



How Can **You** Do Your Part?

Community Members / Neighbors

- Donate to military family organizations — even just \$5 a month makes a difference!
- Educate yourself on the challenges facing military families.
- Write a welcome letter with your top local picks and your contact information.
- Assemble a themed new neighbor welcome box: garden basket with potted plants and seeds/bulbs, kitchen essentials, pet treats, kids activities, local gourmet items. Package with a custom gift tag.
- Perform seasonal chores: cut the grass, weed the flower beds, rake the leaves, shovel snow from the driveway, hang holiday lights.
- Share a meal: invite them over, order take-out, bake a casserole to freeze.
- Give the spouse a break: invite the kids for a playdate, invite the adult out for grown-up only time, organize a sitter.
- Welcome them to your holiday celebrations or offer a distraction during holiday seasons—these times can be particularly hard.
- Surprise them with a cup of coffee and a kind word.
- Provide backup on a sick day.
- Pet sit: offer to watch or care for the family pet while the family is away.
- Help with vehicle or home maintenance.
- Phone, text, or send a handwritten note for no reason other than you care.
- Hire a military spouse or provide networking connections.
- Share your expertise and mentor a military spouse.
- Find more ways through AARP's easy-to-follow guide

Military Families

- Offer free or discounted services to military families.
- Volunteer at a local military-impacted school.
- Help with local military child and youth programs
- Share resources or tips you pick up during service with other military families
- Join your local support groups such as spouses associations, Soldier and Family Readiness Groups,
- Amplify our message. Call your local representatives and let them know that taking care of military families is important to you and your community.
- Contact your closest military installation and learn about volunteer opportunities.
- Donate items for service member care packages or a unit holiday party.
- Tell five friends to join Blue Star Families!

Local and State Government Officials

- Be a supporter of local military and Veteran service organizations
- Listen to military families in your community to better advocate for their needs
- Attend local military and Veteran events
- Host town halls to share and start a dialogue with those in your area

Businesses

- Hire Military Spouses
- Become a Cause Partner
- Open your business for military social events
- Provide networking connections to a military spouse or Veteran looking for work.
- Share your expertise and mentor a military spouse.

Schools

- Hire Military Spouses
- Host a Welcome Week event
- Recognize military children
- Learn about how military-connected students might be impacted (deployments, TDYs, frequent moves)
- Have plans for military-connected students entering mid-year
- If possible, partner with your local military installation to have a Military Family Lifestyle Counselor on staff to help milkids, or have a local MFLC speak to school counselors on military-life issues.

Children

- Set up a playdate with your new military neighbor's kids
- Schools should have a "buddy system" in which another military child shows the new military child around school

Teens

- Have a military-connected student that is willing to welcome and show new students around
- Offer a seat at your lunch table
- Invite new military students to join clubs and after-school activities

“It makes you feel like people care about us. Our lives dedicated to service; the whole family’s lives revolve around military service. Events like this one make you feel better during a deployment and lets us know people care about our sacrifice.”

Tampa Bay Region Chapter Member