MILITARY & FAMILY LIFE COUNSELING











MILITARY AND FAMILY LIFE COUNSELING

Program Guide

April 2025

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE IN LIFE.

U.S. Department *of* Defense

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Section 1: Overview

Background

The stresses of military life are complex, requiring a wide range of problem-solving skills to address areas such as: relationship challenges, communication issues, deployment, frequent relocations, grief and loss, isolation from extended family members, children coping with the absence of a parent, child education and spousal employment. The Defense Department recognizes these difficulties and is committed to providing the necessary counseling support for military service members and their families. The Military and Family Life Counseling Program was designed to rapidly deploy counselors for short- and long-term assignments based on each military branch's specific need.

Intent of the Program

The MFLC services are intended to augment, not replace, other DOD support services/programs or staff available for eligible participants.

The confidential counseling approach is psychoeducational, which helps participants learn to anticipate and resolve challenges associated with military life. Support is aimed at preventing the development or exacerbation of mental health conditions that may detract from military and family readiness.

Licensure

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 includes a license portability provision for non-medical counselors under the MFLC Program. The exception to licensure requirements is for those counselors working toward independent licensure, under the supervision of a counselor licensed to practice independently, and within the guidelines of the state, commonwealth or territory.

All counselors must have a master's or doctorate degree in a mental health-related field, such as social work, psychology, marriage and family therapy or counseling. Counselors must also possess a valid unrestricted counseling license or certification from a state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. commonwealth or a U.S. territory that grants authority to provide counseling services as an independent practitioner in their respective field or be provisionally licensed and pursuing an independent practitioner license. The provisionally licensed practitioner must be supervised by an unrestricted licensed counselor who is approved by their licensing board supervision. The provisionally licensed counselor must also be co-located with a counselor who has a valid unrestricted counseling license or certification from a state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. commonwealth, or a U.S. territory that grants authority to provide counseling services as an independent practitioner.

Scope of Practice

The MFLC Program provides confidential counseling, consultation and outreach services to more than 200 military installations or nearby civilian communities located in most of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories and commonwealths, and over 25 foreign countries including areas considered hazardous duty/danger zones. The MFLC services assignments include rotational, camps, on-demand and surge support services, which are both planned and reactionary.

MFLC services are requested directly from installation points of contact, and the requirement is generated and approved by the service headquarters points of contact, with the MFLC Program Manager as the final approval authority.

Contractor Support

The contract is centrally managed by the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. These general program guidelines do not supersede service regulations.

The MFLC Program operates using two prime contractors, each supporting a service area:

Area 1 – Eastern Geographic Footprint: CONUS locations east of the Mississippi River and OCONUS locations in the Africa Command, European Command and Central Command.

Area 2 – Western Geographic Footprint: CONUS locations west of the Mississippi River and OCONUS locations in the Pacific Command and Southern Command.

Section 2: Operations

Eligibility

Active-duty service members, National Guard and reserve members (regardless of activation status), Coast Guard members when activated for the Navy, DOD expeditionary civilians (90 days prior to deployment through 180 days post-deployment) and their immediate family members are eligible for services, as well as foreign military members and their families (enrolled in DEERS) and non-remarried surviving spouses and children of active-duty, National Guard and reserve service members, regardless of activation status or cause of death of the service member. Veterans and their immediate families are eligible up to 180 days past separation from the military.

Military and Family Life Counselors

Mission

Military and family life counselors and child and youth behavioral military and family life counselors provide up to 12 sessions per issue of face-to-face, short-term confidential counseling, consultation, and outreach services both on and off military installations. Counselors rotate at locations worldwide.

Adult Military and Family Life Counselors

MFLCs provide support to individuals, couples, families and groups for a range of issues including, but not limited to, deployment stress, reintegration, relocation adjustment, separation, anger management, conflict resolution, parenting, parent-child communication, relationship and family issues, coping skills, homesickness, and grief and loss.

Child and Youth Behavioral Military and Family Life Counselors

CYB-MFLCs provide support to families and augment child and youth programs, Department of Defense Education Activity schools, local education agencies, and camps designed for military-connected children and youth and special operations commands. Counselors provide non-medical support, which includes counseling, consultation and outreach, to eligible faculty, staff, parents, children and youth. They may observe, participate and engage in activities with children and youth; provide coaching, guidance and support to staff and parents; and model behavior management techniques for staff and parents. Parents must acknowledge, in writing, their consent to CYB-MFLC support and whether their child under the age of 18 may receive assistance from a CYB-MFLC.

