

7,431 respondents

including active-duty, National Guard and Reserve service members, Veterans, and their family members.

Over 100,000 cumulative responses to date!

Blue Star Families' annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey has been providing a comprehensive understanding of what it means to serve as a military family since 2009.



Blue Star Families
Military Family Lifestyle Survey



National Guard Spotlight

National Guard Respondents (n=240)

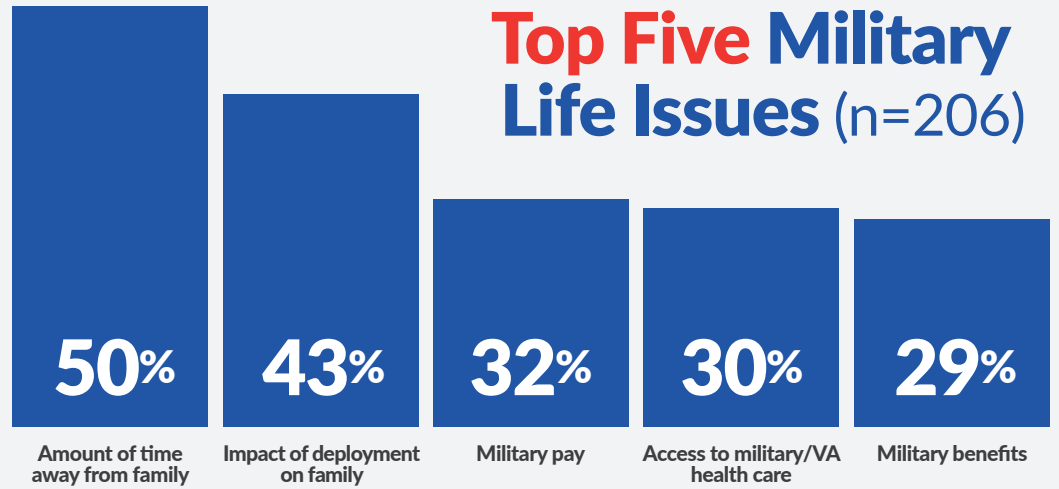
National Guard Service Member | **38%**

National Guard Spouse | **63%**

Ambassadors of Military Service

Encouraged an acquaintance to join the military in the past five years (n=214) | **60%**

Likely to recommend service to a young family member (n=207) | **46%**



Average amount of time separated from family/service member due to military service in the past year | **3.7 months**

Need at least occasional child care (n=146) | **73%**

Financially are "doing okay" or "living comfortably" (n=176) | **65%**

Visited a food pantry or military food distribution in the past year (n=169) | **12%**

Civil/Military Understanding

60% agree that "civilians in my local community are supportive of local military and Veteran families," though only **30%** agree that civilians truly understand the sacrifices made by local service members, Veterans, and their families.

Health Care Access



Most (**78%**, n=182) receive routine medical care in the civilian community, commonly using TRICARE Reserve Select (34%, n=181) or private insurance (32%, n=181). Most can get specialist care in a reasonable amount of time (56%, n=156) but one in three (33%, n=151) waited more than two months for a specialty care appointment.

13% of National Guard service members (n=76) have filed a PACT Act claim

In Their Own Words

"As a National Guard family, especially a family whose service member is mainly inactive (drill and annual training, occasional extra training) there is a severe lack of resources for families in need, or in my area because we are out of the way from the general population."

— Army National Guard Spouse

"It is a very lonely life. And when pay is not done correctly it makes for unnecessary stress. Military needs to do better."

— Air National Guard Spouse

"Spouse work is a definite problem as well as health care for military member and family when they don't live close to a large base with health care."

— Air National Guard Spouse

"We need better ways to communicate programs and available resources to our Guard members. There is a disconnect between what the service member hears and what needs to go home to the families. And we REALLY need TRICARE for all. Too many service members and their families are having issues with getting and keeping timely medical care due to the current system."

— Air National Guard Spouse

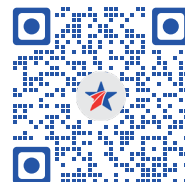
Respondent rank breakdown (n=220)

E1-E4 | **10%** E5-E6 | **30%** E7-E9 | **23%** O1-O3 | **16%** O4-O6 | **16%** O7-O10 | **1%** W1-W5 | **4%**

Funding for the 2023 Military Family Lifestyle Survey is provided through the generosity of our sponsors, The USAA Foundation, Lockheed Martin, Macy's Inc., Northrop Grumman, and CSX. With the additional support of Blue Star Families from Craig Newmark Philanthropies and the Patrick McGovern Foundation.



