



RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE OPERATIONS GUIDE

**Published by AFPC/DPFF
current as of January 2018**



The Airman 's Creed

I am an American Airman.
I am a warrior.
I have answered my nation's call.
I am an American Airman.
My mission is to fly, fight, and win.
I am faithful to a proud heritage,
A tradition of honor,
And a legacy of valor.
I am an American Airman,
Guardian of freedom and justice,
My nation's sword and shield,
Its sentry and avenger.
I defend my country with my life.
I am an American Airman:
Wingman, leader, warrior.
I will never leave an Airman behind,
I will never falter,
And I will not fail.

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Introduction

The following guide is designed to provide Retiree Activities Offices, or RAOs, with an overview of operations. The official instruction for an RAO is Air Force Instruction 36-3106, Retiree Activities Program. Although the instruction is currently being reviewed/revised, no major changes are expected in the latest edition.

This guide addresses RAO “best practices” throughout the Air Force. Not all “best practices” will be applicable to every base – there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to operating an RAO.

The AFPC Retiree Services office thanks retired Col. Jack Houlgate and his volunteers at the RAO at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., for their contributions to this Retiree Activities Office Operations Guide.

Please contact the AFPC Retiree Services office with any changes or ideas for improvements regarding this guide via email at afpc.retiree@randolph.af.mil.

Overview of Air Force Instruction 36-3106, Retiree Activities Program

Air Force Instruction 36-3106 covers all aspects of the Retirees Activities Program. This guide addresses the sections directly affecting local RAO offices.

Section A of the AFI primarily addresses the Air Force Retiree Council. The Air Force Retiree Council representative for your area can be of great assistance to your RAO. The area representative should maintain contact via email, and when the budget allows, personally visit your base to meet and coordinate retiree issues with you and base leadership.

Section B discusses the Air Force Retiree Activities Program at the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) level. It briefly describes the roles of Air Force Director of Personnel and the Air Force Personnel Center commander. Although the AFI states that the Air Force Personnel Center commander provides financial support to publish and distribute the *Afterburner-News for USAF Retired Personnel*, there may be times when Air Force funding challenges prevent hard-copy publication. Regardless of funding, AFPC/DPFFF produces electronic versions, or *e-Afterburners*, twice a year, and posts Air Force Retiree News Service releases on the Air Force Retiree Services website, www.retirees.af.mil, as news occurs.

The Air Force Retiree Council is also funded by the Air Force Personnel Center commander.

The Role of AFPC/DPFFF

AFPC/DPFFF is responsible for the overall management of the Air Force's Retiree Activities Program. The section oversees day-to-day management of the program by:

- Providing advice and consultation to installation Retiree Activities Office coordinators and directors
- Working with Air Force Retiree Council co-chairmen on preparations for the council's annual meeting
- Disseminating information on matters affecting retirees to Retiree Activities Office directors primarily through the quarterly Retiree Activities Program Letter
- Distributing a periodical USAF Retiree Activities Office Directory listing the names, addresses and telephone numbers of offices worldwide; and similar information on active-duty installation Retiree Activities Office coordinators
- Producing, emailing and posting Air Force Retiree News Service releases/articles
- Maintaining the Air Force Retiree Services website
- Managing the Retiree Address Finder program for mailing labels or data files by granting access to Retiree Activities Office directors and trained volunteers

The Role of the Installation

Commanders and staff at the major commands have very little interaction with the Retiree Activities Office program at base level. It is the role of the installation (base/wing) commander who -- among other things -- appoints the Retiree Activities Office director, designates the vice commander as the active-duty coordinator, and provides funding for the office. As Air Force Instruction 36-3106 points out, the Retiree Activities Office is the focal point of the local Retiree Activities Program and its success depends on the support of the installation commander.

The installation commander furnishes necessary support for Retiree Activities Office activities including appropriate facilities, administrative assistance, office equipment, and funding. He/she also appoints retirees as members of base-level advisory councils (commissary, exchange, clubs, etc.) on the recommendation of the Retiree Activities Office director and ensures the director submits one nomination annually for Volunteer of the Year recognition.

Each Retiree Activities Office director is appointed by the installation commander who also appoints an active-duty Airman – normally the installation vice commander -- as the installation's Retiree Activities Office coordinator. An installation coordinator should maintain regular contact with the Retiree Activities Office director, and liaise between

the active-duty staff and the director. The installation commander also ensures the Air Force Retiree Council member, who depends on his/her base for support, receives adequate financial and administrative assistance to support the council member's mission. The RAO has been added to the 2014 IG inspection checklist. Installation commanders should be prepared to show their support of retiree programs.

