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NGAR Regulation 2015-02

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

~~AR DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY
MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT
GENERAL
Camp Joseph T. Robinson
North Little Rock, AR 72119-42
2200 Q10+ January/October 2023~~

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Introduction

1-1. Authority

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

1-2. Purpose

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

1-3. Administrative Procedures

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

1-4. Eligibility

Any current member, or family member, of the Arkansas National Guard or a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces who is a resident of Arkansas is eligible to request assistance. ~~The Arkansas National Guard and Reserves request that the applicant explore all resources (family, community service organizations, churches, etc.) before making application for emergency assistance. The member may be referred to a financial counselor or representative from the State Family Readiness Program office for additional financial counseling based on the recommendation of The Adjutant General, or his or her designee, while reviewing the request. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §26-51-2506(h), eligibility criteria for receiving grants shall include, but not be limited to, the following:~~

- a. The need of the family;
- b. The paygrade of the member of the National Guard and reserve components of the Armed Forces.
- c. The difference between the member's military and civilian pay; or
- d. Any other factors that establish the family's financial hardship

1-5. ~~Funds~~ Designated Agent

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The Adjutant General has designated the Arkansas National Guard Foundation (the Foundation), a non-profit organization organized under the laws of the state of Arkansas and recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service as a tax exempt organization in accordance with section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, to serve as his agent for administration of the Military Family Relief Trust Fund. The Foundation will receive grants from the Department of the Military in accordance with the Department's annual budget appropriation and will distribute those funds in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. §§ 19-5-1127 and 26-51-2506, and any additional guidance that the Adjutant General may issue from time to time. The Foundation will develop and publish procedures for accepting grant request, evaluating them in accordance with statutory guidance and making grants consistent with that guidance. If the Foundation denies a grant, there shall be a right of appeal in accordance with guidance below. The Foundation will maintain records of all grant requests and their decisions on those requests. The Foundation will supply the Department of the Military with a copy of their annual audit and will make their records of grants from the Military Family Relief Trust Funds available for review to the Department of the Military.

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

Examples of situations that could qualify are: Delay in receiving pay or reimbursement from the government; a. Temporary shelter, lodging or rent; b. Emergency utility assistance, i.e. gas electric water (not telephone, cable or internet service provider); c. Emergency transportation and vehicle repair; d. Costs incurred for emergency travel due to death of immediate family member; and e. Any special circumstance as deemed appropriate by The Adjutant General. Examples of things that would not typically qualify are: a. Payment for nonessential items or services; b. Payment for ordinary leave or vacation; c. Payment of fines or legal expenses; d. Liquidation or consolidation of debt; e. Assistance with down payment on a home purchase or home improvements; and f. Funds to purchase, rent or lease a vehicle.

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1-6. Application Procedures

The member or family member's first step will normally be to contact the unit First Sergeant or Unit Commander or Full Time Staff at the unit. Personnel may also contact someone in the Rear Detachment or the Family Readiness Office or a local Family Assistance Center to assist in the process. Anyone who can act on the behalf of the member may apply for assistance if they have a properly executed Power-of-Authority and proof of identification. The Servicemember in need, family member or unit representative on the member's behalf will prepare an application and submit to request assistance. It is preferred that the request be prepared and forwarded to the specific service representative who will verify eligibility. Each service will provide the POCs upon distribution of this information. The service representative will provide the application electronically to the AR-ARNG or Reserve Liaison so that The

Adjutant General, or his or her designee, can decide on awarding the grant. Executive Director of the Arkansas National Guard Foundation for processing.

The request should contain, as a minimum: a. Description of the circumstances or events that caused the financial emergency; b. The need of the family, if applicable; c. Any other factors that establish the member's family's financial hardship; d. The purpose or bills that the grant will be used for; e. The amount requested; f. The difference between the member's military salary and civilian salary; g. Any explanation or attempt to remedy the situation by the Servicemember or the lack of other options or resources (savings account, family assistance, other organizations); and h. Name of the member, names of the family member impacted if applicable, pay grade, unit of assignment, home address, and phone contact numbers. When forwarding the Servicemember's request, a unit representative should include information regarding the Servicemember's standing in the unit/mobilization status, and any additional information reference the Servicemember's situation, especially when a delay in military pay is the cause for financial crisis.

Applicants may be required to provide verifiable proof of the need and other supporting documents. At a minimum, the following items should be needed: a. Military ID Card; b. Leave and Earnings statement and any proof of other family income to show the difference in military pay against civilian pay; and c. Substantiating documents (car repair estimate, rental agreement, utility bill, etc.).

1-7. Type of Assistance Available-Emergency Assistance Approval Committee

The Adjutant General will appoint members of the Emergency Assistance Approval Committee to assist the Foundation in evaluating grant requests. The Committee may conduct its proceedings in person, or electronically. Decisions will be made by a majority vote of the committee. Electronic voting is authorized. Recommended members of the committee include:

- a. The State Senior Enlisted Advisor for the member's Service or Component within the State.
- b. A Family Readiness Coordinator
- c. The State Family Programs Director
- d. The State Full Time Support Chaplain
- The Executive Director of the National Guard Association of Arkansas

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

1-8. Application Processing Appeals

Members may appeal a final decision of the Foundation to deny a grant to the Deputy Adjutant General of the Arkansas National Guard. In the event of an appeal the Foundation will provide the Deputy Adjutant General with all documents relating to the grant request and a statement of reasons for their decision to deny the grant. The Deputy Adjutant General may confirm the decision of the Foundation to deny the grant or approve the grant in whole or in part.

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

1-9. Fund Sources

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

1-10. Contact Information

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Current members, or family members, of the Arkansas National Guard or a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces may contact ~~501-212-5001 to receive more information about the Military Family Relief Trust Fund and point of contact information for their respective branch of the Arkansas National Guard or Reserve Component. The Arkansas National Guard Foundation at its offices on Camp Joseph T. Robinson by calling 501-758-6422 or through their website at <https://www.angf.us/>.~~

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