

# **A Guide to Cooperative Extension System and Military Collaborations in Family Support**

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## **Introduction**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is a dynamic and multi-faceted federal department that meets the critical needs of Americans through its unique programs and partnerships. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is the federal partner with 109 land-grant universities and state and local Cooperative Extension Service offices working to ensure that effective, research-based programs are delivered *to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities* .

For more than 25 years, USDA, land-grant universities, the Extension Service, the Department of Defense (DoD), and military service components have partnered to support service members and their families. These highly effective partnerships have enhanced the lives of thousands of military families and youth, both on and off installation, connecting them to quality support and educational programs to meet their unique needs.

## **Evolution and Legislative Authority for Cooperative Extension Involvement in Military Programs**

Initial collaboration between the military and USDA began when the Navy Family Support Program Branch formalized family service programs in the Navy. Cooperative efforts between the Navy and the Extension Service were critical to establishing effective family programs. By working with Extension, the Navy could quickly and efficiently reach out and address the needs of families. Building on this initial success, numerous military/Extension collaborations have developed.

The 1985 Military Family Act (per Department of Defense [DoD] Authorization Act of 1986, PL 99-145, enacted November 8, 1995) established oversight and coordination of existing military family programs and made program and policy recommendations to the Secretary of Defense, the Armed Services, and the Congress. This led to an improved quality of life for military families. In 1985, the Farm Bill, Section 1472, allowed the United States Department of Agriculture Extension Service the opportunity to assist in this effort by giving it the authority to receive funds from other Federal agencies. Passage of this legislation greatly expanded the ability of USDA and the Extension Service to enter into mutually beneficial agreements. To augment the ability and authority to develop these cooperative programs, a Master Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU) has been in effect since 1986.

## **Levels of Involvement**

There are many levels of involvement for educational programming by the Extension Service on military installations.

### *Encouraging Participation in Local Community Programs*

Extension programs are available to the public. Extension personnel can notify military personnel, including installation commanders, family/community service center directors, public affairs officers, and other appropriate personnel of local program initiatives. Military personnel can then notify others of the availability of Extension educational programs. Military personnel often participate in Extension education activities as a result of public notification in newspaper, radio, and television announcements,

as well as newsletters. Examples of special activities include special interest meetings, workshops, seminars, leader training sessions, and home study courses. Military personnel are notified, invited, and welcomed to participate in the programming activities on the same basis as other citizens within the local community.

### *Consultation*

Extension may agree to provide a faculty member to share expertise for an ongoing program on a military installation. Extension and the military installation may agree to conduct a workshop for installation personnel, train military volunteer leaders, or a similar activity designed especially for a specific need of the installation. In this model, the military installation may work with Extension to purchase the educational resources and staff time. In some instances, the training may be provided with only a charge for educational materials.

### *Sharing Resource Materials*

Military personnel working with families are often interested in utilizing Extension educational resource materials such as publications and audio visuals. Installations can purchase materials in the same manner as other clients who desire multiple copies. Most Extension publications and materials have a set price. Some Extension resource materials, such as trainer manuals, usually require a session(s) to obtain the materials. Trainings may be held on or off the installation depending on circumstances and needs.

### *Delivering Special Programs*

Some military installations partner with Extension to locate one or more Extension professionals part-time or full-time on an installation to provide educational programs for military personnel and families. These long-term projects require cooperative planning. In most cases, a charge will be made for the customized program.

### *Opportunities for Collaboration*

Common concerns of the military community include readiness and retention of service members in military units, quality child care, and the employability of military spouses. It is widely accepted in military circles that a service member's overall satisfaction with military service is directly related to his or her perception that the needs the family are being met.

The majority of Extension military family and youth programs currently in place focus on promoting strong family relationships built on sound financial ground and effective communication, and access to quality child care and after school programming enhance their quality of life. In many respects, the needs of military families and youth are no different than those experienced by their civilian counterparts. However, there are unique considerations inherent in a military lifestyle. Deployment, the fluctuating family support associated with geographic dispersion, and the implications of military service, intensify common lifestyle concerns for military families. Opportunities for collaboration in areas of Extension expertise abound, including.