Each base should host an annual Retiree Appreciation Day or retiree seminar. The installation commander may appoint an active-duty person as the Retiree Appreciation Day project officer to lead a working group to plan and execute these events. Members of the working group should include representatives from public affairs, protocol, financial management, the medical treatment facility/clinic, military personnel flight, services and any other office or agency having a significant impact in retiree events.

It is the installation commander's duty to ensure retirees receive the same respect and courtesy shown to active-duty Airmen by informing the base populace that retirees will be addressed by their retired grade (except for those retirees who are currently Civil Service employees). This includes using the retiree's grade on all official records, and addressing retirees by their retired grade in official correspondence. Installation commanders should periodically forward guidance to units and organizations about continuing to show military respect to retirees.

The installation public affairs staff advises and assists on all retiree-related public affairs matters, and must review the Retiree Activities Office newsletter before publication. The staff can also assist with publicizing Retiree Activities Office events.

The Role of the Retiree Activities Office Director

The RAO director supports the installation commander, and directs and manages the Retiree Activities Office. The director also:

- Publishes a local retiree newsletter if funding support is available. The newsletter should contain local information and information furnished by AFPC/DPFFF and other official sources that affect or would be of general interest to the local retiree community which consists of retirees, family members, and the surviving spouses of retirees.
 - Use of copyrighted information and news is prohibited. To ensure the newsletter meets Air Force requirements governing published material, the Retiree Activities Office director must coordinate the newsletter with, at a minimum, the local public affairs officer and staff judge advocate.
- Ensures publishing expenses are submitted to the installation commander in the annual budget process.

- Ensures AFPC/DPFFF receives a copy of each Retiree Activities Office newsletter.
- Maintains a file or library of pertinent information including -- but not limited to -- this directive, copies of past issues of the *Afterburner*, and the quarterly Program Letter disseminated by AFPC/DPFFF.
- Solicits volunteers to work in the Retiree Activities Office and to participate in other programs supported by the Air Force Retiree Activities Program.
- Submits one Retiree Activities Office volunteer to the installation commander as Volunteer of the Year.
- Maintains and reports fundamental Retiree Activities Office information to AFPC/DPFFF each year using the annual report form issued each January.

Core Retiree Activities Office Capabilities/Operations

The Air Force established the Retiree Activities Program to serve military retirees and their families, including widows and widowers.

A primary purpose of a Retiree Activities Office is to provide information services to retirees in order to, as the Air Force Instruction states, “support, advance and unify the retired and active military communities.” As such, it is important to locate, staff, and equip the Retiree Activities Office in a manner that will facilitate the information services function. Retiree Activities Offices are traditionally located near a personnel customer service office. If possible, the Retiree Activities Office should also be located near the Survivor Benefit Plan office and casualty office in order to assist with those issues, if required.

The objective is to have the Retiree Activities Office work for the highest command position feasible; however, the installation commander determines the chain of command. In some instances, the Retiree Activities Office works for the mission support group commander. While this may not be ideal, it does have functional utility.

It is vital for the director to keep their chain of command informed of office operations and events. This can be accomplished through frequent personal contact, emails or via briefings. Attending the commander’s regularly scheduled staff meetings is a great way to gain exposure and pass along information about Retiree Activities Office to all base leaders.

Most Retiree Activities Office's require, at a minimum, a 15' by 15' office space. We recommend a separate office space to accommodate the privacy of our customers. Being located in an open area or in a "cubicle farm" would not be optimal.

Each installation sets the RAO's office hours, based on the location, number of volunteers, and customer population. We recommend the Retiree Activities Office is open five days a week for at least six hours a day (two three-hour shifts for volunteers) to accommodate retirees who travel an extended distance. Whatever period the office is open, the schedule should be adhered to and well-publicized.

A desk and several chairs for visitors are minimum requirements. The office also requires a file cabinet and a medium-size book case for reference material.

A phone is required with both DSN and commercial long-distance access, and a fax is very useful. If a dedicated office fax is not available, ensure you can have access to one.

Computers/communication access to the Internet and email is essential to operating Retiree Activities Offices. A computer with a printer and email/Internet access is required. Retiree information can be stored and retrieved on the Retiree Activities Office computer. In addition, most RAO office personnel communicate with retirees via email and utilize the internet to access the AF Retiree web page, advertise events and obtain current information on retiree issues.

(NOTE: Because the Air Force has migrated to *@us.af.mil* email addresses, it is vital that the base name be included in the address prefix -- for example, *basename.rao* followed by *@us.af.mil*. Avoid unit designations such as *123aw.rao*, or lengthy names such as *123airliftwing.retireeactivitiesoffice* as they are difficult for customers to identify with or remember.)

