



- Minimum Standards for Army Childcare
- Installation Volunteer Coordinators
- Dental & Vision Insurance for Federal Employees - Increased SGLI from \$50k to \$400k
- Increased Military Annual Leave Carryover
- Expanded EFMP Respite Care
- Montgomery GI Bill Benefits to Dependents
- Medical Entitlements for College Age Dependents
- Operations Security Training for Family Members
- Military Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
- School Liaison Officers (SLOs)
- Fort Carson Dog Park
- Fort Carson Post Shuttle

FORT CARSON ISSUE STATUS			
Pg.	Year	Issue	Status
2	2019	Casualty Assistance Support for Survivors of Retired Soldiers	Complete
3	2020	Childcare Eligibility for Survivors	Active
4	2020	USPS Custom Forms Acceptance at Fort Carson Post Office	Complete
5	2020	General Schedule (GS) Employee Credit for Deployments	Complete
6	2020	Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW) Program Tax on Pay	Active
6	2021	TRICARE Coverage of Cold Therapy for Cancer Patients	Active
7	2021	Move.mil Vulnerability Resulting in Danger to Victims of Domestic Violence	Active
8	2021	Pet Allowance for OCONUS Relocation	Unattainable
9	2021	Liaison Officer (LNO) for OCONUS Pet Relocation	Active
9	2021	Bereavement as a Covered Category for Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP)	Active
10	2021	OPM Guidance on Hazardous Nature of Firefighting	Active
10	2021	Supervisory Firefighter Army Position Description Update	Active
11	2021	DA Firefighter Advocacy Support for Workmen's Compensation Claims	Closed - Rewritten
12	2021	DA Civilian Medical Petition for Regular Retirement	Closed - Rewritten
13	2021	Supervisory Interview Requirement for Workmen's Compensation Claims	Closed - Rewritten
14	2021	Advocacy for Injured and/or Ill DA Firefighters	Active
15	2021	Routine Health Assessments for DA Firefighters	Active

15	2021	Standards for Documenting Exposures for DA Emergency Personnel	Active
16	2021	Hiring/Retention Incentives for Child and Youth Services (CYS) Direct Care Staff	Complete
17	2021	Exceptional Eligibility Transitional Compensation (TC) for Abused Dependents Benefit Inequality	Active
18	2022	Military Spouse Non-Competitive Appointment Disadvantage	Active
19	2022	Military Spouse Hiring Preference for Spouses of Retired Service Members at Final PCS	Active
20	2022	MTOE Authorization for Command Family Readiness Representative (CFRRs)	Active
23	2022	Lack of Pathways to Community Spaces in Older Housing Areas	Complete
24	2023	TRICARE Coverage for Helmet Molding Therapy	Unattainable
25	2023	Review of CYS Total Family Income (TFI) During Divorce Proceedings	Complete
26	2023	BOSS Opportunities for Senior Enlisted and Officers	Complete
27	2023	Expanded Fertility Treatment Options for Service members and Spouses	Active

Issue: Casualty Assistance Support for Survivors of Retired Soldiers

Scope: Retiree Survivor Spouses received limited support. They are often directed to resources rather than being accompanied by a CAO only to be told at the servicing Agency they need to speak to the sponsor, who is deceased.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2020

Proposed COA: Provide same level of CAO support for the Survivors of Retirees

Status: Complete

Update:

- **Issue #724: Casualty Assistance Support for Survivors of Retired Soldiers: Proponent: DCS, G-1. Issue Status: Complete.**
- Fort Stewart piloted a program where retirees volunteered to provide casualty assistance support to the retiree population. Pilot ran from Aug 21 to Feb 22. During the pilot, there were 449 Army retiree deaths in the FSGA area; of which, 212 PNOK requested casualty assistance. Of those 212, only three opted for a Retiree Volunteer CAO. The others requested assistance from the Casualty Assistance Centers Benefit Coordinator or an Active-Duty CAO. The pilot's documentation has been distributed to Korea and AMC/IMCOM G-1.
- Discussion: Focused on opportunities for retirees to volunteer, low return on investment.

Way Ahead:

Issue is closed as complete

Of Note:

AR 638-8, Army Casualty Program (07 June 2019), allows for assisting next of kin of deceased retired Soldiers. Excerpt:

5-12. Assisting next of kin of deceased retired Soldiers

a. In honor of their Service, CACs will provide assistance to the NOK of a retiree who dies. When contacted concerning a deceased retiree, the CAC will communicate with the NOK to determine the extent of assistance needed.

b. When Families of deceased retired Soldiers request assistance, CACs will assign a CAO.

