



30 JAN 1996
COMDTINST 1754.7A

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1754.7A

Subj: COAST GUARD SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

- Ref:**
- (a) Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Public Law 93-112, §504, 87 Stat. 394, as codified at 29 U.S.C. §794.
 - (b) Memorandum of Understanding between DOD and DOT, signed 18 NOV 91, Coordination of Overseas Assignments of Coast Guard Service Members Who Have Children Who Require or Are Likely to Require Special Education
 - (c) Department of Defense Directive 1342.12, Education of Handicapped Children in DOD Dependent Schools
 - (d) Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336, 104 Stat. 327, as codified at 42 U.S.C. §12101.
 - (e) Defense Dependents' Education Act of 1978, Public Law 95-561, 92 Stat. 2365, as codified at 20 U.S.C. §921.

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this instruction is to provide policy and guidance concerning the Coast Guard Special Needs Program.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders; commanders, maintenance and logistics commands; commanding officers of Headquarters units; Superintendent, Coast Guard Academy; unit commanding officers and officers in charge; Family Program Administrators ((FPA's)); Dependent Resource Coordinators ((DRC's)); and Work-Life Supervisors shall ensure compliance with the contents of this instruction and ensure **widest** dissemination.

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. **COMDTINST 1754.7** is **cancelled**.
4. APPLICATION. This instruction applies to all Coast Guard personnel (active **duty**, civilian **and** retired) having family members with special **needs**. Enrollment **in this program is** required for all active duty members with family members with special **needs**.
5. DISCUSSION.
 - a. The Coast Guard **Special Needs Program** was developed and implemented in **1984** to assist Coast Guard families with special needs **and to address the unique challenges and concerns which are above and beyond normal, military family life issues.** ~~The~~ intent of this program is to identify and support **the special needs of the family member** while meeting **the mission of the Coast Guard.** Currently over **2000** Coast Guard families with special needs have been identified and **enrolled in the program.** These active duty members **have successfully continued their careers, their family member's special needs have been addressed and the integrity of the Coast Guard family has been-enhanced.**
 - b. The Special Needs **Program, in concert with other** military and civilian agencies, provides a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to enhance adequate medical, educational, psychological and community support for family **members** with special needs. Services **are** provided through relevant Work-Life staffs before, during and after reassignment. Location and timing of an assignment involving **members** enrolled with special needs families are given careful consideration by **detailers** and Commandant **((G-PWL-2))** for availability of necessary resources and to permit the member to best continue a Coast Guard career while meeting the mission needs of the Coast **Guard.**
 - c. Enrollment in the Coast Guard Special Needs Program is required by active duty personnel **as a** condition of employment. This will help ensure early identification of families with special needs and maximize the provision of quality services **to** reduce family stress and undue hardship while minimizing costly and disruptive Humanitarian Assignment requests and early returns of dependents from outside of the continental United **States.**

- d. Coast Guard civilian personnel **with** family members with special needs are encouraged to **enroll** in the Special Needs Program to **take** advantage of assistance in the identification of necessary resources and support.
- e. Although there **is no statutory** requirement for such a **program**, the Coast Guard has determined **as** a matter of policy that a Special Needs **Program** is essential to the welfare of Its military members, civilian employees and their family **members**.
- f. Commandant **((G-PWL))** is responsible for implementing this program through Coast Guard area and district commanders, **maintenance** and logistics commands **((MLC's))** and Work-Life **Staffs**.
- g. This program **comparable to** the Department of Defense Exceptional Family Member Program **((EFMP))**.

6. POLICY AND SCOPE.

- a. Provide support and **assistance to active** duty, retired and civilian Coast Guard family **members with diagnosed** and professionally **documented long-term** medical, physical, psychological, mental **or** educational disabilities. (Included in **this category** are those family members who are chronically ill and/or orthopedically handicapped: hearing, vision and/or speech impaired, have chronic psychological **problems** and/or mental retardation; and/or are learning disabled, emotionally disturbed or multi-handicapped. Further definition is provided in enclosure **((1))**);
- b. In order for special needs situations to be taken into consideration for assignments and other personnel decisions, all active duty members must enroll their family members with diagnosed special needs in the Coast Guard Special Needs Program;
- c. Active duty members shall not be adversely affected in their selection for promotion, schools or assignment due to their enrollment in this program;
- d. Information concerning enrollment or data used in **this** program shall not be made part of the service record of the member nor the official personnel file of the civilian employee. All information shall **be** kept strictly confidential **in a** locked file cabinet with access only by authorized personnel. Any **case** information maintained in a **data** base shall be physically and electronically secure; **and**
- ea. Eligible active duty members who do not require or request assistance still must enroll in this program.