Several volunteers should be trained and granted access to use a computer connected to the base system. This will require RAO volunteers to obtain and use the Volunteer Access Card, or VOLAC, and a personal identification number to access the computer, or in some cases, an Alternate Token Card. This includes three certificates for logon/ID encryption/decryption and digital signature. The Retiree Activities Office director should work closely with the base's computer systems administrator and other appropriate agencies to ensure enough volunteers receive access to make effective use of the office computer.

A Retiree Activities Office information library is essential for keeping current with information on retiree issues. While access to the Internet can eliminate the need for a large hard-copy library, there is still a need to maintain several key documents.

Among those documents should be:

- *Afterburner*. It is a good idea for the Retiree Activities Office to print copies of the *e-Afterburner* for easy access and reference.
- Air Force Retiree News Service. Sent via e-mail by AFPC/DPFFF as news occurs, and posted on the Air Force Retiree Services website. These news articles provide updates on issues of interest to retirees. Each Retiree Activities Office should have an electronic subscription.
- Retiree Activities Program Letter. Published quarterly by AFPC/DPFFF this document is full of vital information useful to the Retiree Activities Office. It offers program updates, and useful tips and information for assisting volunteers with serving retirees. The entire volunteer staff, not just the Retiree Activities Office director, should read this publication.
- USAF Retiree Activities Office Directory. AFPC/DPFFF periodically publishes a complete list of Air Force Retiree Activities Offices worldwide. This information is kept current and available on the Air Force Retiree Services website at www.retirees.af.mil.

The base library can also assist with getting other helpful publications such as:

- *Air Force Times*. Newspaper published weekly. Although it is not an official Air Force publication, it is a source of active-duty and retiree information being reported in the news. Current issues can serve as reference material. Please note that information contained in Air Force Times is protected by copyright and cannot be reproduced in Retiree Activities Office newsletters, on websites or within other products.
- “Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors.” No longer distributed via hard copy, this Veterans Affairs product is available at http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp in both English and Spanish, and can be downloaded onto several mobile devices.

Volunteers

The most important resource of any Retiree Activities Office is its volunteers. The office director must have a program to recruit, train, educate and acknowledge volunteers.

Based on retiree volunteer demographics, the Retiree Activities Office needs to continually look for new volunteers to staff the office. Sources of recruits are military-related organizations such as the Air Force Association, Military Officers Association of America, Air Force Sergeants Association, and local chief's groups, Top 3, Transition Assistance Program, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, etc.

Volunteers should be trained on the operation of the Retiree Activities Office. This can be done with either locally produced handbooks and internal instructions, or a briefing on the Retiree Activities Office. There should also be a process to keep volunteers continually educated on evolving Retiree Activities Office issues.

Each Retiree Activities Office should have a method to consistently recognize its volunteers. Some of the recognitions tools available include:

- The Air Force Retiree Services Volunteer of the Year program. AFPC/DPFFF manages this program. Each Retiree Activities Office must nominate a volunteer. AFPC/DPFFF will then forward a Certificate of Recognition to the Retiree Activities Office for presentation through local command channels.
- Base Volunteer Program. The Airman and Family Readiness Center at each base manages the Base Volunteer Program. Each Retiree Activities Office should participate in the Base Volunteer Excellence Award Program in order to gain additional recognition for office volunteers.
- Team-Building Events. The Retiree Activities Office should host periodic events such as luncheons, picnics, or other get-togethers for office volunteers for recognition and team building.
- Army and Air Force Exchange Service “Still Serving” Campaign. Work with the base Exchange manager to provide special deals and or freebies for the Retiree Activities Office volunteers during the “Still Serving” campaign normally held in September

Information Dissemination

The core function of a Retiree Activities Office is providing retiree information services to an installation’s local retiree community. There are other important functions; however, this is central to a functioning Retiree Activities Office.

Retirees will frequently walk into the Retiree Activities Office with questions concerning various aspects of their benefits. Volunteers should be prepared to answer questions one-on-one. Many questions can be answered rather easily; however, there will be those that require research or must be answered by a subject-matter expert.

A Retiree Activities Office should maintain a database of retiree-related information. Central to this database would be the documents mentioned earlier, as well as “how-to” or “frequently asked questions” files. This will avoid having to “re-invent the wheel” for each query and assist new volunteers with providing customer service. AFPC/DPFFF maintains a “how-to” file to assist Retiree Activities Offices wishing to establish one.