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Issue: Childcare Eligibility for Survivors

Scope: DODI 6060.02, paragraph 4.d.1 addresses childcare eligibility for surviving spouses of military members who died from a combat related incident but does not address a general Active Duty related death. The language in 6060.02 paragraph 4.d.1 has created childcare eligibility issues placing children of Active Duty related deaths (other than combat) into the lowest priority code, causing a now-single parent to pay the highest premium on the CYS fee scale. Surviving spouse eligibility for Soldiers who have died from non-combat Active Duty related deaths are not identified in the DODI 6060.02 priority system resulting in the survivor's child(ren) receiving childcare on a space available basis only, and at the highest rate on the sliding fee scale.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2019 / 2020

Proposed COA: Amend DODI 6060.02 eligible patrons to include surviving spouses whose Active Duty Soldier passed away due to other than combat related incident (i.e. suicide, training accidents, illness).

Status: To be resubmitted for consideration

Progress:

- This issue was approved for elevation to IMCOM for consideration (4 December 19 Steering Committee meeting). The issue was returned with a recommendation to rewrite and resubmit.
- The issue has been rewritten and submitted for the FY20-21 AFAP process.

Way Ahead:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC)
- Issue will need to be resubmitted in 2022 in order to be included for consideration.

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Issue: USPS Custom Forms Acceptance at Fort Carson Post Office

Scope: The Fort Carson Post Office will not accept handwritten custom declaration forms. Family members shipping packages to deployed Soldiers are being refused shipment at the Installation Post Office if their package contains a handwritten custom declaration form and are being directed to go to a different location to generate and print the form. The handwritten custom declaration form is currently being accepted at a post office located off the installation. The refusal to take handwritten custom forms at the Fort Carson Post Office results in a challenge for some family members in finding a location to print the form, especially if they don't have the resources at home. It can lead additional costs for printing. By being unable to submit a handwritten custom declaration form, families can be faced with inconvenience, additional costs, and delay of shipment.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2020

Proposed COA: Educate Soldiers and Family Members about the change to the USPS policy, how to ship packages overseas, and provide them with a list of locations on the Installation where they can use a computer and print for little to no cost.

Status: Complete

Progress:

- Unable to elevate within AFAP process since the United States Postal Service is not within the purview of the United States Army.
- The issue was addressed locally. Handwritten customs declaration forms are no longer acceptable as of March 6, 2020. The United States Postal Service will no longer accept any article bearing a handwritten customs declaration form and customers should be directed to use PS Form 2976-R, USPS Customs Declaration and Dispatch Note located on the website. The action of not accepting handwritten custom forms is to occur at all facilities, but USPS is in a transition time where some may continue to accept. Eventually, all locations will not accept a handwritten customs declaration form.

Way Ahead:

Local Issue Completed

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Issue: General Schedule (GS) Employee Credit for Deployments

Scope: GS employee deployments are not annotated in the employee's personnel record and do not contribute to promotion. Civilian employees serve in the same capacity as Soldiers, making sacrifices to be away from their families and putting themselves in harm's way. Deployments for civilian employees are not annotated to personnel records for contribution to promotion/hiring preference similar to how deployments contribute to promotion (points) for soldiers.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2020

Proposed COA: Include annotation of civilian deployment in personnel records that assists in promotion ability.

Status: Complete

Progress:

- Response from (CPAC HR): The GS system works on the premise that the employee is responsible for managing their own volunteer assignments and evaluation input for career progression. Whereas service members are under a managed system where points are collected for promotion. GS employees do not follow the same promotion structure as a service member and are not subject to the same promotion practices. A GS employee may request a SF-50 to document their deployment. The GS employee should discuss their performance while deployed with their supervisor and can reach out to their Human Resources / Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) for more information.

Way Ahead:

Local Issue Completed

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Issue: Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW) Program Tax on Pay

Scope: When a General Schedule (GS) employee deploys through the Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW) program, their deployment pay is not tax free. Civilian employees serve in the same capacity as Soldiers, making sacrifices to be away from their Families and putting themselves in harm's way. Both Soldiers and civilians receive hazard pay during deployments but there is a discrepancy in the tax credit between the two populations. GS Employee pay while deployed should be without tax just as a Soldier's deployment pay is non-taxed.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2020

Proposed COA: Change the tax code to include GS employees participating in deployment through CEW program.

