

How to Use the American Red Cross During Family Emergencies When a National Guard or Reserve Member is Absent

No one ever said that families of the Reserve Component (Reserves and National Guard) or any other community-based military was going to be easy for you. Military life, in fact, often creates unforeseen hardships. The good news is that the American Red Cross helps community-based military members and their families cope with separation and other special needs related to service in the armed forces. You are entitled to the same valuable Red Cross emergency services as the families of full time active duty military personnel.

If your loved one is away from home because of military duty and you need to get in touch with him or her in the event of an emergency, then the American Red Cross can help. To assist us in quickly locating your them and sending an emergency message, please have ready the following information:

- Service Member's Full Name
- Rank/Rating
- Branch of Service
- Social Security Number
- Birth Date
- Military Address
- Information about the deployed unit and the home base unit (for deployed service members only)

The Red Cross verifies this information and relays it to the appropriate command where it is up to the military whether the service member returns home. Remember, a service member can only come home in an emergency situation.

Be prepared / Stay in touch with loved ones :

Always have your local Red Cross chapter or stations phone number readily available and share the above information with a trusted friend.

For Butler County residents, your local Red Cross Chapter is located on 312 Mercer Street, Butler. **Military 24-Hour Emergency Phone Number is 724-283-2810**. During the workweek from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. the office will answer calls. After hours calls are

taken by our 24-hour answering service. Please stay on the line and you will be instructed on how to reach a live operator.

Red Cross worldwide emergency communications network operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They can help you send emergency messages regarding the death or serious illness of a family member, the birth of a child, or other family emergencies.

Verification of emergency messages

All emergency messages must be verified before you message can be sent. Because of the HIPPA privacy act, obtaining this information can be VERY time consuming. PLEASE inform your doctor/nurse that information concerning your loved one can be shared with the American Red Cross.

This allows us to provide your reservist's, or guardsman's commander with fast, reliable information to help make decisions regarding emergency leave.

Secure emergency financial assistance:

The Red Cross collaborates with the military aid societies in providing financial assistance up to \$2,000 when an urgent personal or family crisis arises, that is, when your service member might need financial assistance for emergency travel, burial of a loved one, or urgent health and welfare needs such as food and shelter.

When such a situation arises contact the closest Red Cross office to you during weekly business hours. Butler County American Red Cross business hours are Monday – Friday (except holidays) from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Phone 724-283-2810

Counseling:

The American Red Cross offers confidential services to all military personnel and their families — active duty, National Guard and Reserves. Counseling, guidance, information, referrals and other social services are available through our worldwide network of chapters and offices on military installations. Red Cross chapters are listed in local telephone books and on the American Red Cross Web site at <http://www.redcross.org/where/where.html>.

As more and more National Guard and Reserve units are called to full time duty status, counseling is becoming increasingly important to prepare the Guardsman and Reservists and their family members for the period of activation. Because members of the National Guard and Reserve typically live in civilian neighborhoods, they and their families frequently have difficulty accessing much-needed, military-related social services.

American Red Cross
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Butler County Chapter
Butler, Pennsylvania
Phone: 724/283-2810

Our Butler County Chapter has trained counselors who are willing to talk with you or a family member during this traumatic time, especially when the possibility of war is so prevalent. It is not an easy time and having someone to talk to always seems to help.

Armed Forces Emergency Service Volunteers:

Our Butler County Chapter is always in need of volunteers to help us better assist our military families. Even if you can only help for a few hours or can only volunteer to help from home we have opportunities for you. This is a wonderful way to give back to those who are giving so much to us as they service in our armed forces.

For more information contact your local American Red Cross. If you are a Butler County resident please contact us at 724-283-2810.

We Are Proud To Serve
Our Military and Their Families
Come Join The A.F.E.S.Team!