Each Retiree Activities Office should maintain lists of phone numbers of organizations that could be helpful with providing information to retirees. One list can contain local installation phone numbers, and another can list external numbers. A helpful list of resources can be found on the Air Force Retiree Services website at <http://www.retirees.af.mil/resources/>.

Installation Meetings

Many Retiree Activities Office directors attend the installation commander's staff meetings. This keeps them in touch with base activities and lets the commander's staff know of the Retiree Activities Office's requirements and needs.

Most installation hospitals/clinics, commissaries and Exchanges conduct a quarterly Consumer Council meeting to advise active-duty and retiree organizations of events. A Retiree Activities Office representative should attend these meetings.

Retiree Information Categories

The following is a list of topics and types of information each Retiree Activities Office should maintain:

Hospital/Military Treatment Facility

- ✓ The standby situation for TRICARE Standard members
- ✓ The facility hours of operation
- ✓ Whether or not retirees enrolled in TRICARE Prime can use the facilities
- ✓ The pharmacy hours. If there is a satellite pharmacy, list its location
- ✓ The current pharmacy formulary

A good way to stay current on what is happening at the hospital is to have a representative attend the meetings of advisory committees.

Retiree Pay

- ✓ The Retiree Activities Office should have the phone number of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service-Cleveland, 800-321-1080. This is the agency that pays retirees and annuitants.
- ✓ The Retiree Activities Office should be able to go online to the DFAS website -- <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html> -- in order to keep current on pay issues.
- ✓ Qualified volunteers should maintain a myPay account to assist with walking people through the process of how to apply for an account.

Survivor Benefits/Casualty Assistance

- ✓ Assist the Survivor Benefit Plan counselor whenever feasible and or requested.
- ✓ Maintain copies of the Retiree Casualty Assistance Checklist found at <http://www.retirees.af.mil/library/> under "Checklists."
- ✓ Know the phone number and location of the local Survivor Benefit Plan office.
- ✓ Keep a copy of Air Force Pamphlet 36-3028, Benefits and Entitlements for Family Members of Retired Air Force Deceased, in your reference library. (At <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/index.asp>, search for "AFPAM36-3028")

Veterans Affairs

- ✓ If there is a Veterans Affairs clinic in your area, know its location and hours of operation.
- ✓ Have available the phone number of the local state/county Veterans Affairs benefits adviser and regional offices.
- ✓ Have copies of Combat-Related Special Compensation applications (DD Form 2860) available to hand out to those interested in applying.

Medical Records

Most official military personnel files archived at the National Personnel Records Center before 1992 contain both personnel and active-duty health records. Health records cover outpatient, dental, and mental health treatment which a former member received while in the military service. Health record documents include induction and separation physical examinations, and routine medical care (doctor/dental visits, lab tests, etc.) when the patient was not admitted to a hospital.

In comparison, clinical (hospital inpatient) records are NOT filed with the health records but are generally retired at the National Personnel Records Center by the hospital or facility which created them. Other medical records which would not be included are Veterans Affairs records or records for service after 1992.

The practice of filing health records with the personnel record portion has been discontinued. On May 1, 1994 (June 1 for reservists), the Air Force began retiring most of its former members' health records to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Department of Veterans Affairs Records Management Center in St. Louis maintains the active-duty health records or manages their whereabouts when on loan within the Veterans Affairs system. Call Veterans Affairs at 800-827-1000 to identify the current location of specific health records and to find out how to obtain releasable documents or information.

Family member medical records are forwarded to the National Personnel Records Center depository at 111 Winnebago St., St. Louis, MO 63118-4126 two years after the sponsor retires.

Military Records

Written requests with a signature are required by law to obtain copies of selected documents or information from official military personnel records.

Airmen retired before Oct. 1, 2004, should contact the National Personnel Records Center. Phone 314-801-0800. Submit a Standard Form 180 or letter of request to:

NPRC/NCPMF-C
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5000.

Request letters must include the Airman's name, Social Security number, contact information and specific record requested. Those requesting a relative's record also need to provide their relationship to the former Airman. Check the website at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/> for details.

Airmen who retired on or after Oct 1, 2004, can request copies of records by submitting a Standard Form 180 or letter of request to:

AFPC/DPFFCMP
550 C St. West Ste 19
Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, TX 78150
Fax 210-565-4021 or DSN 665-4021

Request letters must include the Airman's name, Social Security number, contact information and specific record requested. Those requesting a relative's record also need to provide their relationship to the former Airman.

- ✓ Retiree Activities Office volunteers need to be able to advise retirees on how to obtain their military personnel and medical records. Ensure you have sufficient copies of Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records, to provide to retirees who inquire how to request copies of their records.