CYB-MFLCs provide support on topics including, but not limited to:

- Identifying feelings
- Bullying
- Conflict resolution
- Self-esteem
- Managing anger and aggression
- Separation from parents
- Problem-solving
- Coping with deployment and reunification
- Transition and moving
- Sibling and parental relationships
- Time management
- Divorce
- Food insecurity

Children of civilians are not eligible to receive counseling on a one-on-one basis; therefore, they will not need to have a signed parental consent. If nonmilitary-connected youth are in a group setting with military-connected youth, the CYB-MFLC shall support the group, to include both the military-connected youth and nonmilitary-connected youth.

Additionally, CYB-MFLCs working in child care, pediatric and school settings are required to complete training competencies for supporting children in developmentally appropriate ways and identifying child abuse and problematic sexual behaviors. This high level of training ensures quality services for the eligible participants.

Counselor Work Schedules

The counselor work schedule is a highly flexible 40-hour work week. Appointments, meetings and briefings may extend beyond typical work hours and may include evenings and weekends. Counselors should take into consideration the unique nature of the work and recognize that mission requirements may necessitate work outside normal hours, including work on federal holidays. In these situations, work hours may be adjusted to accommodate the workload. Overtime beyond 40 hours is not authorized.

School rotations for CYB-MFLCs cover the entire academic year, which may range from nine to 12 months. In coordination with installation points of contact, counselors assigned to a school during the academic school year may remain on the installation during school recesses or breaks and provide services throughout the assignment rotation. This would include providing presentations and walk-around coaching services [*] throughout the installation.

The decision to maintain a counseling presence on the installation or at the school during school breaks is collaboratively made by the school point of contact, installation, service headquarters point of contact and Military Community Support Programs. MCSP has final approving authority regarding counselor presence during school breaks.

If a counselor is unable to complete an assignment, MCSP will work to backfill the assignment.

Counselor Travel

Both MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs are authorized to provide support for activities within a 50-mile radius of their assignment location.

All travel must be in direct support of counselor assignments and be approved in advance by the contracting officer representative.

MFLC Locator

The MFLC Locator is an online directory on MilitaryOneSource.mil that provides easy-to-find contact information for an MFLC assigned to specific installations, units, schools and other locations. With over 2,400 counselors on the ground and nearly 5,000 secondary locations, the MFLC Locator is a dynamic tool that allows participants to easily find their local MFLC.

[*] Walk-around coaching refers to a more casual outreach opportunity that allows counselors to engage with service members and their families and discuss issues they are experiencing. Using this approach, counselors go to the people instead of waiting for them to schedule an appointment in a traditional office setting.

Section 3: Types of Support Provided by the MFLC Program

Rotational Support

Rotational support is provided by counselors 6-12 months on active-duty military installations, as well as National Guard and reserve locations, and within various recruiting commands. Requests to initiate support are submitted through the Business Operations Support System and should be made at least 30 days before the requested assignment start date but no more than 180 days prior to the event. Once a rotational position is approved, it will automatically renew unless discontinued.

Requests to discontinue support or to extend a specific MFLC or CYB-MFLC should be emailed to the chain of command or service headquarters points of contact. Rotational extensions for the National Guard and reserves should be submitted at least 15 working days before the end of the current rotation.

The same counselor may support back-to-back rotations. Requests can be made for a specific MFLC or CYB-MFLC to extend on a case-by-case basis. Requests for extension will be approved and supported pending the MFLC's availability.

Surge Support

Short-term surge support provides service members and families with confidential counseling services for up to 90 days.

Installation points of contact may request surge support using the BOSS and should be made at least 30 days before the requested assignment start date but no more than 180 calendar days prior to the event. Surge support can fill short-term or unanticipated needs, such as support in the aftermath of a natural disaster, crisis and deployment related situations. Requests for support are approved by the service headquarters points of contact, with MCSP as the final approval authority.

Installation points of contact may request an extension of surge support by sending an email through the chain of command to the service headquarters points of contact. Requests for extensions must be received no fewer than 15 workdays prior to the end of the initial surge support.