Recommended Status: To be resubmitted for consideration

Progress:

- Response (CPAC HR): CEW advised that changes to tax codes are enacted by Congress. This issue was approved for elevation to IMCOM for consideration (10 November 20 Steering Committee meeting).

Way Ahead:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC)
- Issue will need to be resubmitted in 2022 in order to be included for consideration.

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Issue: TRICARE Coverage of Cold Therapy for Cancer Patients

Scope: Cold therapy items such as scalp cooling caps and cooling gloves and socks used by cancer patients to diminish the effect chemotherapy drugs have on a patients scalp, hands, and feet are not an established TRICARE benefit. Items promote healing and mental health and are designed to reduce the amount of drug flowing through a patient's vessels, lessening the injury to local peripheral nerves (hands and feet) and reducing chances of hair loss. By not providing these cold therapy items as a benefit, TRICARE beneficiaries are required to purchase these items at their own expense with some even seeking financial assistance through Army Emergency Relief during an already stressful period.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Institute cold therapy coverage for cancer patients as a TRICARE benefit for all categories of beneficiaries.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Move.mil Vulnerability Resulting in Danger to Victims of Domestic Violence

Scope: The standard of using a dummy social security number for processing emergency move packets for victims of domestic violence within move.mil places victims at risk as a result of human error. Currently, the JTR emergency move packet contain a dummy social security number on the orders which is utilized to upload into move.mil; however, human error has resulted on occasion of the offender's social security number being used to upload rather than the dummy social security number. This error of incorrectly processing the social security number places the victim once again at risk because the offender is now able to see where the victim relocated to within move.mil.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Conduct a system redesign of Move.mil in the area of processing emergency move packets for victims of domestic violence.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Pet Allowance for OCONUS Relocation

Scope: There is currently no reimbursement or allowance for the transportation of a house hold pet as a result of an OCONUS PCS move and there is only a reimbursement for mandatory quarantine. As a result of the current environment and inflation, Military families have fewer options for transporting their multispecies families to and from overseas and shipping costs have increased significantly. Without some sort of reimbursement, service members will in some cases need to use pet shipping services which can cost thousands of dollars, depending on the size of the pet and where it's going to or coming from and go into debt, or worse, be forced to surrender their pet, an integral part of their support network, to a shelter.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Provide reimbursement/allowance for the cost associated with shipping pets during OCONUS PCS.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP, but was found to have been previously submitted by USAG Wiesbaden:

***Issue #747:** OCONUS Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Pet Entitlements. Proponent: G-1.*

***Issue Status:** Unattainable.*

***Update:** No consensus among the branches to authorize this entitlement. Conservative estimate on small animals up to large-sized dogs could cost an estimated \$180M annually.*

***Discussion:** Focused on what kind of pets, where do you draw the line, costs, AER assistance.*

Progress:

- The issue #747 was on the agenda for the AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) conducted in September of 2022.

Way Ahead:

Issue is closed as unattainable. VCSA asked DCS, G-9 to work with IMCOM/AMC to identify/advise other methods, communication, etc.... to assist Soldiers and Families.

Of Note:

Army Emergency Relief has a Pet Transportation Assistance Program:

<https://www.armyemergencyrelief.org/news/petassistance/>

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NEW DOD POLICY APPROVED

The Department of Defense has approved a new policy to cover pet travel expenses, like pet shipping or quarantine fees, incurred by Service members during a Permanent Change of Station (PCS). As of January 1, 2024, military Service members going through a PCS within the continental United States can be reimbursed up to \$550 for one household pet, either cat or dog, and up to \$2,000 for moves to or from a location outside the continental United States to cover costs related to the transportation of a pet.

The Services estimate that this new allowance may be used by an estimated 227,000 Service members. Historically, Service members paid the majority of out-of-pocket expenses to transport pets when assigned to a new duty station. This policy reduces that financial burden while recognizing the important role a pet plays in a military family's household.

Issue: Liaison Officer (LNO) for OCONUS Pet Relocation

Scope: There is currently no relocation assistance provided for OCONUS Pet Relocation. Service members are forced to research the process for sending their multispecies families going to and coming from OCONUS locations. Without assistance for OCONUS Pet Relocation, Service members and their Families need to research and understand country import requirements, required vaccinations for travel, timelines, special travel crates, and various required shipping methods based on the size of the pet and this results in thousands of dollars being spent and lost time of the Service member.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Establish LNOs for OCONUS Pet Relocation

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Bereavement as a Covered Category for Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (VLTP)

Scope: Bereavement is currently not a category of assistance covered under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program for DA Civilians because it is not classified as medical emergency or medical condition. Currently, at the discretion of the second level supervisor, an employee may be advanced up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave each leave year for family care or bereavement purposes essentially placing the employee in debt owed status if their leave is exhausted at the time of a loved one's death. This doesn't take into account the financial implications the death of a family member already has caused (travel, burial cost, etc.).