Newsletters

Newsletters to military retirees and surviving spouses within your base's ZIP code area is the best way to directly inform people of changes to their benefits, the status of

current legislations impacting their retirement pay and benefits, and activities on the installation that might be of interest.

When feasible, publish at least one newsletter per year. Establish and submit a budget that includes money for publishing and mailing a newsletter. Some bases have a local contractor publish the newsletter as a newspaper. You provide the articles, and they sell advertising for the newspaper and handle the publication and mailing tasks.

Addresses for mailing newsletters are maintained by Defense Manpower and Data Center. AFPC/DPFFF can assist Retiree Activities Offices with the application process for requesting access to the address database for specific ZIP codes. The address database contains personal identification information so access must be restricted. Files containing address information must be destroyed or returned to the Retiree Activities Office after use.

Ensure AFPC/DPFFF receives a copy of your Retiree Activities Office's newsletter

Original articles in the newsletter should be submitted to public affairs for approval. Articles from the Air Force Retiree News Service have already been cleared; however, articles that have been extensively localized should be cleared through public affairs. Articles from a private publication or organization require written permission for use.

If desired, post an online version of the newsletter on the Retiree Activities Office's website or page. Notify AFPC/DPFFF each time a new newsletter is posted – preferably via email to afpc.retiree@us.af.mil with the link included.

Websites

The Air Force has now standardized all Air Force public websites. Each Retiree Activities Office's page should reside on a sanctioned Air Force website.

Public affairs personnel use the Air Force Public Information Management System to maintain installation and organizational websites, as well as Retiree Activities Office pages. The Retiree Activities Office staff should decide on the content the page, including which links are needed on the site, and work closely with the PA staff.

Retiree Activities Office information on a website should contain the office's contact details such as mailing address, phone number, email address, etc., as well as hours of operation. Consider having links to the following websites: Air Force Retiree Services, Veterans Affairs, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, TRICARE, Social Security, Medicare, and any other sites that might be appropriate for retirees in your area.

Consider posting an online newsletter. Also include bulletins when required.

Retiree Activities Office Briefing

It is useful to prepare a briefing on your Retiree Activities Office operations. The briefing can be used for new-volunteer orientations, briefing key and senior leaders on base, and to educate various Air Force-oriented community organizations on RAO functions (advise public affairs beforehand of any off-base briefings).

The briefing should be done using PowerPoint, stored on a computer, and printed out so it can be used to give a table-top presentation.

Briefings should include -- but are not be limited to -- Retiree Activities Office director and staff names and background, office location and contact information, a brief discussion of AFI 36-3106, number of retirees residing in the base area, and office functions and recent accomplishments.

Retiree Appreciation Days/Seminars/Luncheons

Retiree Appreciation Day events should be advertised well in advance for maximum participation. For advertising purposes, consider using a Retiree Activities Office newsletter, installation newspaper and website, fliers, postings in key locations, Air Force Retiree Services Web site, and any other appropriate news outlets.

If a Retiree Appreciation Day is not feasible, then consider subject-oriented retiree seminars or luncheons. Seminars and luncheons are an excellent way to inform large groups of retirees about a single issue such as TRICARE, the Survivor Benefit Plan, Veterans Affairs, etc.

Some helpful hints:

- ✓ Speakers/experts on various subjects can be scheduled by contacting the Military Officers Association of America, the National Association of Uniformed Services, Air Force Association, local Chief's Group, Veterans Affairs, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, etc.
- ✓ If possible, arrange for attendees to receive special tours of facilities and static displays.
- ✓ Work with the medical community to see if they can schedule a mini-health fair in conjunction with Retiree Appreciation Day.
- ✓ Coordinate with Services to schedule a golf tournament and/or a bowling tournament in conjunction with the Retiree Appreciation Day, or special functions at the clubs.
- ✓ If feasible, consider holding the event in conjunction with the Exchange's "Still Serving" promotional campaign. Work with your local Exchange staff to provide special offerings for retirees.

- ✓ If feasible, consider holding the event in conjunction with a commissary case lot sale or other special events that would interest retirees.

Prepare publicity announcements as soon as possible. Besides the when and where, also include a few highlights of the day's planned events. Ask yourself: "Why would/should retirees make the effort to participate – what's in it for them?" The answers are what will generate interest.

When submitting event information for publicity on the Air Force Retiree Web site, use the Retiree Appreciation Day Announcement Worksheet included in periodic Retiree Activities Program Letters from DPFFF or upon request by emailing afpc.retiree@us.af.mil. For optimum coverage, worksheets should be submitted to AFPC/DPFFF at least 60 days in advance, although it is never too late.