- 4-H Youth Development
- Child Care and School-Age Care Programs
- Family Caregiving
- Family Financial Readiness
- Family Life Education
- Family Member Employment
- Food Safety and Food Security
- Home Care, Maintenance and Energy Use
- Nutrition and Health
- Volunteer Development

## **Benefits of Collaboration**

### *For the Military*

Financial concerns and family problems negatively affect job productivity and readiness. Providing training to families in effective money management skills, family communications, and in problem solving is a sound and wise investment. This investment can help military personnel become more productive, dependable, and motivated and, therefore, a stronger asset to the military. The utilization of Extension by military installations will compound the value recovered from taxpayers' dollars and serve as an outstanding example of how current military monies can be stretched to meet the demands imposed by a more conservative national economy.

### *For Extension Service*

The military is a significant targeted audience with specific needs directly related to the national initiatives identified for Extension. Economic stability and self sufficiency are goals of Extension as well as the military and contribute to the economic well-being of communities and readiness of military personnel.

Families and youth who participate in successful Extension programs can influence lifelong use and support of Extension wherever they may reside. Additionally, military families are major economic contributors to communities. They contribute through their purchasing power as well as increasing the tax base for the community.

## **Funding Options**

At the federal level, an Interagency Agreement is developed, with two primary types of funding arrangements for funding Extension programs on military installations-Grants and Cooperative Agreements .

### **Interagency Service Support Agreements**

An Interagency Agreement is an agreement between two Federal agencies to exchange funds for the delivery of educational programs. USDA/NIFA is a Federal agency and can enter into an Interagency Agreement with a military installation as authorized by DoD and military service regulations. (Within

DoD, Interagency Agreements as governed by DoD Instruction (DoDI) 4000.19 as referenced in DoDI 1015.10 (July 6, 2009) in accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02 (Reference (c)) to establish and implement policy, assign responsibilities, and prescribe procedures for operating and managing programs for military MWR programs (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/101510p.pdf>).

### **Grants and Cooperative Agreements**

Once the Interagency Agreement is in place, USDA/NIFA establishes a Grant or Cooperative Agreement with a state Extension Service to complete the work of programming and/or development of educational/research products.

### **Brief Outline of Procedures for Initiating an Interagency Service Support Agreement (ISSA)**

1. Representatives of a military component or installation and the Extension Service discuss potential for educational programs and cooperation.
2. A draft plan for Extension programming is developed by military and Extension representatives. Contact NIFA to obtain a template for the plan, which must include:
  - a. Situation statement
  - b. Project objectives
  - c. Program components
  - d. Staff requirements
  - e. Proposed budget
  - f. Target audience
  - g. Educational methods and procedures
  - h. In-kind services to be provided by the base and by Extension
3. Extension service sends the draft of the proposed project to NIFA.
4. NIFA contacts the military component or installation to negotiate the interagency agreement.
5. After the interagency agreement is executed, the military command submits a Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR) to NIFA for a specific fiscal year or period of performance, which precipitates the transfer of project funds (grant or cooperative agreement funds) according to established grants.gov and NIFA guidelines, including competition in the awarding of discretionary grants and cooperative agreements.

### **Initiating Contact**

Assistance in coordinating Military /Extension any programming, including programs at the major command level, among installation staff from more than one state, or outside the continental U.S. can be made through NIFA:

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Institute of Youth, Family and Communities

v-202-720-2908

f-202.720.9366

Regular Mail:

1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-2225

Overnight and Other Deliveries:

800 9th St. SW  
Waterfront Centre  
Washington, D.C. 20024

**For additional information**

Contact Brent Elrod, USDA/NIFA

[belrod@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:belrod@nifa.usda.gov) or 202.690.3468.

## **Appendix A: Understanding the Military Organization**

### **Service Components**

Each Branch of Service, though similar in many respects, has its own distinct character and identity. It is common to view all Branches as simply "Department of Defense;" however, it is important to understand and respect the unique characteristics of each Service in developing and maintaining successful collaborative relationships. Below is a brief description of Service components.

### **Department of Defense**

The Department of Defense (DoD Directive 5100.1) is responsible for providing the military forces needed to deter war and protect the security of the United States. The major elements of these forces are the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. Under the President, who is also Commander-in-Chief, the Secretary of Defense exercises authority, direction, and control over the Department which includes the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, three military Departments, nine Unified Combatant Commands, the DoD Inspector General, sixteen Defense Agencies, and nine DoD Field Activities.

