidates a fee, consider looking for another agency to work with.

Positions Staffing Agencies Offer

Staffing agencies work with companies to fill a range of openings, full-time and part-time, in a number of career fields. Usually openings fall into one of three categories.

- **Temporary** – This kind of opening is exactly what it sounds like. If offered a temporary position, you'll work for a company on a short-term basis. Short-term could mean as little as a week, possibly even less. It could also mean a few months.
- **Temporary-to-permanent or temporary-to-hire** – These positions allow companies to try you out as an employee. You will work for a company on a temporary basis, and if you are a good fit, you will eventually become a permanent employee of the company.
- **Permanent or direct hire** – The staffing company recruits you and the company then hires you. These positions usually require candidates to interview with both the staffing agency and the company.

Benefits of Staffing Agencies

Now that you understand how staffing agencies work and know the types of positions they may offer, you may want to consider using a staffing agency to help you.

- Find short-term work to pay the bills while you continue to search for a permanent position.
- Create a professional network in a new location. Even if staffing agencies are only able to offer temporary employment, you may build relationships that could ultimately lead to a full-time job.
- Gain skills to boost your resume. You never know what you might learn while working a temporary job.
- Discover job openings that aren't advertised to the public. Many companies that work with staffing agencies never advertise position openings directly.
- Test-drive a company. If a short-term opportunity crops up with a company you are interested in, here is your perfect opportunity to try it.
- Have flexibility in your work schedule. Staffing agencies offer plenty of temporary and part-time options if you need time off to complete schoolwork or to take care of the kids.
- Beat boredom. If you don't want to do the same thing day-in and day-out, you don't have to. Short-term assignments can be a great way to change up your routine.

If you are interested in working with a staffing agency, take a few initial steps. Make sure your resume is up to date. Consider writing a cover letter as well. For tips on writing a standout resume and cover letter, visit the **ACS**

Employment Readiness Program
Where Career Success Begins



westpoint.armymwr.com
845.938.5655

Paws for Kids

Exceptional Family Member Program
Presents the American Red Cross

JAN 9 & 23

FEB 6 & 20

MAR 6 & 20

ALL SESSIONS
ACS, BLDG 622
3:30-5PM