Bereavement can have a big impact on a person's mental health especially if it involves the death of an immediate family member; grief can manifest in physical pain and should be classified as a medical emergency or medical condition of the employee. By not offering bereavement as a category covered within VLTP, agencies face an increase in employee disengagement, higher employee turnover rate, and a negative impact on the employee's experience.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Include Bereavement as a category of assistance to participate in the Volunteer Leave Transfer Program

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: OPM Guidance on Hazardous Nature of Firefighting

Scope: The OPM Position Classification Standard for Fire Protection and Prevention Series, GS-0081 does not accurately depict the hazardous nature of firefighting. Where it does identify exposure to toxic materials and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive agents, it fails to identify the impact these exposures that could result in which includes cancer, heart disease, lung disease and other infectious diseases. While a hazard free work environment is not a reasonable or achievable goal in fire operations, accurately identifying hazards within the GS-0081 Series is necessary to conduct proper risk management for employees and affords them the opportunity to be advocates for their own health care.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Update the OPM Guidance to include certain diseases federal fire fighters can contract as a result of performing their position.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Supervisory Firefighter Army Position Description Update

Scope: The Supervisory Firefighter Army Position Description does not accurately reflect the duties of Supervisory Firefighters because it does not identify them serving as a fully trained member of a firefighting crew and engaging in firefighting operations. As a Supervisory Firefighter, they are involved in firefighting operations, especially in instances where they may not have proper coverage or the hazard in question requires additional support. By not having this identified in the position description, supervisory firefighters have an additional burden of proof when filing workmen's compensation claims and are denied because any injury/illness incurred while firefighting was not identified as being a duty of their position.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Update the Army Position Description for Supervisory Firefighters to include Firefighting Operations as a major duty.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: DA Firefighter Advocacy Support for Workmen’s Compensation Claims

Scope: Department of the Army (DA) Federal Firefighters currently lack advocacy and support with processing workmen’s compensation claims. Currently, DA Civilians are able to receive advocacy and support with processing their claims from the Office of Workmen’s Compensation Programs (OWCP) but the scope of OWCP is limited. The OWCP primarily serves a workforce that is highly administrative in nature and lacks a specialized hazardous work advocate needed for these types of workmen’s compensation claims. As a result of this lack of specialty and understanding by the OWCP, the full burden is placed on DA Firefighters and their family to research compensation benefits that are afforded to them while they are dealing with an injury or illness that was received as result of the hazardous work performed for the Department of the Army.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Conduct a system redesign that provides DA Firefighters with specialized advocacy and support when filing workmen’s compensation claims

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP, Closed, Rewritten, and Resubmitted

Progress:

- The ACS Fort Carson AFAP Team met with G-9 and G-1 representatives on 20 September 2022 in order to discuss and provide information on the following three issues:
 1. DA Firefighter Advocacy Support for Workmen’s Compensation Claims
 2. DA Civilian Medical Petition for Regular Retirement
 3. Supervisory Interview Requirement for Workmen’s Compensation Claims

Way Ahead:

It was determined that all three issues should be closed out, rewritten, and submitted as one issue since they all dealt in the area of advocacy, support, and education of benefits and processes. A new issue, titled “Advocacy for Injured and/or Ill DA Firefighters”.

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Issue: DA Civilian Medical Petition for Regular Retirement

Scope: There is currently no process for DA Civilian employees to petition to be extended regular retirement if their medically unfit decision is made within a set time of their traditional retirement and the cause of their medical diagnosis is as a result of their position held (i.e. firefighting operations). DA Civilian employees who are determined to be medically unfit for their position, must be terminated within 30 days of the finding. For DA Civilian employees who are planning a traditional retirement, this determination can happen very close to their retirement milestone, leaving them short of expanded retirement benefits by a very close margin, even if they are only a month or two from a traditional retirement. Without a formal petition process being implement, DA Civilians face catastrophic financial loss through no fault of their own but as a result of the services they provided to the Department of the Army.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Allow for DA Civilians to petition to be extended regular retirement if within window of retirement milestone.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP, Closed, Rewritten, and Resubmitted