### **Army**

The Army is organized, trained, and equipped primarily for prompt and sustained combat operations on land. It is responsible for the preparation and sustainment of land forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war except as otherwise assigned and, according to integrated joint mobilization plans, for the expansion of the peacetime components of the Army to meet the needs of war. The Army is a total force, comprised of both Active and Reserve forces.

### **Navy**

American Naval Forces provide a powerful yet unobtrusive presence, strategic deterrence, control of the seas, extended and continuous on-scene crisis response, project precise power from the sea, and provide sealift if large scale war fighting scenarios emerge.

### **Marine Corps**

Fundamentally expeditionary and naval in character, the Marine Corps is the premier crisis response force in the world. With the Navy, Marine forces can go anywhere rapidly, sustaining themselves from sea or land installations. Marines are self-contained, packed, and ready to deploy for sustained periods without supply support.

### **Air Force**

The mission of the Air Force is to defend the United States through control and exploitation of air and space. The Air Force is responsible for providing aircraft and missile forces, land-based air forces, primary aerospace forces, airlift capability, space research and development, and assistance to the NASA space program.

## **Coast Guard**

Under the auspices of the Department of Transportation, the Coast Guard is the primary Federal agency with maritime authority for the United States. Its multi-mission is to respond to public needs in a wide variety of activities and to shift emphasis on short notice when the need arises. This includes protection of National security and interests, enforcement of maritime laws, effective U.S. presence in polar regions, and cooperation in joint maritime ventures. Upon declaration of war or when the President directs, the Coast Guard operates as a Service of the Navy.

## **National Guard**

The purpose of the National Guard is to provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the Armed Forces in time of war and National emergency.

## **Veterans Administration**

The United States has the most comprehensive system of assistance for veterans of any nation in the world. The VA health care system has grown from 54 hospitals in 1930, to include 171 medical centers; more than 350 outpatient, community, and outreach clinics; 126 nursing home care units; and 35 domiciliaries. VA health care facilities provide a broad spectrum of medical, surgical, and rehabilitative care.

## **Acronyms**

An excellent reference for understanding military acronyms is the DoD Dictionary of Military Terms available at [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod\\_dictionary/](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/) . Another widely used site is [www.milterms.com](http://www.milterms.com) . For a hard cover resource, consult *Dictionary of Military Abbreviations* written by Polmar, Warren, and Wertheim, and published by the Naval Institute Press (118 Maryland Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21402).

## **Time**

Military time operates on the 24 hour clock. Thus, 1 p.m. becomes 1300 or 1300 hours and 1 a.m. becomes 0100 hours. Therefore, 3:25 p.m. would be 1525 or 1525 hours.

## **Calendar**

The military expresses dates by day, month, and year – in that order. Months are abbreviated by using the first three letters of the month. For example: January 23, 1996, is expressed as 23 JAN 96.



**Appendix B: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING between the EXTENSION SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE and the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to promote cooperative efforts by the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) (referred to collectively as "the agencies") to educate and assist military personnel and their families in home economics, to include: food and nutrition; financial, resource and energy management; child development; family life education; and interpersonal and parenting skills. This Memorandum of Understanding defines in general terms the basis on which the agencies will cooperate in activities of mutual interest in order to coordinate efforts and eliminate duplication and waste in achieving this purpose. The Memorandum of Understanding between the agencies dated 20 December 1983 is canceled and superseded by this Memorandum of Understanding.

II. Background and Authority

The Extension Service engages in cooperative extension work to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, pursuant to the Smith-Lever Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 341-349), section 1444 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3221), and Title V of the Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended (7 U.S.C. 2661-2669).

The Department of Defense provides numerous community service programs to improve the quality of life for military Service personnel and their families. These programs are designed to ease the adjustment to the unique aspects of military life and to provide assistance during times of crisis and hardship. In addition, programs such as family support/service centers, child care, youth activities, family advocacy, and a myriad of other quality of life and morale enhancing activities substitute for similar programs normally provided by civilian entities.

