Blue Star Families’ annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey provides a comprehensive understanding of what it means to serve as a military family. For that reason, it is a blueprint for strengthening America, identifying how we can continue to enhance military family life.

This infographic represents a geographic cross-section of the results that only includes active-duty families due to limited veteran, National Guard, and Reserve family respondents. When referencing this data, please consider that the majority of respondents reported here are White / non-Hispanic, military spouses, half of whom are field or general grade officers themselves, or are married to ones, and there is a relatively representative distribution among the Services (32% Army, 23% Navy, 23% Air Force, 12% Marine Corps, and 7% Coast Guard). The average age of respondents here is 38, 91% are female, and 25% report they are unpaid caregivers.

### MILITARY FAMILY STABILITY

#### WORK-LIFE BALANCE

60% feel current OPTEMPO is stressful or very stressful for healthy work/family life (n=516)

#### RELOCATION

54% received hard orders 2 months or less before relocating (n=534)

**MOST CONCERNING PARTS OF RELOCATION**

1. finding housing that fits family’s needs
2. finding or maintaining civilian spouse employment

#### FINANCIAL READINESS

59% experience stress due to current financial situation (n=420)

**TOP CONTRIBUTORS TO CURRENT FINANCIAL STRESS**

- Out-of-pocket housing costs
- Un/under-employment
- Out-of-pocket relocation costs

### BOLSTERING BELONGING

#### LOCAL CULTURAL COMPETENCE

62% feel local civilians support military families (n=511)

21% have no opinion

15% feel local civilians understand sacrifices local military families make (n=511)

16% have no opinion

#### SENSE OF BELONGING

56% feel welcome in their local civilian community (n=489)

25% have no opinion

37% do not feel a sense of belonging to their local community (n=488)

26% have no opinion

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES

35% feel local civilian support agencies aren’t effectively addressing their needs

28% have no opinion

23% don’t know (n=447)

#### MILITARY COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIRING THE MOST IMPROVEMENT

52% base housing

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n = total responses to each question  * Question asked differently in 2018
SNAPSHOT OF MILITARY FAMILIES IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION (NCR)

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT*

- 26% are not working, but want or need to work (n=357)
- 22% feel local employers are eager to hire military-connected employees (n=430)
  - 23% have no opinion
  - 26% don't know
- 21% are "not at all likely" to identify military affiliation in interview (n=335)
  - 25% say it depends on the employer

MILITARY CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

- 61% feel their oldest child’s school did an excellent job of welcoming (n=225)
- 39% say oldest child was unable to participate in extracurricular activities regardless of application deadline (n=173)
- 75% want teachers and staff to understand impact of frequent moves on child (n=233)

Spotlight on Interstate Compact Implementation:
- 49% experienced childcare waitlist of 6+ months (n=102)

CHILD CARE

- 63% cannot always find childcare for current situation (n=230)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions about the annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey or ways to support?
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Questions about Blue Star Families’ NCR Chapter?
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OVERALL TAKEAWAYS

Over half of NCR respondents (half of whom are field or general grade officers themselves, or are married to one) report they are financially stressed. Out-of-pocket housing costs, spouse unemployment, and out-of-pocket relocation costs exacerbate financial stress.

There is an opportunity for the Department of Defense to increase notice for hard orders to the NCR area. For the full survey sample, orders issued at least three months prior to a move are associated with a higher sense of belonging to the local community.

There is an opportunity for schools in the NCR to better welcome military children, especially into extracurricular activities. When asked what made their child feel a sense of belonging to their school, parents from the full survey sample reported their child having friends, activities/clubs, good teachers/staff, and school welcoming practices.

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