Summer Program and Camp Support

Summer program and camp support is provided to military-connected children during installation child and youth summer programs, DODEA summer school, Operation Purple Camps and Family Retreats, National Guard and reserve camps, and Operation Military Kids camps. Program directors may request support in the BOSS. Requests should be submitted no later than 90 days from the requested start date of the camp to ensure adequate staffing.

- Requests for short-term camp resources must be submitted at least 15 business days (three weeks) before the camp occurs.
- Requests for long-term camp resources must be submitted at least 30 calendar days before the camp occurs.

- Requests are accepted no more than 180 calendar days prior to the event.

On-Demand Support

Counselors may be deployed to support events, such as Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events and family events, during weekdays, weekends and on drill weekends. These events typically last one to three days but could last up to seven days and are held primarily in the United States or U.S. territories. Unit representatives or event points of contact may request support online using the BOSS. Submissions should be made at least 15 business days in advance and the location must be confirmed at least 10 days prior to the event.

Section 4: Support Request Reviews

Review Analysis

Requests for MFLC and CYB-MFLC support are thoroughly reviewed upon submission and evaluated based on each request's merit. MCSP makes the final determination and the following areas are taken into consideration when requests for support are submitted:

- ❖ The identified needs of the participants at the location or on the installation
- ❖ The number and bandwidth of MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs currently providing support
- ❖ The previous bandwidth of MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs at the location, installation or supported event.

Bandwidth Analysis

MCSP asks the following questions of the data to find MFLC(s) with available bandwidth to service the request at the desired location as a second location:

- ❖ Of the MFLCs in the location specified, how many are Adult MFLCs and how many are CYB MFLCs?
- ❖ Of the type of MFLCs requested, how many are below four hours of daily confidential counseling sessions?
- ❖ How many of the type of counselors have between four and five hours of confidential counseling sessions a day?

The data collected is obtained by MCSP and is not the responsibility of the installation points of contact. MCSP will provide data to points of contact as appropriate and in accordance with the contract.

Realignment Process

All requests to realign the location of MFLC(s) must be approved by MCSP. Installation points of contact should submit their request to their headquarters' point of contact for concurrence. The headquarters' point of contact should submit the request to MCSP. MCSP will process their request

by conducting a bandwidth analysis. Once complete, MCSP will notify the points of contact of the outcome and coordinate the realignment with the MFLC contractor.

MFLC Movement

Because the MFLC contract is a service contract between the government and the MFLC employers, all MFLC movement must be coordinated with MCSP in writing. The coordination can occur via an email from the command point of contact to MCSP (a memo is not necessary). The coordination consists of notification to MCSP, who notifies the contractor of the change in assignment. The contractor notifies the MFLC and makes changes in their system to reflect the correct location/assignment. Movement on the same installation generally takes about two or three days. A change to another installation and/or state could take longer if the assigned counselor is not willing to take the new assignment.

In a crisis situation (e.g., a natural disaster, an unexpected deployment, etc.), a commander can move MFLCs immediately and notify MCSP as soon as possible after the fact.

Section 5: Basic Guidelines for Counseling Support

Counseling is private and confidential, except for instances requiring mandatory state, federal and military duty-to-warn reporting.

Eligible participants may receive up to 12 sessions of confidential counseling **per issue**.

Counselors may be assigned to various locations including, but not limited to, installation Military and Family Support Centers, resiliency centers, selected pediatric clinics, child development centers, teen centers, DODEA schools, local education agencies and installation welcome centers. In addition, counselors may be embedded within military units. They are not limited to their assigned location and are encouraged to meet in various locations as they provide walk-around coaching support. Support may not be provided in a client's home or vehicle. CYB-MFLCs may provide support to children and families enrolled in **installation-certified** Family Child Care homes. When support is provided in FCC homes, all applicable policies, to include line-of-sight supervision, must be followed.

CYB-MFLCs can only work in FCC homes where the provider has a completed and favorably adjudicated child care Tier 1 background investigation. CYB-MFLCs may not work in the home of an FCC provider with an interim background check status. Any engagement by CYB-MFLCs must be coordinated/approved through the installation FCC coordinator or appropriate office.