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Reserves Spotlight

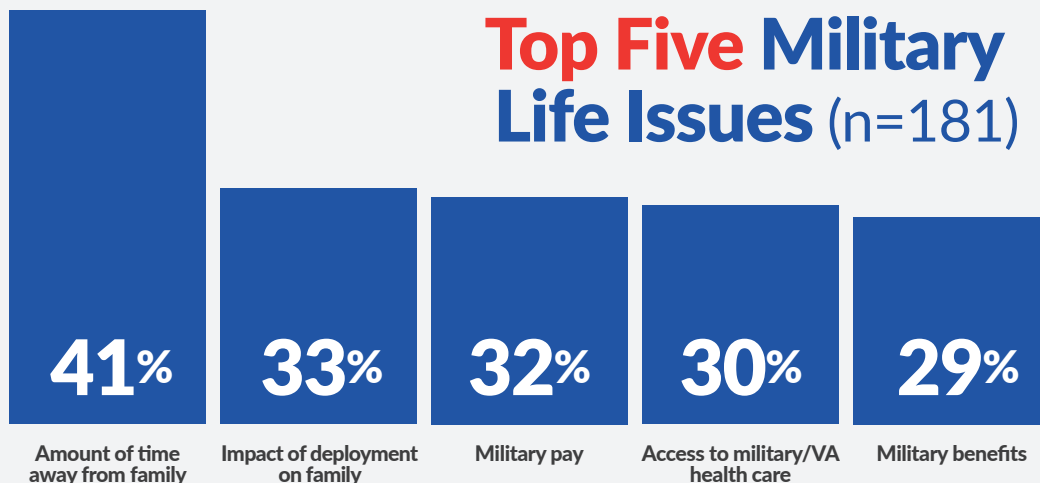
Reserve Respondents (n=223)

Reserve Service Member | **49%**
Reserve Spouse | **51%**

Ambassadors of Military Service

Encouraged an acquaintance to join the military in the past five years (n=185) | **57%**
Likely to recommend service to a young family member² (n=175) | **46%**

Top Five Military Life Issues (n=181)



Average amount of time separated from family/service member due to military service in the past year | **2.77 months**

Need at least occasional child care¹ (n=125) | **73%**

Financially are "doing okay" or "living comfortably" (n=155) | **67%**

Visited a food pantry or military food distribution in the past year (n=147) | **8%**

Civil/Military Understanding

58% agree that "civilians in my local community are supportive of local military and Veteran families" though only **30%** agree that civilians truly understand the sacrifices made by local service members, Veterans, and their families.

Health Care Access



Most (**75%**, n=158) receive routine medical care in the civilian community, commonly using TRICARE Reserve Select (44%, n=156) or private insurance (34%, n=156). Most can get specialist care in a reasonable amount of time (65%, n=141), but one in three (30%, n=139) waited more than two months for a specialty care appointment.

13% of National Guard service members (n=76) have filed a PACT Act claim

In Their Own Words

"I wish there were more in person resources for Reserve families that don't live near a base or near other Reserve families. We used to do yellow ribbon events that were wonderful, but I don't believe they are around much or at all anymore."

— Army Reserve Spouse

"... I feel mobilized Reservists really fall through the cracks ... I also think there is little to no support for military members without dependents ..."

— Navy Reserve Service Member

"We live in a community that is very "patriotic," but all they provide are symbolic support. No one seems to provide practical, tangible support ..."

— Marine Corps Reserve Spouse

"Reserve service members and families are nearly entirely forgotten. We have many of the same challenges as active-duty families without the resources. I need to pay out of pocket for additional child care during drill weekends and during annual training when I also have to work ... He misses T-ball games and weddings just like active-duty members. The time away from families is not understood by civilians or the military."

— Army Reserve Spouse

Respondent rank breakdown (n=220)

E1-E4 | **7%** E5-E6 | **29%** E7-E9 | **12%** O1-O3 | **14%** O4-O6 | **34%** O7-O10 | **1%** W1-W5 | **3%**

¹ Respondents with children ages 20 or younger.

² Question text: How likely are you to recommend that a young family member (child, niece, nephew, etc.) join the military? On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 = "very unlikely" and 10 = "very likely"?