Progress:

- The ACS Fort Carson AFAP Team met with G-9 and G-1 representatives on 20 September 2022 in order to discuss and provide information on the following three issues:
 1. DA Firefighter Advocacy Support for Workmen's Compensation Claims
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Issue: Supervisory Interview Requirement for Workmen’s Compensation Claims

Scope: Workmen’s compensation claims do not have a requirement to interview employers or supervisors in reference to their DA Civilians workmen's compensation claim prior to a verdict being rendered. Decisions are rendered solely off of one sided information that may not have an accurate portrayal of the cause of the workmen's compensation claim. For Active Duty Soldiers in the IDES Process, Commander's statements are included within the Soldiers claim providing an additional viewpoint but this same process is not afforded to Civilian employees. A verdict may be rendered incorrectly if a supervisor statement is not included as a part of the process.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Allow for DA Civilians to petition to be extended regular retirement if within window of retirement milestone.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP, Closed, Rewritten, and Resubmitted

Progress:

- The ACS Fort Carson AFAP Team met with G-9 and G-1 representatives on 20 September 2022 in order to discuss and provide information on the following three issues:
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Issue: Advocacy for Injured and/or Ill DA Firefighters

Scope: Department of the Army (DA) Federal Firefighters currently lack advocacy and support when processing workmen's compensation claims, and information about medical benefits, entitlements, and disability retirement as a result of their injuries and/or illnesses. DA Firefighters currently receive guidance with processing their benefits and entitlements from the Office of Workmen's Compensation Programs (OWCP) and/or Office of Personnel Management (OPM) but the scope of the guidance is limited for this demographic. DA Firefighters have unique issues when filing benefit claims as the date of injury for illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, infectious diseases, and behavioral health, are often unknown or caused by years of exposure while on duty. This places DA Firefighters at a disadvantage over their Civilian counterparts by placing the full burden on them and their families to research medical benefits that are afforded to them while they are dealing with an injury and/or illness that was received because of the work performed for the Department of the Army. Lack of advocacy can hinder the employee by resulting in missed deadlines, denied claims, reduced compensation, and overall inadequate support while navigating all options available. Another comparison is when a service member develops a medical condition and is referred to the Integrated Disability Evaluation System, they are appointed a PEBLO (Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer) to assist them throughout the process.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Provide DA Firefighters with a Liaison Officer that provides advocacy and support, specializing in workers compensation, information on medical benefits, entitlements, and retirement options as the result of injury and/or illness.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- The ACS Fort Carson AFAP Team met with G-9 and G-1 representatives on 20 September 2022 in order to discuss and provide information on the following three issues:
 1. DA Firefighter Advocacy Support for Workmen's Compensation Claims
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 3. Supervisory Interview Requirement for Workmen's Compensation Claims

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Routine Health Assessments for DA Firefighters

Scope: DODI 6055.05-M (Occupational Medical Examinations and Surveillance Manual), paragraph C3.3.1.1 addresses components of the Firefighter examination but disregards National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1582 standards by citing, but not referencing, studies for the dismissal (C3.3.1.4.1). The NFPA is the lead on codes and standards of occupational medical programs for firefighters and cites the importance of annual physicals for firefighters in order to have a much better chance of avoiding a potentially life-threatening or life altering outcome as a result of their position. Because of the DODI 6055.05-M's dismissal, Occupational Health does not conduct routine assessments associated with early detection as recommended by NFPA for common Fire Fighting hazards/illnesses (EKG, Bloodwork, Urinalysis, etc.) placing a firefighter's life in danger.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Update DODI 6055.5-M to adopt NFPA 1582 standards.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Standards for Documenting Exposures for DA Emergency Personnel

Scope: There is no standard directing the documentation of exposure for emergency personnel working on military installations. Standardizing the capturing of incidents and hazards faced by emergency personnel is crucial should the personnel have a medical need in the future. Without standardizing the process, emergency personnel teams on installations are forced to develop their own tracking systems that are not accepted by Occupational Health because they are not on a standard MEDDAC form or are not required by regulation placing not only a burden on emergency personnel but also their team as well.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Standardize documenting exposures of emergency personnel in medical/archive folder.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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Issue: Hiring/Retention Incentives for Child and Youth Services (CYS) Direct Care Staff