Outside the Scope of MFLC Support

The MFLC Program can provide a source of assistance in addressing issues encountered by military families. However, **diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression or other medical and mental health disorders are outside the scope of MFLC support.** Situations meeting the diagnostic criteria for mental disorders, such as those found in the current edition of the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders," are not authorized for support. Participants needing treatment for these conditions will be referred via a warm handoff to behavioral health providers, TRICARE, military treatment facilities or other

providers of professional mental health services as appropriate.

Basic Guidelines of MFLC Supervision

All counselors are under the supervision and control of their contractor. Contract supervisors provide weekly supervision of the counselors. The contract supervisor should remain in contact with the installation point of contact on a monthly or as-needed basis to address counselor support. **Contract personnel cannot participate on boards, become voting members on boards or committees, or attend conferences on behalf of a command.**

Provisional Licenses

Provisionally licensed MFLCs will not be assigned to positions that are OCONUS, isolated or require a high level of security clearance. The use of provisionally licensed counselors enables hiring counselors who have relocated to another state and are awaiting independent licensure (e.g., military spouses) and creates a career path for new master's level practitioners pursuing clinical licensure and a specialty in caring for the military community.

Installation Communication

Installation points of contact or designees should have a robust communication system established to guide MFLCs to where support is needed. It is important installation designees understand their roles and responsibilities, including the scope of the program, to help guide MFLCs. This can be accomplished by building relationships based on communication, collaboration and trust. In cases where the military chain of command, or related medical professional, requests MFLC confidential counseling-related information concerning a service member, the MFLC shall remind them of the confidential nature of the MFLC services in accordance with current and applicable Department of Defense Instructions and refer them to the service headquarters point of contact for further guidance, if applicable. Additionally, in instances when the chain of command refers service members for MFLC Program counseling or requests MFLC support, MFLCs shall inform them it is not possible due to the confidential nature of the program. However, MFLCs are encouraged to consult with the military chain of command or related medical professionals on trending issues for service members and families while maintaining confidentiality.

The contractor, in collaboration with the designated installation point of contact, establishes a schedule and a system to demonstrate day-to-day counselor accountability. At a minimum, the MFLC or CYB-MFLC will notify the designated installation point of contact when the counselor begins and finishes each workday, either through email or another auditable process. Installation points of contact may opt out of receiving these notifications by submitting a request to MCSP via their service headquarters point of contact.

The contractor shall provide a seamless and transparent transition between the outgoing and incoming MFLCs for both CONUS and OCONUS assignments. The government anticipates an overlap of at least one day.

During this assignment transition, the outgoing MFLC shall, at minimum, convey pertinent data such as on-the-ground knowledge of installation points of contact and procedures, critical issues, and

status of the installation's current MFLC service needs.

MFLC Work Hours

The government anticipates that the MFLC daily activity reflects an average of six hours daily of providing confidential counseling and two hours daily of nontraditional walk-around service activity during the course of an eight-hour day which includes administrative responsibilities.

An in-person counseling activity is considered to occur when the counselor engages a participant, determines the participant is in need of counseling, and provides the Limits of Confidentiality Statement to the participant. CYB-MFLC daily activity differs from adult MFLC activity in that, while encouraged, in-person counseling/consulting is not required to meet the six-hour/two-hour ratio, as nontraditional walk-around and classroom participation are the predominate activities.

Counselors work a highly flexible 40-hour work week to accommodate the needs of the community. Appointments, meetings and briefings may extend daily work hours and may include evenings and weekends. In these situations, work hours may be adjusted to accommodate the workload. Overtime beyond 40 hours per week is not authorized. The work hours and locations should be a product of ongoing collaboration and communication between the installation point of contact and the counselor.

Allowed Additional Meetings

Inclusion Action Team

The CYB-MFLC may participate in the Inclusion Action Team to improve support to children and families when requested by program leadership. Information sharing is to be limited to the context of supporting the continuum of care.

CYB-MFLCs are not dedicated resources for families with special needs. If eligible members of the family need confidential counseling support, the CYB-MFLC may provide support. It is imperative that confidential counseling support the primary purpose of the IAT goals.

Behavior Support Plans

Although MFLCs may not participate in the development of behavior support plans, counselors may provide confidential counseling support to families who have a behavior support plan established for their child. This includes supporting classrooms by modeling effective interactions for challenging behaviors. Counselors may not conduct or administer systematic and structured assessments for the purpose of developing a behavior support plan.

