

SECTION II

THE KEY VOLUNTEER NETWORK STRUCTURE

A. OVERVIEW

The structure of the Marine Corps Key Volunteer Network is outlined in MCO 1754.2A. Each unit maintains a copy of this Order.

The Order directs that each unit throughout the Marine Corps, from battalion/squadron level and above appoint a Key Volunteer Coordinator and Key Volunteers to assist in implementing a Family Readiness Program. The Key Volunteer Coordinator and Key Volunteers work with the unit's Commanding Officer (CO) and Family Readiness Officer (FRO) to provide information, support and referral assistance as needed to Marines and Marine Corps family members.

Key Volunteer Coordinators and Key Volunteers are assigned at the applicable unit level of the reserve component.

To support the Key Volunteer Network, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps has developed a required training package, distributed program guides and training materials, and supplied start-up equipment. HQMC monitors volunteer programs through the Human Resources Division of the Manpower and Reserve Affairs Department.

At HQMC, a Key Volunteer Network Coordinator, who is appointed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, represents the Network in policy considerations and coordinates information flow. As an experienced Key Volunteer Coordinator, this Volunteer Coordinator serves as a liaison between the Key Volunteer in the field and HQMC.

B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Guidance regarding roles and responsibilities for the Key Volunteer Network Program is provided in MCO 1754.2A.

1. The CO.

The Key Volunteer Network is the CO's program. The CO is responsible for establishing a Key Volunteer Network that meets the unique needs of the unit. Among the CO's duties are to:

- Select and appoint a Key Volunteer Coordinator from those qualified and interested spouses of members of the command who apply or are recommended for the position based on their experience and willingness to participate.

- Appoint the Key Volunteers.
- Issue an official letter, appointing the Key Volunteer Coordinator and Key Volunteers, which contains specific duties and limitations (such as Privacy Act and confidentiality requirements) and providing appropriate references such as the Marine Corps Orders 1754.1 and 1754.2A. The appointment documents include a Statement of Understanding which defines the legal basis for the volunteer service to the Marine Corps.
- Provide unit specific direction to prepare Key Volunteer Coordinators and Key Volunteers for their assignments.
- Provide information regarding and encouraging attendance at training provided for Key Volunteers.
- Determine a budget for appropriated funds, and/or non-appropriated funds (if available in the unit) or other funding sources such as donations to the Key Volunteer Network.
- Provide administrative support, use of official mail, and reimbursement for incidental expenses such as mileage and child care under pre-agreed circumstances.
- Provide work space, if necessary, and administrative needs -- paper, pencils, answering machine, etc.
- Promote understanding and visibility of the Key Volunteer Network within the unit.

2. The FRO.

The FRO is an active duty member of the unit who serves as the direct link between the Key Volunteer Network and the CO. Selected by the CO to oversee unit family readiness for Marines and their families, the FRO's responsibilities vary with each unit as determined by the CO. Some typical duties include:

- Serve as the military POC, for routine matters, between the unit and members of the Key Volunteer Network. This is especially important during deployments.
- Work with the Key Volunteer Coordinator regarding family readiness matters.
- Assist in providing administrative and logistical support for the unit's Key Volunteer Network.
- Educate Marines in the unit on family readiness responsibilities.

- Maintain contact with the Director of the Family Service Center (FSC) or the Family Readiness Support Program Coordinator, and become thoroughly familiar with the FSC's programs, training, and services.
- Provide liaison for the Key Volunteer Network with other military organizations, e.g., the disbursing office, the base post office, etc.
- Maintain a consolidated unit family readiness roster, including names, addresses, and phone numbers of family members, and periodically provide an updated roster to the Key Volunteer Coordinator.
- Maintain a current roster of all Key Volunteers in the unit. Provide a copy of the current roster to the FSC on a quarterly, or more frequent basis, as needed.
- When assigned as the FRO at the regimental/group level or higher, serve on the installation's Family Readiness Support Council.
- Perform other duties as determined by the CO.

