



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY JAPAN
UNIT 45005
APO AREA PACIFIC 96343-5005

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

APAJ-GA

12 AUG 2016

COMMAND POLICY MEMORANDUM 16-10

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SUBJECT: Soldier for Life (SFL) Program

1. References.

- a. Soldier for Life website, <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/>.
- b. Army Directive 2014-18, Army Career and Alumni Program, 23 June 2014.
- c. Army Transition Campaign Plan FY14 – FY15, 18 June 2014.
- d. HQDA EXORD 054-12 ISO Army Transition, 29 December 2011.
- e. VOW to Hire Heroes Act, Public Law, 21 November 2011.

2. Applicability: The policy applies to all US Army Japan (USARJ) Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Family members.

4. The point of contact for this memorandum is the USARJ Well Being and Quality of Life Specialist, G1 Directorate at 263-3567.

2 ENCLs

1. Policy and Guidance
2. Transition Life Cycle Implementation


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US ARMY JAPAN SOLDIER FOR LIFE (SFL) PROGRAM

1. Policy.

a. The Army has significantly transformed its approach toward transitioning Soldiers. Soldier For Life (SFL) has incorporated what was known as Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) into the Soldier For Life Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP). Commanders are responsible for ensuring their Soldiers are prepared for transition from the Army through their entire career. In some cases, continuing service in uniform is what makes most sense. In others, applying skills learned in the Army to the civilian sector is what would serve the Soldier best. Knowing your Soldiers and having effective counseling/mentoring programs is critical to the success of SFL. I expect commanders to view their transitioning Soldiers like those who reenlist and SFL will become an extension of what you have already been doing.

(1) Commanders should ensure that incoming Soldiers receive counseling that includes transition preparation within 30 days of arrival at their unit. During counseling, Soldiers must construct an Individual Development Plan (IDP) which maps career goals and looks toward future transition. First line supervisors must review the Soldier's plan, discuss training, career, and educational goals (both short and long-term), and ensure that the Soldier has a detailed and achievable timeline. A Soldier's IDP should be reviewed with that Soldier by a leader in the Chain of Command and a career or education counselor no less than once annually.

(2) Commanders will ensure Soldiers have enrolled in the SFL-TAP program before recommending approval for retirements, unqualified resignations, or other voluntary early separation programs. Verification will be in the form of a notation in the commander's remarks on DA Form 4187 or by memorandum from the Transition Assistance Center.

b. All transitioning Soldiers must prepare an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) which will point them toward civilian careers, further education and/or establishing a business. A Soldier's IDP should morph over a period of time into his/her ITP.

c. The SFL lifecycle is divided into three distinct phases (see enclosure 2) to prepare Soldiers to serve the nation in uniform and ultimately as productive citizens after their active military service. Soldiers will master the military skills required for a successful Army career, while developing key career readiness products through their military service.

(1) The Initial Phase will conclude within the first 180 days of being assigned to a Soldier's first duty station. Supervisors will ensure that Soldiers complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP), a 12-month spend plan and register for VA eBenefits (<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>).

(2) The Service Phase is from the first year of service until the Soldier makes the decision to transition or retire and pursue their post-service career goals. During this phase commanders must promote a culture of lifelong learning and development via directed updates of the IDP/spend plan with targeted counselings annually and at certain career points (see Enclosure 2).

(3) The Transition Phase encompasses much of what is formerly known as ACAP. Transition activities can begin as early as 24 months for Soldiers who are retiring and 18

months for Soldiers who are ETSing. Focus on the Soldier, not the statistics. Balance the conversations about retention and separation and be advised that the timelines differ. **Once Soldiers are within 12 months of separation they MUST initiate the SFL-TAP.**

d. Unscheduled separations, such as Soldiers identified for involuntary separation, are at high risk for unemployment and will have limited time to receive transition services. As such, these Soldiers must be scheduled for SFL-TAP services immediately after being identified for potential separation.

e. Every Soldier is strongly encouraged to have a resume, as well as one of the following, prior to separation: Acceptance letter from a college/training institution; an actual job offer; a current list of solid job leads matched to the Soldier's knowledge, skills, and abilities; or a business plan if the Soldier plans to start a business. The SFL-TAP office will ensure that requirements are met before signing clearing papers.

f. SFL-TAP office will provide units with monthly reports to keep the chain of command informed concerning the status of services for Soldiers required to transition. Units must keep the SFL-TAP office informed of any changes in separation dates listed on the reports and any unscheduled separations not included in the reports.

g. In order to ensure the success of SFL-TAP, commanders will identify and appoint on orders a primary and alternate Transition Liaison, E6 or above, to work with installation transition personnel in tracking the status of transitioning Soldiers and working related issues. A copy of these appointment orders should be furnished to USARJ G1 and garrison Transition office. **I have also directed that SFL be incorporated into USARJ's Organizational Inspection Program (OIP) effective FY17.**

h. Embracing the "Soldier For Life" program and encouraging Soldiers, Family members and Civilians to participate reinforces our commitment to the program. SFL can help Soldiers leverage valuable Army-acquired skills, training, and experience to obtain civilian careers or education. SFL provides assistance through his/her career and improves the Army's ability to recruit and retain quality men and women. We cannot mandate that a Soldier becomes a "Soldier for Life." How we treat them during their service, and when they return to civilian life will determine if they identify as "Soldiers" for life.



Transition Soldier Life Cycle Implementation



CRS introduced early and throughout a Soldier's career with touch points at the following:
 first duty station-home station drill/first year of service/reenlistments/deployment-mobilization/promotion/transition

