



GETTING PREPARED, STAYING PREPARED

OPERATION  
**READY**  
Focus on the Family, Stay Ready, Stay Prepared

# Family Readiness Group (FRG) Key Caller Training

## Online Version



## Instructions for Certificate

1. Review slides online
2. Open a new browser and visit: <http://quizstar.4teachers.org/indexs.jsp>
3. Register for the QuizStar Site by clicking on the yellow arrow “Sign Up” and creating a Username and Password.
4. On the next screen, select “Click here to search for a new class.”
5. In the Class #1 box type “Fort Bragg Key Caller Training” and select Exact Match. Check the checkbox next to the training and click the Register button.
6. The following screen confirms your enrollment in the class. Click on the “Classes” tab at the top of the page to view your enrollment.
7. Click on 1 Untaken Quizzes and on the next page; click “Take Quiz” to begin.
8. You must pass with an 80% or better to receive a certificate.
9. Once you pass the exam with 80% correct, email [david.l.stamper3.civ@mail.mil](mailto:david.l.stamper3.civ@mail.mil). At a minimum, you should submit the following information:
  - Full Name
  - Phone Number
  - Email
  - Name of FRG Quiz taken
  - Test Date
  - Unit to which you are or will be assigned for FRG volunteer duties.
10. It may take 1-2 business days to process your certificate.



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# Objectives of Key Caller Training

- FRG Overview
- Overview of the Key Caller Role
- Expectations and Role of FRG Volunteers



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# Family Readiness Group Overview



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# Objectives of FRG Overview

- To define the mission and role of the FRG
- To review the structure of FRG operations
- To highlight how FRGs need to adapt to changing times – what FRGs need to do now



## What is an FRG?

“A FRG is a command-sponsored organization of Soldiers, civilian employees, Family members and volunteers belonging to a unit.”

(Source: AR 608-1, Appendix J)



## FRG Purpose

- Assist unit commander in enhancing Family readiness.
- Encourage self-sufficiency by providing information, referral assistance and mutual support.
- Provide a network of communications among Family members, chain of command and community resources, which includes:
  - Providing feedback **to command** on state of unit Families.
  - Disseminating official, accurate information **from command** to Families
  - Offering referral assistance to community resources.



## FRG Mission

- Act as an extension of the unit in providing official, accurate command information.
- Provide mutual care and concern between the command and the FRG membership.
- Advocate more efficient use of available community resources.
- Help Families solve problems at the lowest level.





# FRG Activities

## Mission Essential

- FRG member meetings
- FRG staff and committee meetings
- Publication and distribution of FRG newsletters
- Maintenance of updated Family rosters and Family readiness information
- Establishment of FRG telephone tree and e-mail distribution lists
- Scheduling educational briefings for FRG members



## FRG Activities (continued)

### Non-mission activities

- FRG social activities
- FRG fundraising activities

**Note:** While FRG social activities can be valuable, they are not funded by the unit's appropriated funds. The FRG must use its FRG informal fund.



## FRGs Are Not

- The ladies' coffee group
- Just for deployment
- Only for people with problems
- A long-term babysitting service
- Part of casualty notification process
- Fundraising entity for unit



# FRG Structure

**Company Level:** Typically establishes FRG.

**Battalion Level:** Advisory role to company level FRGs. May establish FRG for battalion or an FRG for battalion HQ unit.

- Battalion Commander
- FRG Steering Committee
- FRG Advisor

**Brigade and Division Level:** Advise battalion leadership on readiness issues and policy issues.



## What FRGs Need To Do in Today's Environment

- Support a diverse FRG membership
  - Single Soldier/Parent, Extended Family members
- Be operational in all phases of deployment cycle
- Support individual Soldiers and their Families
- Prepare for situations that can impact a unit/unit family
- Conduct practice exercises



# FRG Supports the Unit's "Family"

## Soldiers/Service Members

- Assigned
- Attached to unit for deployment (augmentees)

## Family Members

- Spouses
- Children
- Extended Family (parents, grandparents, etc.)
- Others as identified by Soldiers (e.g., boy/girlfriends, fiancées, guardians).

These individuals may be geographically dispersed.



