



# COMMANDER'S CALL TALKING POINTS

## February 2021



## Your Role in Ensuring a Successful Return Home from Deployment

Transitioning from deployment, like any major life change, can test resilience. As a leader, you play an integral part in creating a smooth transition when an Airman or Guardian returns home. Take time this month to familiarize yourself with the programs available to equip your Forces and support their mental fitness.

## How Can You Support Your Airmen and Guardians?

There are several ways you can support a successful transition back home. One way is to make sure that your Airmen and Guardians are aware of valuable programs, such as the [Airman & Family Readiness Centers \(A&FRC\)](#). The A&FRC provides pre-deployment readiness briefings, deployment education, and support to Airmen, Guardians and their families at all phases of the deployment cycle. At the reintegration phase, a briefing is held and include speakers from:

- Chaplain Corps
- Mental Health Clinic
- [Military & Family Life Counseling Program \(MFLC\)](#)
- [Primary Care Behavioral Health \(PCBH\)](#)

Another program available for National Guard and Reserve members is the [Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program](#). This program promotes the well-being of National Guard and Reserve members and their loved ones by connecting them with resources before and after deployments. A list of [upcoming events](#) can be found on their website.

In addition to sharing these programs, there are several other ways you can support an Airman or Guardian's deployment experience, including:

- Sponsor reunion activities and programs and/or organize a homecoming celebration
- Ask returning members to discuss experiences and "lessons learned"
- Be visible and available
- Ensure a Key Spouse representative or other unit POC maintains regular contact with family members to make sure they feel adequately adjusted

For more ideas, view the DAF Resilience [Deployment Leadership Guide](#).

## Recognizing Barriers to Receiving Mental Health Care

February is National African American (Black) History Month and as we celebrate and honor the 2.1 million Black military veterans who've served,<sup>1</sup> we must also recognize and continue to support our current Force.

SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health results show that members of racial and ethnic minority groups are significantly less likely to receive services for any mental illness than non-Hispanic whites due to low perceived need, prejudice/discrimination, structural barriers, and concerns over effectiveness.<sup>2</sup> This month, take the time to promote help-seeking behavior for all Force members regardless of racial and ethnic groups. Visit [Air Force Diversity & Inclusion](#) for more information and resources.

## Resources



[AF Personnel Center](#)  
offers tools for Airmen and families for every phase of Deployment.

### MILITARY ONE SOURCE

[Military OneSource](#)  
provides redeployment and reintegration resources.



[The AFRC Psychological Health Advocacy Program](#)  
provides psychological health referral services to AFRC Reservists and their families.



[AF Resilience](#) offers tools for Airmen and Guardians to maintain resilience.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census. National African American (Black) History Month: February 2021. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2021/black-history-month.html>

<sup>2</sup> SAMHSA. 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH): African Americans. [https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt23247/2\\_AfricanAmerican\\_2020\\_01\\_14\\_508.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt23247/2_AfricanAmerican_2020_01_14_508.pdf)