These programs are provided directly from DoD resources or obtained from other government or civilian agencies. It is the Department of Defense's policy to encourage cooperation with existing government programs at all levels whenever possible in providing these services to military personnel and their families.

The Extension Service serves as the educational arm of the USDA and is responsible for carrying out educational programs in cooperation with the State Cooperative Extension Services located in both the 1862 and 1890 Land-Grant Universities, including Tuskegee University. These Cooperative Extension Services develop educational programs to provide information and technical assistance to the general public.

The Extension System with its network of highly trained professional staff, located in each State and Territory, is in an excellent position to cooperate with local installation commanders in providing

educational programs and materials to enable military personnel and their families to make better use of family resources, resolve problems, and create a satisfying quality of life.

III. The Extension Service-USDA will:

- A. Inform the Directors and Administrators of the Cooperative Extension Services in all States and Territories of the purpose and intent of this Memorandum of Understanding.
- B. Encourage Directors and Administrators of State Cooperative Extension Services to establish cooperative endeavors with installation commanders in supplying educational programs and materials designed to assist military personnel and their families in the area of home economics, to include: food and nutrition; financial, resource and energy management; child development; family life education; and interpersonal and parenting skills.

IV. The U.S. Department of Defense will:

- A. Inform the military Services of DoD of the purpose and intent of this Memorandum of Understanding.
- B. Encourage installation commanders to cooperate with the Director and Administrator of the Cooperative Extension Service at the Land-Grant Universities in the State in which the installation is located in supplying educational programs or materials covered by this Memorandum of Understanding to military personnel and their families.

V. Agency Responsibilities

- A. DoD and USDA will assign staff on a collateral duty basis to coordinate the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding.
- B. This Memorandum of Understanding does not constitute a financial obligation or serve as a basis for expenditures. Each agency will utilize its own resources, including expending its own funds, to implement this Memorandum of Understanding.
- C. If an activity or project is identified that will require an advance or reimbursement of funds between the agencies, a separate agreement shall be developed in writing, which shall set forth the specific statutory authority supporting the transaction and the applicable terms and conditions agreed upon for the conduct of the activity.
- D. Releases to the press, public announcements, and communications with the Congress concerning joint programs conducted under this Memorandum of Understanding may be made by either agency following coordination with the other agency.

VI. Effective Date

This Memorandum of Understanding is effective upon the signature of the authorized officials of USDA and DoD and shall continue in force indefinitely. It may be canceled by either agency by giving a 90-day written notice to the other agency.

## Appendix C: Application Submission Instructions

Each applicant seeking special project funding for an extension activity must file an application. This application submission package provides the forms, instructions, and other information to be used in applying for project funds.

Applications should be submitted in response to program solicitation announcements. The requirements setting forth what must be included in the application will be contained in the program solicitation announcements. Careful adherence to guideline requirements facilitates the processing and review of proposals. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) encourages all applicants to read the specific solicitation or announcement carefully to determine exactly what must be included in each application.

Please be advised that all applications **must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov**.

Information pertaining to electronic submission can be found at the following NIFA website:

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> .

In FY 2010, applications must be submitted using a Non-competitive RFA. Applications submitted on other forms will not be accepted. The FY 2010 Guidelines for Application Preparation and Submission of Federal Administration Research Grants should be used to prepare your application. Part IV. of the Guidelines should be used in the preparation of an application in conjunction with the NIFA Electronic Application Guide. The Guidelines, application forms, and instructions are available at

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/UpdateOffer?id=14512>.

Questions concerning the interpretation of policies and guidelines should be directed to the Office of Extramural Programs.

## Appendix D: Resources

### U. S. Military Installations

This listing of military installations is provided by Military.com at

[http://benefits.military.com/misc/installations/Browse\\_USMap.jsp](http://benefits.military.com/misc/installations/Browse_USMap.jsp) . Clicking on any installation site listed on the page will produce specific information regarding that installation. Another excellent source for up-to-date information is <http://www.defense.gov/faq/pis/sites.html>

### Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Land Grant Colleges and Universities are partners with NIFA. Clickable, printable, and text versions of Land-Grant system maps are at [http://nifa.usda.gov/qlinks/partners/state\\_partners.html](http://nifa.usda.gov/qlinks/partners/state_partners.html) .