Scope: Garrisons are currently not allowed to offer the competitive hiring/retention incentive of free-to-reduced childcare to CYS Direct Care staff. This hiring/retention incentive will increase the number of staff as well as the number of children to able to be provided for in a given center because the number of children a CYS Direct Care Staff member can provide care for exceeds the number they are a parent to. Providing high-quality military child care is a readiness and retention issue recognized by the Army although it falls short in its recruitment efforts for this vital position that carries high vacancy and low retention rates at installations where the waitlist for childcare can be in the hundreds. Several studies have shown that the lack of child care impacts recruitment and retention of military personnel while other studies tie lack of child care as cause for a high unemployment rate among Military Spouses. The incentive program addresses both of these issues. By not providing a hiring/retention incentive program for CYS Direct Care Staff, Garrisons will continue to face both high vacancy and low retention rates resulting in a long wait list for child care for Military Personnel and their Families.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Create a free-to-reduced child care incentive program for CYS Direct Care staff.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP, Issue did not proceed beyond IMCOM because updates to CYS hiring initiatives were implemented.

Progress:

- Issue is Complete

Way Ahead:

- Fort Carson CYS currently offers 50% off Childcare for CYS Direct Care Employees along with Priority One Care (Guaranteed Child Care). This offer is available to new and existing CYS Direct Care Employees.
- [CYS Childcare Discount \(armymwr.com\)](http://armymwr.com)

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Issue: Exceptional Eligibility Transitional Compensation (TC) for Abused Dependents Benefit Inequality

Scope: Abused Dependents with an Exceptional Eligibility TC approved packets are not afforded the same compensation as routinely processed TC packets. Currently, DoDI 1342.24 for Exceptional Eligibility packets states “the Secretary concerned may determine the beginning and duration of payments for individual exceptional eligibility cases in a manner similar to that established for 3.2.a and 3.2.b” (routinely processed packets). The use of the term “may” allows for the Secretary concerned to provide benefits in lesser amounts of the standard of 36 months afforded to routinely processed packets. All cases should be adjudicated under the same criteria where the Secretary concerned approves the standard 36 months compensation regardless of the type of packet processed.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2021

Proposed COA: Approved Exceptional Eligibility Transitional Compensation are afforded the same compensation standard of 36 months.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.

Way Ahead:

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ISSUE: Military Spouse Non-Competitive Appointment Disadvantage

Scope: Military spouses referred to federal job positions are placed at an unintended disadvantage by the current Military Spouse Non-Competitive hiring practice of “contact is a commitment to hire”. The Military Spouse Non-Competitive Appointing Authority (Executive Order 13473) was created to allow agencies to appoint certain military spouses without competition with the intent of enhancing recruitment of military spouses to provide them with greater opportunities. After a position is closed within USAJobs, the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) reviews applications, ranks the candidates, and generates two lists to be provided to the hiring manager. One is the Military Spouse Preference (MSP) list and the other is an additional non-competitive hiring list (contains veterans, current civilian employees, etc.). CPAC instructs hiring managers that any form of contact with the candidate on the MSP list, even checking references constitutes a “commitment to hire” from the MSP list. If there is only one spouse on the MSP list, and a reference is contacted, a phone call is made, or the spouse was interviewed, the hiring manager is required to hire the spouse even if in the process they have found the spouse to be either minimally qualified or not a good fit for the position and/or organization. Hiring managers can receive more candidates on the additional Non-Competitive list than on the MSP list and are afforded the opportunity to interview from this additional list without the same strict requirement of “commit to hire” if any contact is made. In the majority of instances, an interview or reference check allows the hiring manager to address any concerns they may have about the accuracy or self-assessment of the skills placed into a candidate’s resume. The “contact is a commitment to hire” requirement ultimately places the military spouse candidate at a disadvantage and is contrary to the original intent of the Executive Order because hiring efforts are focused on the other non-competitive list.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2022

Proposed COA: Categorize Military Spouse Preference the same as other Non-Competitive Authorities to allow Hiring Managers greater selection without bypassing MSP candidates.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.
- Included in FY23 AFAP Prioritization Tasker to different commands.