7↓ PROCEDURES.

a. Commandant ((G-PWL)) shall:

- (1) Provide coordination of the Coast Guard Special Needs Program service-wide;
- (2) Initiate **and develop policy**, procedures, revisions and guidance concerning **the Coast** Guard Special Needs Program;
- (3) Review, assess and maintain documentation on all special needs cases provided **by** military or civilian agencies, Work-Life **staffs**, Family Advocacy Representatives (**FAR's**), **units**, assignment-officers, medical **staff**, **educational** systems, districts and commands **to ensure appropriate education**, prevention and intervention and case decisions and judgments have occurred; guidance and support have been provided: and case recommendations have been made whenever necessary;
- (4) Maintain the Central Registry **for** special needs cases Coast Guard-wide for review, coordination of transfers, tracking, and providing accurate monthly and annual statistical reports;
- (5) Provide direct technical guidance to Work-Life staffs on special needs **cases or** issues;
- (6) Exercise final review authority regarding special needs case decisions;
- (7) Track and implement trends in national, Federal and **DOD** special needs related programs;
- (8) Prepare reports and maintain statistics for the Special Needs Program service-wide;
- (9) Develop and establish training and written materials to provide education Coast Guard-wide on special needs issues for all relevant personnel (**FPA's**, **FAR's**, **DRC's**, commands, medical staff, chaplains, assignment officers, etc.);
- (10) Represent Coast Guard interests in meetings and contacts with Department of Defense, national, Federal **and** state agencies and organizations;

- (11) Conduct regular Quality Assurance Visits of all special needs case **files under** the management/review of the **FPA** and provide a written report of findings to the District Commander **or** Commanding Officer responsible for the administrative evaluation and oversight of the ~~**duties and**~~ responsibilities of Work-Life staffs:
 - (12) Provide assistance and guidance to all Coast Guard personnel on special needs and related Humanitarian Assignment requests and overseas screening issues;
 - (13) Identify and assess national resources/services and programs, both civilian and military, to enhance the provision of quality and available services to family members with special needs service-wide; and
 - (14) Provide annual lists to **FPA's** and **DRC's** of all special needs cases within geographic areas of responsibility.
- b) District commanders and commanding officers with **FPA's** shall:
- (1) Implement policy **and program** objectives as described herein;
 - (2) Ensure special needs training is conducted, in accordance with training requirements as prescribed by Commandant **((G-PWL))**, for all **commands**, FAR's, Work-Life Supervisors, **FPA's** and **DRC's** in their geographic areas of responsibility;
 - (3) Require identification and enrollment in the Coast Guard Special Needs Program for all members **with** special needs family members; and
 - (4) Identify and facilitate the prompt availability of adequate and appropriate medical, psychological and/or education services, through existing military or civilian medical and educational facilities, for all active **duty** family members with special needs being considered for assignment out of **CONUS** or isolated in **CONUS** assignments. This particularly pertains to families with special needs being considered for assignment overseas. Ensure copies of these evaluations are provided to Commandant **((G-PWL-2))**, relevant **FPA's** and **DRC's**.

c. Supervisors of **FPA's** shall:

- (1) Implement policy and program procedures as described herein;
- (2) Ensure special needs case files are secured; this shall include providing a private locked office and file cabinet for the physical security of files;
- (3) Ensure **only** personnel with a need to know are provided **access to case information** and files:
- (4) Supervise and provide administrative support to **FPA's and DRC's; direct all technical and policy questions to Commandant (G-PWL-2);**
- (5) **Use** applicable Quality Assurance Visit reports provided by Commandant **(G-PWL)** when rating the performance of **the FPA and DRC;**
- (6) Ensure **members** with special needs family members are identified and enrolled in the Coast Guard Special Needs Program; **and**
- (7) Ensure all special needs **cases** are managed in accordance with **the** criteria delineated in enclosure **(2)**, Case Management/Review of Special Needs Cases.