3. The Key Volunteer Network Advisor (Optional).

The Advisors to the unit's Key Volunteer Network serve at the request of the CO, and may be the spouses of the CO and the senior SNCO, or the spouses of other senior members of the unit. Although they may vary with each unit, typical Advisor roles are to:

- Serve as a mentor for the unit Key Volunteer Coordinator and Key Volunteers.
- Promote the work of the Key Volunteer Network through a positive attitude and support.
- Work with the Key Volunteer Coordinator and/or Key Volunteers resolving difficult challenges as appropriate and as requested.

4. The Key Volunteer Coordinator.

A Key Volunteer Coordinator is selected by the CO to provide guidance to and coordinate volunteers who form the Key Volunteer Network. Selection methods for the Coordinator vary among units. Some CO's appointments are based on recommendations; others use an application process. Each CO establishes his/her own selection and screening process. Selection of a Key Volunteer Coordinator is generally based on experience, management and organizational skills. A Key Volunteer Coordinator, like Key Volunteers, must be a spouse of a member of the unit. Duties of a Key Volunteer Coordinator are to:

- Keep the CO informed on a regular basis on the state of family readiness in the unit.
- Serve as a liaison between the CO and Key Volunteers, and provide feedback to the CO about family concerns.
- Work with the PRO regarding family readiness matters.
- Coordinate with key command personnel as necessary; e.g., the PRO, XO, SgtMaj, Chaplain, etc.
- Develop an effective communications network among unit families; e.g., organize a telephone tree through Key Volunteers and activate it upon the CO's direction or as otherwise needed.
- Assist in recruiting eligible volunteers and make recommendations to the CO for appointment to Key Volunteer positions.
- Coordinate the training of Key Volunteers with the FSC's Family Readiness Support Program Coordinator.
- Communicate to Key Volunteers the responsibilities of their position, informing them about the support available from the unit and the expectations of the CO.
- Oversee the development and distribution of a newsletter on a regular basis.
- Participate, as appropriate, in the local installation's Family Readiness Support Program Council and work closely with the FSC on training and resource matters.
- Work with the Key Volunteer Coordinators from other units temporarily attached to their own unit during deployment.
- Perform other Network activities as determined by the CO.

5. The Key Volunteer.

The Key Volunteer in the Key Volunteer Network holds a critical position in matching available resources to the needs of families. Her/his performance is directly linked to the quality of life and morale of families within the unit. The Key Volunteer Network provides assistance to families within the unit, giving Marines confidence that family needs and concerns will have the attention of trained and caring Key Volunteers. Key

Volunteers also serve as role models for family readiness and help less experienced families learn to be more self-sufficient.

Selection as a Key Volunteer entails serious responsibilities and the potential for great personal fulfillment. The CO will rely on the Volunteer's judgment, reliability and positive attitude in accomplishing the goals of the Family Readiness Support Program. Complete confidentiality and discretion, as discussed in Section VI, is required of Key Volunteers in their work with Marine families.

The duties of Key Volunteers are to:

- Welcome and assist incoming members and families of the unit and ensure they are aware of services available to the "Marine Family."
- Participate in a telephone tree as directed by the Key Volunteer Coordinator to ensure a rapid dissemination of information to families.
- Maintain a family readiness roster of names, addresses, and telephone numbers for their assigned families and provide changes to the FRO via the Key Volunteer Coordinator.
- Provide information to families to refer them to appropriate resources as needed (FSC, Red Cross, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, etc.), and follow up on referrals to ensure the assistance required was obtained.
- Provide information and feedback to unit CO's, via the Key Volunteer Coordinator and FRO, regarding family readiness issues.
- Offer moral support and assistance to families during times of difficulty and/or crisis.
- Assist the Key Volunteer Coordinator with occasional Network activities where unit families can meet each other and form support systems; e.g., videotaping, reunion workshops, etc.
- Assist with Key Volunteer Network newsletters by providing input, writing, distributing, etc.
- Perform other Network activities as determined by the CO.