Way Ahead:

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ISSUE: Military Spouse Hiring Preference for Spouses of Retired Service Members at Final PCS

Scope: Spouses of retired service members are currently not afforded the opportunity to participate in the Military Spouse Preference (MSP) Program for end of Military Service orders for retirement. DoDI 1400.25-V315 states “A military spouse is not eligible for MSP upon a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move that is in conjunction with the retirement or separation of the military member except when that retirement or separation is based upon 100 percent disability.” Currently, retired service members are entitled to a final move that relocates them to their home of record, place of entry, or other location. For example, a service member that retires at Fort Carson, Colorado is entitled to relocate to their home of record even if it is in another state. This final PCS results in the military spouse, now retiree Family member and potential caregiver to a veteran, to once again lose employment. In addition, depending on which state you move from, the spouse may be ineligible for unemployment benefits as a result of this move. Under these conditions, there an increased potential for both the veteran and the spouse to be unemployed simultaneously, placing them at a severe financial hardship. Allowing for spouses of retired service members to participate in the MSP Program allows them to maintain their career and promote family and financial stability as they transition from active duty to retirement.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2022

Proposed COA: Allow for spouses of Retired service members to participate into the Military Spouse Preference Program at their final move location.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.
- Included in FY23 AFAP Prioritization Tasker to different commands.

Way Ahead:

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ISSUE: MTOE Authorization for Command Family Readiness Representative (CFRRs)

Scope: There is currently no MTOE authorization for Command Family Readiness Representatives within units. The CFRR position requires the individual to manage social media content, maintain communication rosters, execute communication plans, identify at risk Soldiers and Family members, coordinate resilience events, promote Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) activities, manage, recruit, and certify volunteer positions, act as the liaison for on and off post resources, and much more. The Army has historically recognized the need to support Commander's Soldier and Family Readiness programs by first creating the Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA) program in 2002, and upon sunset of the program, identifying Service members as Family Readiness Liaisons (FRLs) continuing to perform the FRSA duties and support Soldier and Family Readiness. HQDA EXORD 233-19 took this position a step further by not only renaming the position to Command Family Readiness Representative (CFRR), but also identifying the CFRR as a proponent in the Soldier and Family Readiness Group (SFRG) chain of command requiring them to execute the essential elements of the SFRG. The HQDA EXORD also states, it shall be their only additional duty. Due to personnel strength and mission requirements, current CFRRs have multiple additional duties, some with five or more, and cannot devote enough time to perform all the SFRG responsibilities effectively in addition to their position. Many CFRRs are appointed only to PCS or deploy within a few months leaving the SFRG abandoned and others fear being improperly rated (OER/NCOER) due to this additional duty. Without a fulltime CFRR on the MTOE, the total quality, continuity of operations, success, and participation in Soldier and Family Readiness are diminished.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2022

Proposed COA: Provide authorizations on the MTOE for Command Family Readiness Representatives at Division, Brigade, and Battalion levels.

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Awaiting status update from AFAP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) currently scheduled for February 2023.
- Issue was not included in FY23 AFAP Prioritization Tasker to different commands, request for information to be submitted to higher headquarters for guidance/feedback.

Way Ahead:

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ISSUE: Lack of Pathways to Community Spaces in Older Housing Areas (Local Issue).

Scope: There are no pathways leading to playgrounds and community areas in the older villages on Fort Carson. There are sidewalks around the perimeter but no direct clean pathway to these areas. This poses an issue for Family members that visit the park with a stroller, toddler bike, etc.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2022 (Local Issue)

Proposed COA: Update community areas and playgrounds to be ADA Compliant.

Recommended Status: Complete

Progress:

- At the time the issue was submitted there was already mandated enforcement in progress. All housing is privatized, but there is a federal mandate requiring ADA Compliant. Balfour Beatty does have this incorporated in their Facility Investment Plan but we may not see full implementation of ADA compliance in all community spaces until 2035.

Way Ahead:

- Issue is identified as complete.

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ISSUE: TRICARE Coverage for Helmet Molding Therapy

Scope: TRICARE does not cover helmet molding therapy as it is seen for cosmetic purposes only, but without it there can be skull deformities affecting the jaw and in severe cases, it can affect eating.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: FY22 submitted issue, "Cranial Remodeling Helmets for Children". Information paper was included in the FY22 New Issue Prioritization Workbook/Ballots.

Proposed COA: TRICARE covers helmet molding therapy.

Recommended Status: Unknown

Progress:

- **Information Paper Excerpt (Pg 43):**
"TRICARE covers the Dynamic Orthotic Cranioplasty (DOC) Band Post-Operative device (a molding helmet) if an infant is three to eighteen months old and underwent craniosynostosis surgery. Exclusions of the coverage include flat spots formed when an infant lies on its back too frequently or is the sole treatment (no surgery) for craniosynostosis...This proposal will not meet the medical necessity criteria required by TRICARE."