Lobbying

Even though Retiree Activities Offices are staffed with volunteers, Air Force rules still govern certain behaviors and practices.

In the past, some Retiree Activities Office volunteers have tried to use their positions to "influence members of Congress," although they did not even realize they were doing so or that it is not permissible. The problem is even more prevalent thanks to the easier and faster electronic transfer of information.

Often it is not so much original information that slips out, but information that is sent out from various sources, especially from some of the military-related organizations.

Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 1913 -- Lobbying with Appropriated Monies states, "No part of the money appropriated by any enactment of Congress shall, in the absence of express authorization by Congress, be used directly or indirectly to pay for any personal service, advertisement, telegram, telephone, letter, printed or written matter, or other device, intended or designed to influence in any manner a member of Congress, to favor or oppose, by vote or otherwise, any legislation or appropriation by Congress."

Simply put, volunteers cannot use a government office, telephone, postage money, newsletter or computer to tell folks to write their elected officials, or to vote for or against a certain bill.

For the most part, the problem arises when people use material from one of the military-related groups about a certain bill. Using the material is OK as long as the Retiree Activities Office has written permission and clearly states the source of the information when it is used; however, do not retain any words that urge folks to "write your elected officials and tell them to vote for (or against) HR XXX." That is taboo. The best volunteers can do is explain the provisions of a bill to and then remind retirees to let their elected officials know their views.

Bottom line: Volunteers cannot tell others what views to express nor can they use government equipment, space, and funding to express their own specific views to Congress.

Official Email Only

As a reminder, government computers are for official use only, and sending any **inappropriate email is not tolerated**. The Retiree Activities Office could lose its computer capabilities if this is violated.

This applies not only from government/official computer to government/official computer but also from a home email account to a government computer.

Government computers are subject to monitoring, and they are monitored more frequently than people think – just ask those folks who have been caught doing something wrong. Even if inappropriate use is not detected through monitoring, people must not assume everyone will find certain jokes funny, or share certain political or religious viewpoints.

Remember: It is better to be safe than sorry.

Other Volunteer Functions

Many Retiree Activities Office volunteers do more than perform the retiree information services function; several provide volunteers to a wide variety of base functions such as:

- ✓ Satellite Pharmacy – Work with the base pharmacist to see if there is a need for volunteers to assist in the satellite pharmacy with handing out medications. Military retirees are the type of responsible volunteers required to perform this function and can ease the workload of the active-duty staff.
- ✓ Hospital Information Desk – Check with the base hospital leaders to determine if such a service is required. Volunteers can advise hospital customers on where various clinics are located, key phone numbers, and other helpful information.
- ✓ Tax Preparation – Some bases need volunteers to assist in tax preparation. Check with the legal office to see if they need assistance performing this function.

Retiree Activities Office Resources/Partners

Budget uncertainties will yield good years and challenging years; however, there are agencies the Retiree Activities Office can work with to ensure adequate support.

- Financial Manager -- There is not an “Air Force Retiree Activities Program” budget line in the Air Force budget that Retiree Activities Offices can access, nor is there one at command level. Each office’s funding support resides at its installation. Further, there will be no specific Retiree Activities Office funding line at installation level unless the office director works to establish one. Best practices have shown that Retiree Activities Office directors should work with their respective financial managers to establish a yearly Retiree Activities Office budget for things like newsletters, Retiree Appreciation Day, computers/printers, etc.
- Services – Contact the director of Services when planning a Retiree Appreciation Day and/or seminar. If your event is open to the entire military community, then Services should be able to provide assistance. In addition, the installation library is a good place to distribute retiree information.
- Exchange -- The Exchange has a “Still Serving” promotion every fall. The Retiree Activities Office should coordinate Retiree Appreciation Days, seminars or luncheons with the Exchange’s “Still Serving” campaign if at all possible.
- Commissary – The Retiree Activities Office should work with the commissary manager when planning Retiree Appreciation Days, seminars or luncheons to plan outreach opportunities.
- Local Service Organizations -- These organizations are focused on the military community and are an excellent source of information and/or volunteers:
 - Air Force Association
 - Air Force Sergeant’s Association
 - Chiefs’ Group
 - Top Three
 - Company Grade Officers’ Council
 - Military Officers Association of America
 - Non Commissioned Officers Association
 - Veterans of Foreign Wars
 - American Legion
 - Disabled American Veterans

Frequent contact with AFPC/DPFFF and your region’s Air Force Retiree Council member is advised.

Airman & Family Readiness Center

Airman & Family Readiness Centers serve as the focal point for the Air Force volunteer program at each installation, and collaborate with other agencies to recruit, train, place, and recognize volunteer service in the military community. The level of volunteer assistance varies from installation to installation because of resources, manning, and leadership requirements.

