

# 18 WG/JA

## DEPLOYMENT BRIEFING CHECKLIST

Current as of September 2023

### I. POWERS OF ATTORNEY

- ☐ Do you have the necessary powers of attorney so business can be done while you are deployed?
  - ☐ For Care of Children (medical care and/or child care, Family Care Plan)
  - ☐ For Banks (to access checking or other accounts to pay bills—bring acct# and bank address)
  - ☐ For Finance (start, stop, change allotments or make pay inquiries)
  - ☐ For Base Housing (inprocessing/outprocessing)
  - ☐ For Real Estate (buy or sell—bring legal property description and property mailing address)
  - ☐ For TMO (receive or ship household goods)
  - ☐ For Vehicles (ship, sell, purchase, pick up, or register—bring year, make, model and VIN #)
  - ☐ For Filing Taxes
  - ☐ For Military Personnel Customer Service/Finance (obtaining a dependent ID card)

### II. WILLS

- ☐ Do you have a current Last Will and Testament? Do you want your belongings to be distributed other than by state law? Do you need to appoint a guardian and trustee for your children?
- ☐ Do you want a Living Will? This document advises your loved ones and physicians of your wishes regarding life-sustaining procedures in the event of a terminal or irreversible medical condition.
- ☐ Do you want a Medical Power of Attorney? This document names another person to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to do so for yourself.
- ☐ Do you want a Durable General Power of Attorney? This document names another person to care for your personal business and financial affairs when you are unable to do so for yourself. (This is not the same as a special power of attorney.)

### III. INSURANCE

- ☐ Is all of your insurance, including SGLI, up-to-date and in order?
- ☐ If you've created a trust in your will, did you list the trustees in your will as the SGLI beneficiaries for any minors?
- ☐ Is your emergency data and family care plan up-to-date and on file?

### IV. TAXES

- ☐ Have you filed your tax return or made arrangements for someone else to file them?
  - ☐ Federal and State income taxes
  - ☐ IRS Form 2848, Power of Attorney
  - ☐ Access to your W-2 via special myPay account, and other IRS forms

### V. SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT (SCRA)

- ☐ Do you have any pending litigation that could affect your deployment?
- ☐ Do you have any pre-service debts with interest rates over 6%?
- ☐ Do you need to break your lease? If so, provide at least 30 days' notice prior to your rent due date.
- ☐ Do you want to cancel or suspend your cell phone contract?

## **VI. OTHER ARRANGEMENTS**

- ☐ Are your important papers organized and accessible?
- ☐ Do you know who is going to look after your car, house, and children while you are deployed?
- ☐ Does your family care plan appoint anyone other than the biological parents of your children as their guardian?
- ☐ Have you arranged to have all of your bills paid?
  - ☐ Mortgage or rent on your house or apartment
  - ☐ Car, truck, or motorcycle payments
  - ☐ Student or other loan payments
  - ☐ Utilities (electric, gas, cable, water)
  - ☐ Credit cards, including your GTC

## **VII. RESERVIST ISSUES**

- ☐ Have you notified your employer IN WRITING that you intend to return following your deployment?
- ☐ Do you understand how long you have to report back to work following your return from your deployment?
- ☐ Do you have any special SCRA issues that need to be addressed?

## **VIII. RETIREMENT & SAVINGS BENEFITS**

- ☐ Are you aware that while deployed most of your income will be free from federal and possible state income tax?
- ☐ Are you aware of the new ROTH TSP retirement savings plan?
- ☐ Are you aware of the increased contribution limits for traditional TSP savings plan?
- ☐ Are you aware of the Savings Deposit program? You can earn a guaranteed 10% interest on up to \$10,000 while you are deployed.

## **IX. VOTING ASSISTANCE**

- ☐ Have you registered to vote with your home jurisdiction?
- ☐ Do you want information about voting in your home jurisdiction?
- ☐ Would you like to take an SF-76 Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)?

## **X. STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENTS (SOFA)**

- ☐ Be aware that a SOFA is an agreement the United States has in place with many foreign countries in which you might serve. It is typically comprehensive and covers many things that may be important for you to know in order to accomplish your mission. Please seek out your JAG when you get in country for an in-brief of that country's SOFA or other legal protections.
- ☐ Be aware that you are always subject to the UCMJ, but may also find yourself subject to the criminal prosecution of the foreign country depending on the SOFA in place with the US. Bottom line – don't commit any crimes, and obey traffic regulations!