The duties of Key Volunteers do not normally include, but can be done at the Key Volunteer's discretion:

- babysitting .
- driving family members on errands, etc.
- planning and organizing all the unit's social events (though Key Volunteers may assist in planning as needed).

Obviously there are times when any one of these activities may be the appropriate form of support on a one time basis. Key Volunteers must protect themselves from over-extension and inappropriate expectations of others.

A Key Volunteer may leave the Network at any time, without repercussion. A simple letter of resignation should be submitted to the CO through the Key Volunteer Coordinator.

There are some situations that require a CO to ask for a Key Volunteer's resignation. Breach of confidentiality and failure to perform agreed upon duties in a timely fashion are among the reasons for dismissal.

Personal motivation needs to be examined by the candidate before applying for this important position. Key Volunteers should not expect status or personal favors as the result of their participation in the Network. A genuine desire to help others and commitment to the Marine Corps mission are the best motivation possible.

Key Volunteers are taught in training to become more knowledgeable about family support programs, develop skills in providing referral services, and learn the importance of conveying accurate information. They serve as role models and unit representatives. Reward comes in the form of increased self-confidence, maturity, independence, and personal preparedness to meet the challenges of life in the Marine Corps.

C. INTERRELATIONSHIPS

Key Volunteers interact with a number of individuals and organizations for the Key Volunteer Network to function effectively. The chart on page 13 helps to put these relationships in perspective.

Within a particular unit the exact nature or the description of these relationships may vary. Key Volunteers should note these changes on the chart, especially if it is to be used as part of a turnover job file when an appointment ends.

The military chain of command is a formal one. Although the Key Volunteer Network is not a chain of command, it provides a similar structure to allow for efficient and effective communication throughout the entire Marine Corps community. Volunteers are to use the "chain of communication" within their Network whenever an issue or a conflict needs to be resolved.

D. TRAINING

Key Volunteer Network training is essential for the effective operation of the program. The purpose of the training is to:

1. Give volunteers an understanding of the Marine Corps organization and structure, the Marine Corps Key Volunteer Network and its relation to the Marine Corps mission.
2. Make volunteers aware of confidentiality, ethical issues and professionalism as a volunteer.
3. Develop communication and listening skills.
4. Develop organizational skills necessary to provide efficient information and referral services.
5. Provide information on local and regional resources.

Headquarters Marine Corps has developed a basic training program for the topics mandated by MCO 1754.2A. This training prepares Key Volunteers to assist families, which in turn supports the unit mission readiness.

An additional benefit from attending training is the attainment of skills that encourage self reliance and develop self-esteem. An ability to help others seek solutions to problems depends on self-confidence and communication skills. For those who have been trained at a previous installation, refresher training provides an opportunity for familiarization with local resources and services. Yearly refresher training serves as an opportunity to conduct cross-training and review lessons learned for new Key Volunteer Coordinators and Key Volunteers.

Most FSCs offer continuing education courses on topics that help prepare Key Volunteers for more significant leadership positions or enhance their ability to work effectively within the Key Volunteer Network. Unit level training may be conducted to provide unique information, service needs, service availability, etc. Although basic training is standardized throughout the Marine Corps, advanced training topics vary from installation to installation and may include stress management, time management, communications skills, etc.