d. **FPA's** shall:

- (1) Provide coordination and direct case management of all special needs cases within geographic areas of responsibility:
- (2) Obtain, review and analyze documentation on all special needs cases provided **by** Headquarters and other **FPA's, DRC's,** districts, **MLC** commands, units or FAR's to ensure appropriate services and support are being provided. Make case recommendations whenever necessary;
- (3) Review and co-sign all special needs cases at least annually in which **DRC's** are providing documentation unless the case is 'considered to be an "at risk" (of family violence) special needs case or already a family violence **case**. If so, these cases shall then be managed exclusively **by** the **FPA**. Sign off on all special needs cases to **be** transferred or closed:
- (4) Maintain a list of all active duty members with special needs family members updated quarterly, in conjunction with the **DRC,** within geographic areas of **responsibility and provide a list annually to Commandant (G-PWL-2);**

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- (5) Identify and enroll **active** duty members with special needs family **members**;
- (6) Provide ongoing coordination and communication with Work-Life **staff** specialists, especially **the DRC**;
- (7) Notify **members'** commands whenever their family members are enrolled in the Special Needs Program;
- (8) **Represent** and advise district commanders, **MLC** commands and commanding officers, officers in charge and Work-Life Supervisors, in conjunction with the Work-Life **DRC**, in all areas pertaining to special needs:
- (9) Maintain special needs cases on children until they reach **21** years of age and/or are no longer a dependent; or the **member** is discharged from the service; or the special need of the family member has been resolved;
- (10) Send special needs cases of retired Coast Guard personnel to Commandant (**G-PWL-2**) to be kept in inactive status pending request for further services;
- (11) Manage special needs cases involving members who are geographic bachelors but whose family members with special needs reside within their area of responsibility:
- (12) Not use E-mail to transfer case information or provide discussion of any special needs cases or situations;
- (13) Maintain all special needs case records in accordance with **Privacy Act Systems** Notice **DOT/CG 641**, the Privacy and Freedom of Information Acts Manual, **COMDTINST M5260.2** (series), and the Paperwork Management Manual, **COMDTINST M5212.12** (series);
- (14) If disclosure of case particulars is made to an agency outside the Department of Transportation (**DOT**), the name and address of the person or the **agency**; the date, agency involved, and purpose for the disclosure must be made part of the special needs case record by the **FPA** or **DRC**; and

(15) Disclose case information within the following guidelines:

(a) Disclose to personnel of the Coast Guard who have a need to know the information within the record in the performance of their official duties:

(b) Disclosure outside the Coast Guard within compliance with the routine uses of records published in the system of records notice. Specifically, this pertains to:

(1) Federal, state and local government or private agency for coordination of special needs programs, medical care, mental health treatment, and monitoring and tracking special needs families:

(2) Individuals or organizations providing family support program care under contract to the Federal government.

(c) Individuals requesting access to special needs case records should write to: Commandant ((G-TPS)), USCG, 2100 Second St., S.W., Washington, DC 20593-0001. Only Commandant can disclose case information or provide copies of case files to private individuals.

e. DRC's shall:

- (1) Provide assistance to FPA's with special needs cases and case documentation;
- (2) Provide special needs contact and follow-up, by telephone and/or face to face contact, with each family enrolled in the Special Needs Program within areas of responsibility at a minimum of once a year;
- (3) Document in the special needs record each contact and any activity pertaining to those families ensuring each entry is signed and dated by the Individual making the entry;
- (4) Provide information to all Coast Guard personnel, within geographic areas of responsibility, concerning relevant policy, procedures and required enrollment in the Special Needs Program;
- (5) Identify and enroll all Coast Guard active duty members with special needs family members within geographic areas of responsibility:

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- (6) Access and assess relevant resources (medical, educational **and psychological** services/programs), both civilian and **military**, in close collaboration with other Work-Life specialists, within geographic areas of responsibility. **Create and maintain a resource file;**
 - (7) Provide ongoing **coordination and communication** with **FPA's** and commands concerning all identified families with **special needs:**
 - (8) **Provide all obtained special needs enrollment forms** and supportive **medical, educational** and/or psychological documentation to relevant **FPA's** to enable **them to provide appropriate case management/review;**
 - (9) Ensure **multi-disciplinary support, guidance, advocacy and follow-up** to **Coast Guard personnel** with special need family members whenever necessary;
 - (10) **Maintain and update a list of all active duty members** with special needs family members within geographic areas of responsibility and provide a quarterly **copy of that list to the FPA;**
 - (11) Not use E-mail to transfer case information or provide discussion of **any special needs cases or situations;** and
 - (12) Report immediately all suspected or substantiated family violence incidents to relevant **FPA's,** commands and appropriate state agencies' whenever any such information is provided or obtained.
- f. Unit commanding officers, officers in charge and their **FAR's** shall:
- (1) Ensure enrollment of active duty members with special needs family members at individual units providing members with the enrollment form with the Privacy Act Statement included;
 - (2) Keep no case files and/or supportive documentation (medical, educational or psychological) of the family member with special needs **at the unit level.** All such information shall be sent immediately, upon receipt, to **FPA's or DRC's.** Clinical records shall be kept in accordance with **COMDTINST M6000.1,,** (series) Medical Manual, Chapter **4;**
 - (3) Inform **FPA's** and **DRC's** of Coast Guard personnel who have family members with special needs; and

- (4) Ensure information **and** enrollment forms **are** provided to all unit personnel concerning relevant policy and required enrollment in the Special Needs Program.

g. Commanding Officers of units with clinics shall:

- (1) **Ensure** every effort **is made** to provide **material** assistance to families with **special** needs;
- (2) Provide families with information **regarding** health benefit **plan alternatives: and**
- (3) Comply **with paragraph 7.f. (1), (3) and (4)..**

h. Coast **Guard** active duty members with **family members** with special needs **shall:**

- (1) Complete **the Coast Guard Special Needs Enrollment and Assessment Form ((CG-5494))** (enclosure (1)) for each identified family member:
- (2) Obtain and **provide copies of current** medical, educational **and/or psychological** documentation/evaluations when submitting the **Special Needs Enrollment and Assessment Form to** relevant **FPA's** or **DRC's;**
- (3) Provide **an update of** all information to **FPA's** or **DRC's** every two years or sooner if the situation warrants;
- (4) Inform individual assignment officers, Commander ~~((MPC-epm-2))~~ or ~~((MPC-epm-2))~~ and **FPA's** or **DRC's** of any special needs family member(s); and
- (5) Send the completed forms and documentation to relevant **FPA's** or **DRC's..** Place forms and supportive documentation **in** double envelopes and mark **"FOUO"** on the outside of the inner envelope.


i.. Directors of Coast Guard Child Development Centers shall:

- (1) Inform **FPA's,, DRC's** or **FAR's** whenever a family with special needs is identified: and
- (2) Encourage enrollment of families with special needs in the Special Needs Program.

j. Ombudsmen shall:

- (1) Inform unit **FAR's, DRC's, FPA's and commands** whenever a family with special needs is identified; and
- (2) Encourage enrollment of families with special needs in the Special Needs Program.

8. FORMS. Coast Guard Special Needs Enrollment and Assessment Form. Security classification shall not be given to this form. This form may be reproduced locally.



J. J. CONNELL
Chief, Office of Personnel
and Training

- Encl:** (1) Coast Guard Special Needs Enrollment and Assessment Form
- (2) Criteria for Case Management/Review of Special Needs Cases

COAST GUARD SPECIAL NEEDS ENROLLMENT MD ASSESSMENT FORM

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT:

Data required by the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a)

AUTHORITY: **14 U.S.C. §632.**

PRINCIPAL PURPOSES: To obtain family information needed to evaluate and document the needs of family members for special education and/or health related services. Information will be used by personnel, **Commandant (G-PWL-2)**, to evaluate and document the health related needs of family members and to document the special education needs of school age family members. This information will enable assignment personnel to match needs of family members against the availability of special education and health related services by assignment location, **service-wide**.

ROUTINE USES: Provide information to Federal Government agencies for coordination of special needs programs, **medical care**, mental health treatment, and monitoring and tracking of special needs families. Provide information to individuals or organizations providing family support program care under contract to the Federal Government.

