



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

07 JAN 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2021-01 (Army Survivor Outreach Services Program)

1. References. For a list of references, see the enclosure.
2. Purpose. This directive revises Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) policy. It defines eligibility, outlines roles and responsibilities, and directs the use of a comprehensive case management database.
3. Applicability. This directive applies to the Regular Army (RA) and Reserve Components (RCs) (Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States and U.S. Army Reserve).
4. Background. Section 562 of Public Law 109-163, commonly referred to as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, directed the Department of Defense (DoD) to establish a uniform policy on casualty assistance that includes both short- and long-term assistance for a deceased servicemember's eligible survivors. In 2007, the Army initiated the Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Program. The program developed a case management system that integrates multiagency casualty assistance and long-term services for eligible survivors.
5. Policy. The RA and RCs will implement the Army SOS Program to help eligible survivors with social and emotional support, primarily through referral to service providers and non-Federal agencies. The Army SOS Program will ensure a seamless transition from the initial support provided by the Army's Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Division to long-term, ongoing referral assistance for eligible survivors. Services are portable and, where available, may be provided at an Army location (including joint installations, National Guard installations or State headquarters, and Army Reserve centers) closest to the survivor's current residence.
6. Responsibilities.
 - a. The Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-9 will—
 - (1) Ensure resources are available to support the SOS Program.

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(2) Oversee a case management database for the SOS Program. The centrally maintained database will include survivor contact information and annotations regarding interactions with the survivor, such as referrals made and services provided.

(3) Oversee the SOS Program to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and policies.

(4) Ensure the SOS Program serves eligible RA and RC survivors.

(5) Ensure commanders, Soldiers, and Families are informed about the policies in this directive.

(6) Oversee and contribute to SOS coordinator training. As needed, periodic training will be distributed using technology to the maximum extent feasible.

(7) Provide senior leader representation for Army Survivor Advisory Working Group meetings.

b. The Commander, U.S. Army Materiel Command will—

(1) Maintain the system of record case management database for the SOS Program in accordance with Records Management and Declassification Agency requirements and the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended.

(2) Coordinate with the Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Division, the Casualty Assistance Centers, and casualty assistance officers for timely transfer of cases to the SOS Program case management database.

(3) Develop and deliver Armywide SOS coordinator training through distributed learning technology.

(4) Provide senior leader representation for Army Survivor Advisory Working Group meetings.

c. The Chief, National Guard Bureau and Chief of Army Reserve will—

(1) Develop and conduct programs to support the SOS Program in accordance with DoD and Army policies and procedures. The Chiefs will avoid duplication in service delivery.

(2) Provide senior leader representation for Army Survivor Advisory Working Group meetings.

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(3) Use the system of record case management database as described in paragraph 6b(1). Migrate data kept outside this database to the system of record no later than 180 days from the date of this directive.

7. Eligibility.

a. Persons eligible for SOS long-term case management include survivors recorded as dependents in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS):

(1) surviving dependents of an RA sponsor who died while serving on active duty

(2) surviving dependents of a member of the Army National Guard who was serving on official duty at the time of death

(3) surviving dependents of a member of the U.S. Army Reserve who was serving on official duty at the time of death

b. Persons eligible for SOS long-term case management also include survivors not recorded as dependents in DEERS:

(1) surviving parents (RA or RC next of kin)

(2) surviving spouse and children (next of kin) of RC members who were not on a current order for a period not to exceed 36 months

8. Process. The SOS Program will be administered through the following processes:

a. Once the casualty assistance officer (CAO) completes duties as prescribed by Army Regulation (AR) 638–8, survivors transition to the SOS Program. The CAO will advise eligible survivors of the SOS Program and its services, and refer them to the program.

b. Each SOS coordinator, regardless of component, will document cases and update the system of record case management database described in paragraph 6b(1).

c. Release of survivor information to third-party entities and organizations requires the survivor's written approval before release.

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d. The SOS Program may provide the following services to eligible survivors:

(1) liaison to DoD agencies and benefits coordinators, such as the Defense Health Agency and Defense Finance and Accounting Service

(2) liaison with non-Federal agencies, such as Tragedy Assistance for Survivors, Gold Star Wives, Gold Star Mothers, and Gold Star Fathers

(3) milestone management, such as changes in benefits, entitlements, financial stability, and recertification of enrollment of children in full-time education

(4) outreach events

(5) bereavement team support

(6) life skills and resiliency education

(7) financial counseling

(8) estate planning

(9) monthly newsletters

(10) referrals to grief counseling and specialized support groups, community resources, State agencies, and government and nongovernmental organizations, such as MilitaryOneSource, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and Tragedy Assistance for Survivors

(11) annual outreach to survivors to afford them the opportunity to stay connected to the Army and receive updated information about benefits

9. Assessment and Compliance. Family Programs for the RA and RCs will incorporate the SOS Program into their current Family Readiness accreditation or certification process. SOS will be included in the Army Family Readiness standards evaluation process. The certification process occurs every 4 years. The SOS system of record case management database is subject to annual Army internal control requirements as specified in AR 608–1.

10. Proponent. The proponent for this policy is the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. The DCS, G-9 will revise AR 608–1 to incorporate the applicable provisions of this directive within 2 years from the date of this directive.

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11. Duration. This directive is rescinded on publication of the revised regulation.



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Encl

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REFERENCES

- a. National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, Public Law 109-163, section 562, 119 Statute 3267–3268
- b. National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, Public Law 113-66, section 633, 127 Statute 786
- c. Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, Title 5, U.S. Code, section 552a (5 U.S.C. 552a)
- d. 10 U.S.C. 1475 (Death gratuity: death of members on active duty or inactive duty training and of certain other persons)
- e. 10 U.S.C. 1477 (Death gratuity: eligible survivors)
- f. 37 U.S.C. 481f (Travel and transportation allowances: transportation for survivors of deceased member to attend member's burial ceremonies; transportation for survivors of member dying overseas to attend transfer ceremonies)
- g. Department of Defense Instruction 1300.18 (Department of Defense (DoD) Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies, and Procedures), 8 January 2008, incorporating Change 1, 14 August 2009
- h. Department of Defense Instruction 1342.22 (Military Family Readiness), 3 July 2012, incorporating Change 2, 11 April 2017
- i. Department of Defense Manual 1000.13, Volume 2 (DoD Identification (ID) Cards: Benefits for Members of the Uniformed Services, Their Dependents, and Other Eligible Individuals), 23 January 2014, incorporating Change 1, effective 5 August 2020
- j. Army Regulation (AR) 600–20 (Army Command Policy), 24 July 2020
- k. AR 608–1 (Army Community Service), 19 October 2017
- l. AR 638–8 (Army Casualty Program), 7 June 2019

Enclosure