The Retiree Activities Office is not supervised by the Airman & Family Readiness Center; however, as part of the Air Force Volunteer Program, RAOs should build/maintain a strong relationship with the center staff and report annual volunteer hours if requested. Airman & Family Readiness Centers are also a great source of volunteers.

Air Force Retiree Activities Office Directory

The Air Force Retiree Activities Office Directory is available on the AF Retiree web page. We need your help to ensure it properly displays your base RAO information. Send an email (afpc.retiree@us.af.mil) to AFPC/DPFFF as soon as changes occur, such as a new Retiree Activities Office director or active-duty coordinator, office hours, email address, street address, etc. All changes must be in writing. RAOs may fax the information if necessary.

This directory is only useful if it is current, so help AFPC/DPFFF maintain an up-to-date product.

Annual Training Requirements

Volunteers who have access to an Air Force's computer system are required to complete annual training. One of the required courses is Information Assurance training. It is available through the Advanced Distributed Learning System on the Air Force Portal.

Be sure to suspense this training within the Retiree Activities Office to help ensure it is completed on time. If training is not current, users will be denied computer access.

Contact the unit/installation training manager to arrange for Information Assurance training and any other training that may be required.

Contact Directory

Air Force Aid Society -- Contact the Airman and Family Readiness Flight on any Air Force installation. Web: www.afas.org/. Phone: 800-769-8951.

Air Force Enlisted Village -- Write: Air Force Enlisted Village, 92 Sunset Lane, Shalimar, FL 32579-1000. Phone: 850-651-3766 or toll free 800-258-1413. Email: afef@afev.us. Web: www.afenlistedwidows.org.

Air Force Village (Blue Skies of Texas) -- Write: Air Force Villages, 5100 John D. Ryan Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78245. Phone: 210-677-8666 or toll free 866-553-5389. Email: info@airforcevillages.com. Web: <http://www.blueskiesoftexas.org/>.

Air Force Wounded Warrior Program -- Phone: 800-581-9437. Email: afwounded.warrior@us.af.mil. Web: www.woundedwarrior.af.mil/.

Arlington National Cemetery -- For general information, location of gravesites, and visitor information call 703-607-8000. Contact the Interment Services Branch at 703-607-8585 regarding funeral arrangements and eligibility requirements. Write: Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA 22211. Web: www.arlingtoncemetery.org.

Armed Forces Recreation Centers:

Dragon Hill, Seoul -- Phone: 011-82-2-790-0016. Email: reservations@dhl.korea.army.mil. Fax: 011-82-2-790-1576. Web: www.dragonhilllodge.com.

New Sanno Hotel, Tokyo -- Web: www.thenewsanno.com. Phone: 011-81-3-3440-7871. Email: room_rsv@thenewsanno.com.

Hale Koa Hotel, Hawaii -- Write: Hale Koa Hotel, 2055 Kalia Road, Honolulu, HI 96815-1998. Phone: 800-367-6027. Web: www.halekoa.com.

Shades of Green Resort in Orlando, Fla. -- Write: Shades of Green, 1950 W. Magnolia Palm Drive, Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830. Phone: 407-824-3400. Fax: 407-824-3665. Email: sales@shadesofgreen.org. Web: www.shadesofgreen.org.

Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington Campus -- Write: Armed Forces Retirement Home, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington, DC 20011-8400. Phone: 800-422-9988. Fax: 202-730-3492. Email: admissions@afrh.gov and specify the "DC" in the subject line. Web: www.afrh.gov.

Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport Campus -- Write: AFRH-Gulfport, P.O. Box 1120, Gulfport, MS 39502. Phone: 228-604-2205. Email: admissions@afrh.gov and specify the "Gulfport" in the subject line. Web: www.afrh.gov.

Armed Forces Vacation Club -- Web: www.afvclub.com/default.asp.

DEERS Telephone Center -- Phone: 800-334-4162 (Calif.); 800-527-5602 (Alaska and Hawaii); or 800-538-9552 (all other states). Web: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe/indexAction.do> .

Defense Finance and Accounting Service – Phone: 800-321-1080. Fax: 800-469-6559 for retirees, and 800-982-8459 for annuitants. Write: DFAS, US Military Retirement Pay, PO Box 7130, London KY 40742-7130 for retired members, and DFAS, US Military Annuitant Pay, PO Box 7131, London KY 40742-7131 for annuitants. Web: <http://www.dfas.mil/>.

Identification Cards – Phone: 800-525-7502 for location of the nearest issuing facility. Web: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/appj/site?execution=e1s1>.