DISCLOSURE: The provision of requested information is mandatory from active duty military personnel. Failure to respond may preclude processing requests or consideration for **out-of-COUS** assignments. Proper medical and educational evaluations of **family** members cannot be made without completion of this form.

DATE: _____

SPONSOR'S NAME: _____ **SSN#:** _____

RATE: _____ DISTRICT: _____ UNIT: _____

WORK NUMBER: _____ HOME ADDRESS: _____
(INCLUDE ZIP CODE)

HOME NUMBER: _____

NAME OF CHILD/SPOUSE **WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** _____

DATE OF BIRTH OF CHILD/SPOUSE: _____

TYPE OF DIAGNOSED SPECIAL NEEDS CONDITION (Deaf, Vision or Speech Impaired; Cerebral Palsy; Mental Retardation; Attention Deficit Disorder; Down Syndrome; **Spina Bifida**; Seizure Disorder; Learning Disabilities; Developmental Delays; Emotionally Disturbed; **Hydrocephalus**; Chronic illnesses such as heart, kidney, cancer, asthma, blood disorders, tumors; Depression; Head or Spinal Cord Injuries; etc.):

CAUSE OF SPECIAL NEED (if known):

TYPES OF THERAPY/TREATMENT NEEDED OR CURRENTLY RECEIVING
(Speech; Physical Therapy; Occupational Therapy; Psychotherapy; Chemotherapy; Radiation; **Specific Medications**; Medical Specialists; etc.):

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND/OR PROGRAMS ATTENDED OR PRESENTLY ATTENDING
(Infant Stimulation; Center Base School; Home Resources;
Residential Treatment Facility; Learning Disabled Classes;
Resource Room; Special Education Classes: Chemical Substance
Program; etc.):

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED (Wheelchair; neck, **arm**, leg and/or back
braces: crutches: apnea monitor: **hearing aids**; glasses: modified
car or van; feeding devices; **communication board** (Bliss); etc.):

SUPPORT GROUPS USED, IF ANY (Parents of Down Syndrome Children;
Parent Groups Within Schools: Parents of Learning Disabled
Children; National Parent Network on Disabilities; Easter Seals:
National Cancer Society: Candlelighters; **etc**):

SPECIAL PROBLEMS AND/OR CONCERNS: (Availability of Special
Schools and/or Programs; Lack of Medical Specialists/Therapists,
Medications and Equipment; Support Groups; etc.):

NAME OF FAMILY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR (FPA) AND TELEPHONE NUMBER:

NAME OF UNIT FAMILY ADVOCACY REPRESENTATIVE (FAR) AND TELEPHONE
NUMBER:

HAS A COPY OF THIS ENROLLMENT FORM AND SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTATION
BEEN SENT TO YOUR FPA OR DRC?

YES _____ DATE _____

NO _____

HAS A COPY OF THIS ENROLLMENT FORM AND SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTATION
BEEN SENT TO HEADQUARTERS ((G-PWL-2))?

YES _____ DATE _____

NO _____

ESTIMATED DATE/YEAR OF REASSIGNMENT: _____

CASE MANAGEMENT/REVIEW OF SPECIAL NEEDS CASES

Family Program Administrators (**FPA's**) shall case manage or review all special needs cases in accordance with risk factors and criteria listed below:

LEVEL I:

- Family is knowledgeable
- Services are available and appropriate
- Services are utilized by family
- Once a year (unless otherwise requested by **DRC's** or other W/L staff) **FPA's** shall staff and review **case** with **DRC's** and **sign** case notes indicating a review has occurred

LEVEL II:

- Family is knowledgeable
- Services **are available** and appropriate
- Family beginning to utilize services
- Twice a year **FPA's** shall staff and review cases with **DRC's** and sign case notes indicating a review has occurred

LEVEL III:

- Family becoming knowledgeable and accepting special need
- Assessment of needs completed
- Available services are identified
- **FPA's** shall manage the case until services are in place and utilized by the family

LEVEL IV:

- Family cannot/will not accept special need
- Services are not available or appropriate
- Family refuses to utilize services
- **FPA's** shall manage the case until positive or permanent change occurs

LEVEL V:

- Family Violence and Special Needs case
- **FPA's** shall **always** case manage

US Department
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United States
Coast Guard

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