KEY VOLUNTEER NETWORK: FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

COMMANDING OFFICER (CO)	FAMILY READINESS OFFICER (FRO)	KEY VOLUNTEER ADVISOR (Optional)	KEY VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR	KEY VOLUNTEER	FAMILY SERVICE CENTER	UNIT FAMILIES
<p>Appointed by CO. Provides advice on family matters based on interaction with Key Volunteer Network.</p>	<p>Appointed by CO. Military link to family programs. Coordinates unit's family readiness efforts.</p>	<p>Selected by CO. Provides advice on family matters based on interaction with Key Volunteer Network.</p>	<p>CO appoints and/or replaces. CO provides all guidance. CO provides resource support.</p>	<p>CO appoints and/or replaces. CO provides primary guidance via Key Volunteer Coordinator. CO provides resource support.</p>	<p>Uses FSC programs as tool to support unit family readiness. Is a referral source for Key Volunteers.</p>	<p>CO uses the Key Volunteer Network to support and communicate with unit families.</p>
<p>Appointed by CO. Military link to family programs. Coordinates unit's Family Readiness efforts.</p>	<p>Appointed by CO. Provides advice on family matters based on interaction with Key Volunteer Network.</p>	<p>Informal interaction via the Key Volunteer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Regular meetings to assure information exchange on family matters and to provide assistance as needed.</p>	<p>Informal and generally via the Key Volunteer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Holiday liaison between unit Key Volunteer Network and the FSC.</p>	<p>Serve as general coordinator for all family readiness initiatives including the Key Volunteer Network.</p>
<p>Appointed by and responsible to CO. Meets regularly for information exchange on family matters.</p>	<p>Regular meetings to assure information exchange on Key Volunteer Network and other family matters.</p>	<p>Regular meetings to share information.</p>	<p>Regular meetings to share information.</p>	<p>Informal interaction via the Key Volunteer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Informal</p>	<p>Interact as appropriate. At times, at the request of the Key Volunteer Network.</p>
<p>Appointed by CO. Interaction via Key Volunteer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Regular meetings to assure information exchange on family matters.</p>	<p>Regular meetings to share information.</p>	<p>Regular interaction to provide guidance and general support.</p>	<p>Overall coordination of the Key Volunteer Network activities.</p>	<p>Regular interaction with FSC. Coordinator to keep abreast of FSC services.</p>	<p>Interact as appropriate. At times, at the request of the Key Volunteer Network.</p>
<p>Provides program services including training for Key Volunteer Network to assist in maintaining unit readiness.</p>	<p>Interaction via Key Volunteer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Informal interaction via Key Volunteer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Regular interaction for schedule training and other support to Key Volunteer Network. Accepts referrals.</p>	<p>Provides Key Volunteer Network training and referral support.</p>	<p>Source for training for Key Volunteers and resource center for families.</p>	<p>Regular interaction.</p>
<p>Interaction through the chain of command.</p>	<p>Interaction as necessary. At times through the Key Volunteer Network.</p>	<p>Informal</p>	<p>Information primarily through the Key Volunteers.</p>	<p>Regular interaction as needed.</p>	<p>All FSC services in addition to support and assistance to the Key Volunteer Network.</p>	<p>All FSC services in addition to support and assistance to the Key Volunteer Network.</p>

SECTION III

GETTING STARTED

After completion of the basic training, the Key Volunteer will meet with the Key Volunteer Coordinator and other Key Volunteers in the unit. Other initial activities will include:

1. Reviewing those parts of the two major policy documents (MCO 1754.1 and MCO 1754.2A) that guide actions within the Key Volunteer Network.
2. Keeping a record of basic information about each of the assigned families within the unit.
3. Establishing a method for documenting contact with assigned families.
4. Obtaining from the unit Coordinator an information form on service providers in the area or assist in developing one.
5. Keeping a record of the Network's activities and accomplishments. A sample form is provided at appendix A.

A. PERSONNEL AND FUNCTIONS

Review the interrelationships chart in Section II. The Key Volunteer needs to meet the other members of the Network (FRO, other Key Volunteers) and the Family Readiness Program Support Coordinator (FRSP) at the FSC. If a Key Volunteer has questions about how the Network operates in the unit, she/he should ask the Key Volunteer Coordinator or the FRSP Coordinator to clarify.

The Key Volunteer may need to develop a plan for contacting assigned families, gathering basic information, and determining preferred methods of keeping in touch, if needed.

The sample form at appendix B can serve as a means of developing a profile regarding personnel closely associated with the Key Volunteer Network. The Key Volunteer Coordinator can assist in providing information about or in arranging meetings with personnel such as:

1. The FRO.
2. Other Key Volunteers.
3. The FRSP Coordinator.
4. Other FSC personnel.

B. INITIATING CONTACT

Another aspect of getting started will be the gathering and logging of information about the families assigned to each Key Volunteer. Key Volunteers will be provided a roster of their assigned families' names and phone numbers. Additional information such as the number of children and addresses may be included.