## **XI. OPERATIONS LAW ISSUES**

- ☐ *Standing Rules of Engagement* – From CJCSI 3121.01B, Enclosure A.
  - ☐ Applies to all military operations and contingencies outside the US. SECDEF may issues theater-, mission-, or operation-specific ROEs. Key distinction between SROE and SRUF is hostility: either a hostile act, demonstrated hostile intent, or Declared Hostile Force.

□ Inherent right of self-defense – combined definitions of unit and individual. Remember other operations law principles here though.

□ Are often supplemented for various theaters, operations, and/or missions. You are responsible to know what applies, so ask if in any doubt.

□ *Standing Rules for the Use of Force* – From CJCSI 3121.01B.

□ Generally, applicable to DOD civil support (e.g., military assistance to civil authorities) and routine Military Department functions (including AT/FP duties) occurring within US territory or US territorial seas, homeland defense missions occurring within US territory, and to DOD forces, civilians and contractors performing law enforcement and security duties at DOD installations.

□ Important concepts include: 1) minimum force necessary, 2) use force only as a last resort, 3) give party opportunity to withdraw if possible (no warning shots!), and 4) authority to use deadly force in limited circumstances (inherent right to self-defense, defense of others, protection of assets vital to national security, protection of inherently dangerous property, national critical infrastructure, other particular mission-related circumstances).

□ SRUF is often augmented by commanders—take note of any deviations from the SRUF for your specific situation.

□ *Law of Armed Conflict* – remember the 4 principles: (from <https://doctrine.af.mil>)

□ Military Necessity – Is this target a valid military objective?

□ Unnecessary Suffering – May the use of particular weapon used to strike a target cause unnecessary suffering?

□ Proportionality – Does the military advantage to be gained from striking a target outweigh the anticipated incidental civilian loss of life, property if this target is struck?

□ Distinction – Have we distinguished between combatants and non-combatants; have we distinguished between military objectives and protected property or places?



## Legal Quick Tips: Deployments

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### Financial Considerations:

- Someone appointed to take care of bills and taxes with a *Special Power of Attorney*
- Mortgage/Rent/Monthly Installment payments (automobile, student loan, etc.)
- Reduce monthly bills as much as possible (utilities, internet, phone, cable, etc.)
- Stop monthly subscriptions (newspaper, magazines, gym membership, etc.)
- Reduce interest rates to 6% through the Servicemember Civil Relief Act (SCRA)
- Reduce student loan rates to 0% while receiving hostile fire pay
- Set up fraud alerts on your credit reports through Experian, TransUnion, or Equifax
- "Savings Deposit Plan" – Earn 10% on money deposited using a deployment savings account; up to \$10K

### Legal Considerations:

- Pending legal action: determine whether you need to settle, find an attorney, or utilize SCRA
- Ongoing spousal/child support – consider setting up an electronic transfer with your bank or credit union
- Powers of Attorney – appoint someone to help you with:
  - o Renewing dependent ID card
  - o Accepting or surrendering government housing
  - o Making LES changes at MPF
  - o Managing financial accounts
  - o Filing or handling a legal action
  - o Entering a rental agreement or lease
  - o Shipping or receiving a vehicle incident to a CONUS/OCONUS PCS
  - o Caring for a child (Medical, Dental, School enrollment, Parenting decisions)
  - o Shipping or receiving household goods
  - o Submitting a claim
  - o Filing, paying, litigating, or settling taxes
- Do you have any significant legal problems that could be affected by this deployment (child custody, child support, potential divorce/separation, bad debts, bankruptcy, etc.)?

### Family Considerations:

- Ensuring spouse/family knows where your belongings are located
- Enrolling all dependents in DEERS and have ID cards
- Special expedited immigration/naturalization benefits when spouse deploys
- Child custody – let someone else have your time by "delegating your custody" while you're gone

### Incapacity and Testamentary Issues:

- Obtain a will that reflects your current situation (marriage, children, assets, etc.)
- Solidify your state of legal residence (ID cards, voters registration, etc.)
- Establish Survivorship (bank accounts, IRAs, annuities, etc.) and insurance beneficiary designations
- SGLI: Consider getting the maximum coverage and designate a beneficiary
- Living Will and Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care – keep it with you when you deploy
- Arrange for the long term care of dependents and pets