Outside an Installation Educational/Recreational Center

Counselors may provide support outside the center if coordinated by the installation point of contact. For example, MFLCs may support outreach events and programs at the installation Military and Family Support Center or unit family events if there are needs to support the request.

General Meetings

MFLCs may participate in unit or command meetings; however, contract personnel cannot

participate on boards, become voting members on boards or committees, attend conferences on behalf of the command or attend events in which strategy and policy are discussed. They may also attend staff meetings or organizational events to conduct outreach or report out on general trends.

Problematic Sexual Behavior in Children and Youth Multidisciplinary Team

The CYB-MFLCs may participate in the PBS-CY MDT to improve support to children and families on a case-by-case basis when supporting DODEA schools or child development program/youth program-sponsored settings. Information sharing is to be limited to the context of supporting the continuum of care.

If eligible members of the family need confidential counseling support, the CYB-MFLC may provide support. It is imperative that confidential counseling supports the primary purpose of the PBS-CY MDT goals.

Virtual Confidential Counseling, Consultation and Outreach Support

The MFLC Program requires services to be delivered in person unless extenuating circumstances require virtual support. Situations that would prohibit face-to-face interaction could be unexpected and affect global, national, regional or local areas (e.g., hurricane, pandemic). In those situations, MFLCs are authorized to provide telephonic and virtual support from their place of employment to provide continuity of care until face-to-face interaction is allowable with prior approval from the MFLC Program Office. Virtual support will be conducted on a platform that meets the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA, regulations for technology and processes to ensure privacy, security and the integrity of the participants (e.g., Zoom for Healthcare). MFLCs providing telephonic and virtual support shall be trained, competent in using the platforms, and follow their respective licensing board regulations on providing telehealth. As with all MFLC services, telephonic and virtual support are also **free of cost** to participants.

If telephonic or virtual support is authorized, the MFLCs will provide contact information on scheduling, provide access to services and provide all participants with possible advantages and disadvantages of using telehealth. While using telephonic and virtual platforms, the MFLCs will continue to provide confidential counseling, consultation and outreach within the scope of the program and are still under the duty-to-warn and mandated reporting guidelines.

For participant safety, MFLCs request the participant's contact number and location if the connection is dropped or emergency services are needed. This information is destroyed after the session to maintain confidentiality.

In providing confidential counseling to children, the parents/guardians must log in, approve MFLC services and remain in line of sight of their child. Children 13 years of age and over can receive individual counseling. Children 12 years of age and under can participate in family counseling with their parents/guardians. All children can participate as part of an organized group activity with the child and youth programs, school or camp. When MFLCs support group activities, a staff member must also be present on the platform to monitor the classroom and provide line-of-sight supervision. Whether face-to-face, telephonic or virtual, MFLCs maintain a high quality of confidential care.

Presentations

MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs can access a variety of products approved by the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. If an installation point of contact would like a briefing or presentation reviewed and approved for use by an MFLC or CYB-MFLC, the installation point of contact or designated point of contact must submit the request through the chain of command to the service headquarters for review and submission to MCSP.

Reporting and Documentation

Domestic abuse, child abuse or neglect, problematic sexual behavior in children and youth, potential harm to self and others, and other duty-to-warn situations must be reported to the designated installation point of contact and contractor chain of command immediately. Counselors must personally report suspected child abuse or neglect to the local child protective services agency in order to meet the requirements of state and federal law and must report suspected domestic abuse and child abuse or neglect to the nearest installation's Family Advocacy Program office. Counselors are not responsible for determining the veracity of the report or the seriousness of the incident and should facilitate a warm handoff of the affected individual to the proper resource. The point of contact should verify the incident is reported to the appropriate reporting agency in accordance with installation protocol but should not screen reports of suspected child abuse or neglect or domestic abuse in lieu of the counselor making the report. The counselor must notify their contract supervisor as soon as possible. Duty-to-warn protocols may vary depending on federal, state, local and installation regulations.

MFLCs are not authorized to receive domestic abuse- or sexual assault-restricted reports. If the person receiving counseling requests restricted reporting pursuant to domestic abuse or sexual assault, the counselor should transfer the person to a specified individual who is authorized to receive a restricted report in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 6400.06, "DOD Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Abuse Involving DOD Military and Certain Affiliated Personnel," Dec. 14, 2021, and Department of Defense Directive 6495.01, "Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program," Jan. 23, 2012.

