

**Military Family Relief
Trust Fund Operating
Guide and Procedures**

MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
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North Little Rock, AR 72112-2200
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MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF TRUST FUND OPERATING GUIDE AND PROCEDURES

This regulation is established in accordance with the Arkansas Administrative Procedure Act (Act), Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-201 et seq.:

Official:

Major General
The Adjutant General

History. Military Family Relief Trust Fund Operating Guide and Procedures filed March 17, 2010.

Summary. This regulation implements Act No. 1028 of 2005, as amended. It includes changes through the 2015 legislative session, which includes Act No. 402 of 2015.

Applicability. This regulation applies to all members of the Arkansas National Guard and Reverse Components of the Armed Forces and the families of these members.

Proponent and exception authority. The proponent of this regulation is The Adjutant General of the Arkansas National Guard. The Adjutant General has the authority to approve exceptions or waivers

to this regulation that are consistent with controlling law and regulations.

Suggested Improvements. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to The Adjutant General.

Distribution. This publication is available in electronic media. Special distribution of this publication in paper will be made through channels to all levels of command in the Arkansas National Guard.

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Introduction

1-1. Authority

This regulation is created pursuant to authority granted to The Adjutant General by the Arkansas Legislature through the adoption of Act No. 1028 of 2005, Act No. 827 of 2007, and Act No. 402 of 2015 (codified at Ark. Code Ann. §§ 19-5-1127 and 26-51-2506, respectively).

1-2. Purpose

The Military Family Relief Trust Fund was established to provide short term emergency financial assistance in the form of grants to members of the Arkansas National Guard and Reserve Components of the Armed Forces and/or families of these members impacted by a crisis situation. This fund provides a valuable means to assist and improve the morale and welfare of members of the Arkansas National Guard and Reserve Components of the Armed Forces.

1-3. Administrative Procedures

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §26-51-2506(h), The Adjutant General of the Arkansas National Guard has the responsibility to promulgate all rules necessary from implementing the grant program of the Military Family Relief Trust Fund, for the overseeing of the operation of the program, and for approving grant applications. Funds are administered through an account maintained by the Arkansas State Treasury. The Military's Directorate of State Resources will maintain all appropriate administrative files and information concerning the operation and processing of the business of the Fund.

1-4. Eligibility

Any current member, or family member, of the Arkansas National Guard or a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces who is a resident of Arkansas is eligible to request assistance. The Arkansas National Guard and Reserves request that the applicant explore all resources (family, community service organizations, churches, etc.) before making application for emergency assistance. The member may be referred to a financial counselor or representative from the State Family Readiness Program office for additional financial counseling based on the recommendation of The Adjutant General, or his or her designee, while reviewing the request.

1-5. Funds Administration

As mentioned above, the requested financial assistance must be to solve a crisis situation. A crisis is defined as "an event beyond the control of the member or family member that requires assistance that is not available from any other reasonable source." Additionally, the financial assistance should remedy a one-time problem, not an ongoing situation. If an applicant's monthly cost of living notably exceeds their income, no one-time infusion of financial assistance will solve the problem. A large percentage of available funds are designed to provide immediate cash to members/families who are waiting to receive military pay or reimbursements that have been delayed. All payments from the Funds are handled in accordance with Arkansas Code Annotated Section 26-51-2506 et seq.

Examples of situations that could qualify are:

Delay in receiving pay or reimbursement from the government

- a. Temporary shelter, lodging or rent;
- b. Emergency utility assistance, i.e. gas electric water (not telephone, cable or internet service provider);
- c. Emergency transportation and vehicle repair;
- d. Costs incurred for emergency travel due to death of immediate family member; and
- e. Any special circumstance as deemed appropriate by The Adjutant General.

Examples of things that would not typically qualify are:

- a. Payment for nonessential items or services;
- b. Payment for ordinary leave or vacation;
- c. Payment of fines or legal expenses;
- d. Liquidation or consolidation of debt;
- e. Assistance with down payment on a home purchase or home improvements; and
- f. Funds to purchase, rent or lease a vehicle.

1-6. Application Procedures:

The member or family member's first step will normally be to contact the unit First Sergeant or Unit Commander or Full-Time Staff at the unit. Personnel may also contact someone in the Rear Detachment or the Family Readiness Office or

local Family Assistance Center to assist in the process. Anyone who can act on the behalf of the member may apply for assistance if they have a properly executed Power-of-Attorney and proof of identification.

The Servicemember in need, family member or unit representative on the member's behalf will prepare an application and submit to request assistance. It is preferred that the request be prepared and forwarded to the specific service representative who will verify eligibility. Each service will provide the POCs upon distribution of this information. The service representative will provide the application electronically to the AR ARNG or Reserve liaison so that The Adjutant General, or his or her designee, can decide on awarding the grant.

The request should contain, as a minimum:

- a. Description of the circumstances or events that caused the financial emergency;
- b. The need of the family, if applicable;
- c. Any other factors that establish the members family's financial hardship;
- d. The purpose or bills that the grant will be used for;
- e. The amount requested;
- f. The difference between the member's military salary and civilian salary;
- g. Any explanation or attempt to remedy the situation by the Servicemember or the lack of other options or resources (savings account, family assistance, other organizations); and
- h. Name of the member, names of the family member impacted if applicable, pay grade, unit of assignment, home address, and phone contact numbers.

When forwarding the Servicemember's request, a unit representative should include information regarding the Servicemember's standing in the unit/mobilization status, and any additional information reference the Servicemember's situation, especially when a delay in military pay is the cause for financial crisis.

Applicants may be required to provide verifiable proof of the need and other supporting documents. At a minimum, the following items should be needed:

- a. Military ID Card;
- b. Leave and Earnings statement and any proof of other family income to show the difference in military pay against civilian pay; and
- c. Substantiating documents (car repair estimate, rental agreement, utility bill, etc.).

1-7. Type of Assistance Available

The amount of assistance will not exceed \$1,500.00 in a 12 month period. Assistance is in the form of a grant. Upon approval, the funds may be paid to the Servicemember or applicant or may be made payable direct to a creditor.

1-8. Application Processing

Once the application is received by the service representative, the service representative will forward to the AR ARNG representative, who will forward to The Adjutant General, or his or her designee. The Adjutant General, or his or her designee, will contact the Director of State Resources to arrange for the disbursement of funds or provide the feedback to the service representative. The AR ARNG Representative will maintain all appropriate records in the administration of this program.

1-9. Fund Sources

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §26-51-2506 (c), the Revenue Division of the Department of Finance and Administration includes on Arkansas individual income tax forms a reference to the Military Family Relief Check-off Program where individuals can donate money to the Military Family Relief Trust Fund. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §26-51-2506 (d)(1), the Director of the Department of Finance and Administration may accept any gift, grants, bequests, devises, and donations made to the State of Arkansas for the purpose of funding the Military Family Relief Check-off Program.

1-10. Contact Information:

Current members, or family members, of the Arkansas National Guard or a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces may contact 501-212-5001 to receive more information about the Military Family Relief Trust Fund and point of contact information for their respective branch of the Arkansas National Guard or Reserve Component.