Way Ahead:

- **AER Assistance:** Financial assistance is provided for Cranial Helmets that can cost on average of \$2,500 - \$3,000. Most of the assistance is in grant format (Exceptions: Large Surplus in Budget).
<https://www.armyemergencyrelief.org/assistance/>

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ISSUE: Review of CYS Total Family Income (TFI) During Divorce Proceedings

Scope: CYS currently uses DD Form 2652 to calculate the Total Family Income (TFI) of a household to determine the rate/category childcare is paid. The DD Form 2652 does go under annual verification, but updates to TFI for divorce proceedings can prove to be difficult. Couples going through divorce proceedings are unable to make updates to their TFI until a final divorce decree has been provided and there is no exception to policy in place. There are instances where a parent provides no financial support to the parent in care of the children during the divorce process. As a result of this non-financial support, the parent providing for the children's care struggles to afford the childcare rate that is based on both parent's income. This is especially the case in instances where the financially non-supportive parent had the higher income the TFI was calculated with. On average, contested divorces can take up to a year and half to receive a final divorce decree for the parent to update TFI in order to update their category of pay for childcare services.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2023

Proposed COA: Create an exception to policy process to adjust TFI for parents not receiving financial support during divorce process.

Recommended Status: Complete. A policy is already in place.

Progress:

- **Issue is complete. CYS SME Feedback:**

Based on the SY22-23 Fee Policy, couples going through a divorce can have the TFI recalculated per the following criteria:

7. Fees for Legally Separated Families are contingent on a legal separation document, a signed separation agreement, or a notarized statement explaining that the parents are separated and unable to reconcile their marital relationship, civil union, or domestic partnership. Military must have the Battalion Commander co-sign the document.

*11. TFI Category is adjusted when:
b. There is a documented reduction in TFI (e.g., change from full time to part time, furlough, loss of employment or new employment of spouse, etc.).*

Way Ahead:

- Education on CYS Policy.
- Ensure ACS Financial Readiness Specialists are aware of the policy.

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ISSUE: BOSS Opportunities for Senior Enlisted and Officers

Scope: BOSS is a great way for young soldiers to get out of the barracks and meet other people. As Sr. NCOs and officers, life is just different for them and there are no programs to help so they can meet and enjoy activities without the perception of fraternization.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2023

Proposed COA: A program like BOSS but for SR NCOs and Officers.

Recommended Status: Complete.

Progress:

- **Issue is complete. BOSS Feedback:**
 - *Typically, BOSS does not see senior NCOs or officers, the highest rank they have seen so far is an E7.*
 - *Whenever there are events, a BOSS program staff member always must be present.*
 - *If there are overnight trips, it is planned with a 3rd party or organization. In the event there is an uneven number of males/females, that said individual will get their own room.*
 - *Currently, all BOSS services and events are for all ranks.*

Way Ahead:

- Continue to educate on about the BOSS Program.
- Bring awareness to other Fort Carson activities such as Outdoor Recreations “Get on the Bus” events.

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ISSUE: Expanded Fertility Treatment Options for Service members and Spouses

Scope: The existing fertility benefits coverage available to military personnel and their Families is currently limited and requires expansion. The present scope of fertility benefits within the Army fails to adequately support our diverse workforce, resulting in financial strain and emotional distress for those aspiring to build families. Moreover, some families are excluded due to the prohibitive costs associated with fertility treatments that are available through the Army. Unlike the Adoption Reimbursement Program, there is no financial assistance for Army Families opting for fertility treatments to build their families. While the Army and TRICARE offer some coverage, it is often completely out-of-pocket for beneficiaries, subject to availability and long waitlists, and/or very limited in scope for qualification. In 2024, the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program available to Department of the Army Civilians will require all FEHB carriers to cover at least two forms of artificial insemination and associated drugs, and at least three cycles of in-vitro fertilization (IVF) each year. The 2024 FEHB program, along with national insurance providers, Medicaid (in several states), and businesses providing fertility benefits demonstrate a commitment to the overall well-being of their personnel. Expanding fertility benefits coverage to include IVF, artificial insemination, associated drugs, and other common treatments, aligns with societal trends, promotes loyalty, and positions itself as a valuable and crucial tool for recruiting and retaining skilled military personnel and their Families while addressing the unique needs of our diverse and dedicated force.

Entered Fort Carson AFAP: 2023

Proposed COA: Expand Fertility Coverage Benefits for Service members and their Spouses

Recommended Status: Entered into AFAP

Progress:

- Elevated on 01 December 2023.

Way Ahead:

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