Duty-to-warn and mandated reporting reports are provided to inform services of duty-to-warn situations that have occurred and been reported by the MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs. Reviewing the reports provides an opportunity to cross-check reports received through the reporting chains and provides the ability to monitor compliance with reporting protocols. In addition, the reports provide data to target resources and better support service members and their families.

The MFLC Activity Report summarizes the non-medical MFLC Program services provided to military personnel and their family members. The MFLC Activity Report, along with monthly Military OneSource reports and duty-to-warn and mandated reporting reports, may be accessed by installation points of contact via the Data Warehouse.

Conflict Resolution Process

If a point of contact, commander, family program director or headquarters point of contact identifies a personnel issue with a particular counselor, he or she should address the concern with the contract supervisor first. If the contract supervisor does not resolve the issue or responds in an unsatisfactory manner, or if the issue needs higher level attention, he or she should contact the service headquarters point of contact who will reach out to MCSP for assistance.

Section 6: Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

Military Community Support Programs

- Centrally manages the MFLC contract
- Establishes policy, guidance and scope of the contract
- Reviews MFLC Program performance
- Reviews and approves requests for MFLC support

Service Headquarters Point of Contact

- Receives data and monitors trends
- Communicates trends, staffing and programmatic updates received from MCSP to the stakeholders
- Makes suggestions to stakeholders on how to use data to improve support services
- Keeps MCSP apprised of curricula and training requests (the program office must approve counselor attendance at installation trainings in advance.)
- Approves access of installation points of contact to Data Warehouse

Contractor

- Verifies each counselor's education, license and supervision requirements if provisionally licensed prior to employment
- Ensures all counselors undergo background checks
- Ensures a Tier 1 National Agency Check with Inquiries, or Tier 1 NACI with child care, investigation is processed by the government for all approved counselors
- Ensures a background check is processed by the government in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 1402.05, "Background Checks on Individuals in DOD Child Care Services Programs"
- Ensures each counselor receives a background check letter signed by the program office prior to the beginning of the assignment
- Provides required training on military culture to include chain of command, rates, ranks and insignia, and other specialized subject areas

Contract Supervisor

- Onboards new MFLCs (including housing and transportation)
- Ensures MFLC accountability and that MFLCs work the required hours at their assigned location
- Provides initial orientation and ongoing training for MFLCs
- Ensures MFLCs have an established work schedule
- Provides regular administrative and clinical supervision to MFLCs
- Consults with MFLCs regarding duty-to-warn and mandated reporting situations
- Maintains ongoing communication with installation points of contact, including addressing any issues or concerns, and providing staffing updates.

Installation Point of Contact or Designated Point of Contact

- Requests MFLC Program support via BOSS
- Remains current on MFLC Program policies, guidelines and resources
- Reports any MFLC Program compliance and performance issues
- Reports any issues with MFLC compliance in duty-to-warn protocol
- Communicates to families and staff the role of MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs
- Coordinates MFLCs' access onto military installations as appropriate
- Possesses knowledge of the whereabouts and schedule of assigned MFLCs
- Maintains open communication with the regional and service headquarters point of contact, contractor representative and MCSP (as appropriate) to address issues that cannot be resolved locally
- Serves as the liaison for all community contact and coordination for the MFLC Program
- Ensures a variety of logistical and communications activities are in place for MFLCs, and coordinates and guides work schedules
- Trains MFLCs on procedures and protocols for the local child and youth program, DODEA, and local education agencies
- Ensures parental consent for CYB-MFLC services
- Provides MFLCs with community and unit orientations, including information on the installation mission and demographics
- Provides information on installation reporting procedures for domestic abuse and child abuse or neglect, potential harm to self and others and other duty-to-warn situations. Reporting procedures clearly define that school-based MFLCs must follow school protocols and procedures
- Coordinates space for MFLCs' use (if available)

- Serves as the liaison between the MFLC and the local community
- Provides training on service-specific positive guidance and touch policies for MFLCs working with children and youth
- Assists in prioritizing community support needs
- Maintains an awareness of issues encountered by MFLCs
- Informs MCSP via service headquarters point of contact of temporary or permanent changes in reporting location

Section 7: Frequently Asked Questions

Counseling Support

1. **What are the background check requirements for CYB-MFLCs?**

   - **A:** All CYB-MFLCs must undergo a background check in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 1402.05, "Background Checks on Individuals in DOD Child Care Services Programs." Counselors must work under line-of-sight supervision regardless of their background check status.