The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation -- Write: The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation, 17050 Arnold Dr., Riverside CA 92508. Phone: 800-729-2999. Email: info@afvw.com. Web: www.lemay-foundation.org.

Locator Service -- Write: HQ AFPC/DPDXIDL, 550 C St West Ste 50 Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4752. Web: <http://www.afpc.af.mil/Air-Force-Worldwide-Locator>.

Lodging Reservations:

Air Force -- Phone: 888-235-6343, after prompt, dial first three digits of base name. Web: <http://dodlodging.net/>.

Army – Phone: (800) 462-7691. Web: www.armymwr.com/portal/travel/lodging/.

Navy – Phone: (800) 628-9466. Web: www.navy-lodge.com.

Marine Corps – Web: www.usmc-mccs.org/lodging/index.cfm?sid=rf.

Medicare -- Phone: 800-633-4227. Web: www.medicare.gov.

myPers – <https://mypers.af.mil>. How to create an account: <http://www.retirees.af.mil/myPERS/>.

Records Requests -- Personnel records are available by calling the Total Force Service Center at 800-616-3775 for veterans who retired after Oct. 1, 2004. Veterans who retired before Oct. 1, 2004, should contact the National Personnel Records Center at www.archives.gov/veterans/.

Report a Retiree's Death -- Phone: 877-353-6807. Overseas callers should contact the nearest U.S. Embassy.

Social Security -- Phone: 800-772-1213 or commercial 410-965- 8019. Write: Social Security Administration, Office of Public Inquiries, Windsor Park Building, 6401 Security Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21235. Web: www.ssa.gov.

TRICARE – Web: www.tricare.mil. Phone: West, 877-988-9378; North, 877-874-2273; South, 800-444-5445; overseas, 888-777-8343.

TRICARE for Life – Phone: 866-773-0404.

TRICARE Information Center – Phone: 877-363-6337.

TRICARE Retiree Delta Dental Plan – Phone: 888-838-8737. Web: www.ddpdelta.org.

TRICARE Mail-Order Pharmacy Program -- Express Scripts, Inc. In United States, call toll free 866-363-8667; or overseas, call 866-275-4732. Web site: www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE.

VA matters -- For benefit inquiries call 800-827-1000; life insurance 800-669-8477; status of headstones and markers, 800-697-6947; special issues such as Gulf War/radiation/Agent Orange/Project Shad call 800-749-8387; and GI Bill and education matters call 888-442-4551. Web: www.va.gov.

The information listed above is subject to change without notice. Please use the computer search engine of your choice to determine current information. If listed information has changed, notify AFPC/DPFFF at afpc.retiree@randolph.af.mil.

Abbreviations & Acronyms

The following are some common – and not so common – abbreviations and acronyms used in the Air Force today:

A

AFI – Air Force Instruction
AFPC – Air Force Personnel Center
A&FRC -- Airman & Family Readiness Center
AFRAP – Air Force Retiree Activities Program
Alt Token – Alternate Token

B

BDU – Battle Dress Uniform
BRAC – Base Closure and Realignment Commission

C

COMSEC – Communications Security
CONUS – Continental United States
CRDP – Concurrent Retirement Disability Pay
CRSC – Combat-Related Special Compensation
CSA -- Computer Systems Administrator

D

DBIDS – Defense Biometric Identification System
DeCA – Defense Commissary Agency
DEERS – Defense Enrollment and Eligibility Reporting System
DFAS – Defense Finance and Accounting Service
DMDC – Defense Manpower Data Center
DODDS – Department of Defense Dependents School
DPFFF – Air Force Retiree Services Section
DRMO – Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office
DSN – Defense Switched Network

E

FY – Fiscal Year

I

ID – Identification
IED – Improvised Explosive Device
IMPAC – International Merchants Purchase Authorization Card

M

MAJCOM – Major Command
MPF – Military Personnel Flight
MTF -- Medical Treatment Facility

N

NCOA – Non Commissioned Officers Association

O

OPSEC – Operations Security

P

PA -- Public Affairs
PIN – Personal Identification Number

Q

QDR – Quadrennial Defense Review

R

RAD – Retiree Appreciation Day
RAF -- Retired Address Finder
RAO – Retiree Activities Office
RAPL -- Retiree Activities Program Letter

S

SBP -- Survivor Benefit Plan

T

TDY – Temporary Duty

U

URL – Uniform Resource Locator

V

VEA – Volunteer Excellence Award
vMPF – Virtual Military Personnel Flight
VOLAC -- Volunteer Access Card
VOY – Volunteer of the Year