It is imperative that the privacy of Marines and their families be respected by protecting this roster information and using it only in an official Key Volunteer capacity. The unit may collect more personal information by distributing forms at family days or adding to the information when contacts begin with the families. Some families may resist giving personal information until they understand its importance for Key Volunteers' assistance. If resistance is encountered, Key Volunteers should not pressure families for more than the basic information on the roster. Respect for Marine family privacy is critical to Key Network functioning and credibility. Guidelines for obtaining information during "first calls" are outlined in Section IV.

The sample form at appendix C can be adapted to track information in a consistent way for all the families assigned. This basic family information may be maintained on a computer database. Each Key Volunteer, as a part of her/his get acquainted process, is expected to make contact with assigned families.

C. THE CONTACT LOG

The third phase of start up is to develop a procedure for maintaining a log of family contacts, if the unit has not yet developed one. A sample contact log is provided at appendix D.

Try to log all attempts to reach unit families even if it is not successful or a message is left. This log will assist in keeping track of how often contacts are made by Key Volunteers, the issues addressed, or questions asked by the family member contacted.

Treat this form, as with all other notes maintained on unit families, in a confidential and secure manner. Even information that may be considered harmless should be handled in such a way that the Key Volunteer's family members and others do not have access to it. Confidentiality issues are a part of the Key Volunteer training, as is the Privacy Act guidance that applies to serving as a Key Volunteer.

Part of the job as a Key Volunteer is to provide feedback to the CO, through the Key Volunteer Coordinator, on trends or issues that might impact on family readiness. Describing the nature of calls will help form part of the composite support program picture the unit can use to refine its family readiness plans.

D. SERVICE PROVIDERS SUMMARY PROFILE

A Key Volunteer should maintain a list of service providers in the local area. The sample form at appendix E provides the Key Volunteer a means for development, such as a reference card.

Much of this information is readily available through the local Family Service Center and will be part of the Key Volunteer basic training. It is also a good idea to establish personal contact, especially for those services that will be used regularly. Visiting or calling service providers can provide more complete information for inclusion in the profile. Examples: a call to the local Red Cross Chapter may provide additional information on services available and establish a point of contact. At large installations, the service providers are contacted by either FSC or senior command (Division/Wing) Key Volunteer Coordinators, and information passed to unit Key Volunteer Coordinators at training, meetings, etc. It would be unrealistic for the Red Cross to field 300 calls from unit Key Volunteer Coordinators and Key Volunteers.

At small bases or remote locations, nothing replaces personal contact with service providers. When a friendly relationship has been established it is much easier to call with confidence for further help or information. It is strongly recommended that Key Volunteers schedule, whenever possible, get acquainted visits as part of putting together a valuable resource support group for Network families.

E. SERVICE PROVIDERS

Listed below are resources that are available on or near most installations. A list should be provided to all Key Volunteers by the local FSC during training. If one is unavailable, Key Volunteers should record local points of contact, phone numbers, available services, etc.

- American Red Cross.
- Career Resource Management Center (part of the Family Service Center).
- Chaplain's Office.
- Child Development Center(s) - In-Home Care Coordinator #.
- Commissary.
- Dental Clinic.
- Disbursing Office.
- Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDs).
- Education Center.
- Exchange.
- Family Service Center.
- Housing Office - Emergency Repair.
- Human Resources Office (formerly known as Civilian Personnel Office).
- Legal Assistance Office.
- Library.
- Medical Treatment Facilities.

- Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) - sports, pools, etc.
- Post Office.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.
- Provost Marshall Office (PMO)
- Ready Reserve Liaison Office.
- Thrift Shop;
- Joint Public Affairs Office.
- POC when entire unit deployed (assigned FRO, rear detachment or rear party officer).