# FRG Planning and Preparation for Unit/Family Situations

- Get training
- Review the Operation READY materials
- Meet with unit leadership to discuss how unit Families will be supported in deployment cycle and in emergency situations



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## Benefits of Effective FRGs

### Families

- Connection to unit and unit families
- Connection to community resources
- Able to problem-solve
- Ability to cope with deployments

### Soldiers

- Peace of mind/  
Reduced stress
- Ability to focus on mission





## Benefits of Effective FRGs (continued)

### Commanders

- Ability to be more responsive to Family issues
- Reduced time spent handling individual Soldier/Family issues
- Increased Family readiness and deployment preparedness



## Benefits of Effective FRGs (continued)

### Community

- Reduced occurrence of crisis situations
- Increased ability to support Soldiers and Families where they live



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# Overview of Key Caller Role

Third Edition, 2006



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## Objectives of Key Caller Role

- To discuss purpose of FRG phone tree (an FRG mission activity performed by key callers)
- To define key caller's responsibilities
- To discuss how to prepare for key caller role
- To identify key caller's resources
- To provide tips for success



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## Purpose of Phone Tree

- Phone tree is a FRG mission activity
- Primary purpose is to provide timely and accurate information from command to families
- Phone tree also provides the FRG an opportunity to:
  - Introduce families to FRG
  - Welcome new families to unit
  - Notify and encourage families to attend unit and FRG-sponsored activities
  - Assist families by providing referrals
  - Monitor unit families' well-being
  - Maintain families' connection to the FRG and unit



## Setting Up the FRG Telephone Tree

- FRG member roster compiled from:
  - Unit roster
  - Completed Family Readiness Information forms
  - Requests to Soldiers and Families for family contact information
- FRG leader (in conjunction with phone tree chair) develops the phone tree
- Each key caller to contact a small list of Families on ongoing basis
- Keep in mind participation in the FRG is voluntary



## FRG Phone Tree Operations

- FRG leader receives information from command
- Information passed to key callers via FRG leader or FRG Phone Tree Chair
- Key callers contact their assigned families
- Key callers then notify either FRG leader or FRG Phone Tree Chair
- Specific guidance to be provided by FRG leader



## Contact with Families

- Frequency of contact with families will depend on:
  - Number of families assigned
  - Phase of unit's deployment cycle
  - Activity level of FRG
  - Whether families seek help from FRG





## FRG Key Caller Responsibilities

- Relay information from command accurately; in some cases, command will provide a script
- Make information calls in TIMELY manner
- Call periodically to check on Families, especially in deployment and post deployment phases of deployment cycle
- Address Families' questions, referring to others when appropriate
- Maintain Family privacy and confidentiality



## FRG Key Caller Responsibilities (continued)

- Perform administrative tasks per FRG leader's guidance
  - Register as statutory volunteer, DD2793
  - Submit volunteer hours via [www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)
  - Submit necessary forms for reimbursement of incidental expenses (i.e., long distance telephone costs)
  - Track all calls with Families
  - Provide updated family contact information to FRG leader (including when family members leave the area during deployment) to keep FRG roster up to date



## Preparation for Key Caller Role

- This Key Caller training
- Attend other training identified by FRG leader
- Review Operation READY Key Caller Handbook
- Review other Operation READY and other materials provided by FRG leader
- Get directories of community resources (may be provided by FRG leader)



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## **Tips to Handling Key Caller Role**

- Understand the boundaries of your role
- Learn effective ways to handle different types of calls
- Maintain confidentiality
- Know when to notify FRG leader (or phone tree chair)
- Take care of yourself and learn effective ways to handle stress
- Develop and use your Smart Book and other resource materials



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Advancing the Family's Ability to Stay Prepared

## Tip: Understand Key Caller Role

- Key caller is responsible for providing referral and **not** solving Family's problem
- Keep in mind you are not expected to know everything, but know where to look for answers to Families' questions
- Follow-up is not required (i.e., you are not responsible for checking to make sure Family contacted the referral agency)
- Seek help from FRG leader or phone tree chair when:
  - Unable to answer question or provide referral
  - Have difficulty dealing with a Family



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# Tip: Learn How to Handle Different Types of Phone Calls

## Calls by key caller to family:

- Information
- Social/health and welfare

## Calls by Family to key caller:

- Information
- Problems
- Gossip and rumor
- Chronic
- Crisis



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## **Tip: Keep FRG Leader Informed**

- FRG leader to provide procedural guidance
- Situations when it is important to notify FRG leader:
  - Crisis situation
  - Issues experienced by many Families
  - Emerging issues being experienced by Families
  - Difficult issues Families are facing
  - Rumors Families are hearing
  - Questions that require command response





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## **Tip: Take Care of Self**

- Maintain health and well-being
- Manage demands and have the proper mindset for the job
- Take action “when stressed out”
- Find effective ways to relax





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## Tip: Develop a Smart Book

- Operation READY Key Caller Handbook
- List of assigned Families and contact information
- Forms (e.g., phone tree log form, family contact form, volunteer incidental expense reimbursement form)
- Materials and handouts from trainings
- Community directories
- Other pertinent information (e.g., FRG events schedule, unit deployment and training schedules)



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# Expectations and Role of FRG Volunteers



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# Objectives of FRG Volunteer Role

- To explain the need for FRG volunteers
- To identify roles and responsibilities of key FRG volunteers
- To review expectations of FRG volunteers
- To review volunteer rights
- To specify support available for FRG volunteers
- To discuss administrative tasks
- To address volunteers' questions



## Need for FRG Volunteers

- FRG's mission activities involve: telephone tree, e-mail, newsletter, member meetings, and educational briefings. Also social activities may be conducted though not a mission activity.
- FRG activities cannot be done solely by the FRG leader.
- A FRG leader needs a volunteer team. The size of the team depends on:
  - Key volunteer positions needed (e.g., committee chairs, key callers, FRG Informal Fund manager)
  - Number of volunteers needed to perform different FRG activities (i.e., one or a group?)
  - Whether the FRG is able to get assistance from FRG membership when needed



## Typical FRG Volunteer Positions

FRG Leader\*  
FRG Fund Manager\*  
FRG Fund Manager  
Alternate\*  
Phone Tree Chair  
**Key Callers\***  
\* required/essential

FRG Secretary  
FRG Newsletter Editor  
vFRG Coordinator  
Special Events Chair  
Hospitality/Welcome Chair  
Publicity Chair  
Fundraiser Chair  
Childcare Chair



## Expectations of Key FRG Volunteers

- Be dependable.
- Be friendly and courteous.
- Be flexible.
- Know your role.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Be nonjudgmental.
- Notify FRG leadership of important issues.
- Take care of yourself.



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## Volunteer Rights

- Be heard and help plan.
- Be treated with respect.
- Be informed.
- Have meaningful work.
- Be trained.
- Be recognized.



## Ways FRG Volunteers Are Supported

- Defined task and/or written job description
- Training
- Guidance and encouragement
- Supervision and feedback
- Authorized use of government resources for official FRG business
- Reimbursement for incidental expenses (for statutory volunteers only)
- Recognition





## FRG Volunteer Training

- Information and training for FRG volunteers available from a variety of sources including:
  - Operation READY Smart Book
  - Army Community Service (ACS)
  - Army National Guard State Family Program Office
  - Army Reserve Regional Readiness Command Family Program Office
  - Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC)
  - Army Family Team Building/Guard Family Team Building
  - Local community.
- The FRG leader will inform volunteers when and where to get any training needed.



## FRG Volunteer Supervision

- The FRG leader (and/or committee chair) is responsible for providing supervision.
- Volunteers working on FRG activities that require command approval will be asked to submit documents to FRG leader.
- Supervision will typically be done informally by maintaining communications with volunteer.
- Purposes of maintaining communication are:
  - to identify and address any volunteer problems or issues
  - to monitor how specific FRG activities are being carried out
  - to assess how well the FRG is supporting Families.



## FRG Volunteer Supervision (continued)

**Action by the FRG leader (or unit commander) may be necessary if:**

- Violation of rules or regulations
- Failure to perform assignment
- Blatant mistreatment of others
- Disregard for privacy or confidentiality.



## FRG Volunteer Recognition

- Informal and formal methods will be used.
- All volunteers will be recognized at Garrison community volunteer recognition ceremonies.



# Administrative Tasks Related to FRG Volunteers

## FRG Leader/Unit commander will:

- Provide written job descriptions
- Ensure key volunteers register and submit hours
- Review reimbursement procedures for volunteer expenses (for statutory volunteers only)
- Provide necessary forms
- Provide supervision



## Administrative Responsibilities of FRG Volunteers

- Register (registration applicable for key FRG volunteers only)
- Complete Volunteer Agreement (DD Form 2793)
- Submit volunteer hours monthly
- Submit incidental expenses (for registered volunteers only)
- Complete training



## Volunteer Portfolio

- The following information is maintained by the Army:
  - Job description
  - Hours contributed
  - Training attended
  - Recognition received.
- This information on volunteer service is available for volunteers' future use (e.g., letters of recommendation, resume for employment or another volunteer job).



## Key Caller Resources

- FRG Center Staff (910) 432-3742
- Operation READY Key Caller Handbook
- Personalized Key Caller Smart Book
- FRG Phone Chairperson, if assigned
- FRG leader
- Other key callers





## Key Caller Resources (continued)

- Garrison Army Community Service (ACS) – [www.fortbraggmwr.com/acs](http://www.fortbraggmwr.com/acs)
- State Joint Force Headquarters' Family Program office - each state has family program office overseeing services for Army National Guard families ([www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org))
- Regional Readiness Commands (RRC) – each RRC has family program office serving Army Reserve families and FRG volunteers ([www.arfp.org](http://www.arfp.org))
- Family Assistance Centers (FAC) – located throughout the U.S. providing services to Army families ([www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org))



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# Training Complete!

Thank you for completing FRG Key Caller Training Online!

View the next slide for instructions  
on taking the quiz!

If you have any questions, call the FRG Center (910) 432-3742

We are open Mon-Fri, 0800-1900



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