2. **Are CYB-MFLCs permitted to make contact with children whose parents are on deployment, or by request only?**

   - **A:** Counselors may contact children if the parent or guardian requests the child to be seen. Additionally, the parent or guardian must have signed the Parent Acknowledgment Form authorizing MFLC support.

3. **Can a counselor participate in physical contact, for example holding an infant, having a child sit in the counselor's lap or hugging?**

   - **A:** Each branch of service has established positive guidance and appropriate touch protocols and policies based on Department of Defense Instruction 6060.02, "Child Development Programs," Aug. 5, 2014, Enclosure 3. Counselors should follow their service's positive guidance and touch policies when interacting with children and coaching and mentoring child and youth program staff. Designated installation points of contact will review the service-specific policies with the CYB-MFLC during installation in-processing.

4. **What do MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs do when an installation is closed due to a natural or regional disaster or for another reason?**

   - **A:** The MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs should look for guidance from the local point of contact and installation during these situations. In general, if the installation is closed, the MFLC or CYB-MFLC cannot report for duty on the installation and may find it necessary to stay home or in his or her designated housing area.

     If the installation point of contact requests that the counselor work at an off-installation location (and the counselor is safely able to do so) then he or she may do that. In locations where face-to-face interaction is prohibited (e.g., hurricane, pandemic), the MFLC may be approved to provide telephonic and virtual confidential counseling, consultation and outreach. The installation point of contact must make a request for telehealth and virtual support to MCSP through their service headquarters.

5. **Can a CYB-MFLC provide support to students assigned to another school that does not have MFLC service?**

- **A**: Yes, they can. However, prior to supporting another school, it must be coordinated through their service headquarters and MCSP.

Miscellaneous

6. **Will there be additional preventative and coping resources to address the current trend in suicides among service members?**

- **A**: MCSP is always looking to update our prevention and coping resources for our MFLCs. Suicide prevention resources are a high priority. As we closely track trends, we also actively look for additional resources and tools that our MFLCs can use to best support service members and families.

7. **Are MFLCs able to order brochures from Military OneSource?**

- **A:** Yes. An MFLC Military OneSource account profile must identify their role as a DOD service provider, and their affiliation as an MFLC. If your account profile is not set up as an MFLC, all materials will show up in the system as "out of stock."

8. **Is MCSP pursuing any new presentations for MFLC counselors?**

- **A:** MCSP leverages their internal team of clinicians as well as their contract team partners to best determine emerging topics and issues in the military community to add to the library of presentations topics. We also look to our MFLCs as our experts on the ground to provide recommendations on new presentation to your contract chain of command.

9. **One challenge, if not the most common challenge within the middle schools, is identity-questioning and, at large, self-esteem issues. Does MCSP have a schedule to deliver new and updated materials to address the issue?**

- **A:** Materials and presentations used by our MFLCs and CYB-MFLCs must receive government approval prior to being utilized but we are tracking these topics as emerging issues across the military landscape. We encourage you provide recommendations on materials that best meet the current issues through your contract chain of command.

10. **How does MCSP determine how a school becomes an eligible candidate to receive an MFLC?**

- **A:** We are here and love to support our military-connected children. Child and Youth Programs support is provided to DODEA schools and local education agencies with a substantial population of military-connected children during the academic school year. Requests should be made online using the BOSS.

11. MFLCs are seeing an increase in demand for counseling sessions, which results in less time for outreach and engagement. What does MCSP see as the optimum balance between sessions, and outreach and engagement?

- **A:** All aspects (sessions, and outreach and engagement) are equally important. When the demand for confidential counseling sessions increases, we expect the outreach hours to decrease.

12. What are MCSP's immediate, near-term and long-term goals to navigate and address the increasing mental health needs of service members and families?

- **A:** MCSP and the MFLC Program's top focus is always how to best support service members and their families through confidential counseling. Emerging trends and issues help shape our support and determine our program's emphasis in prevention support. We work with stakeholders to include our headquarters and local points of contact as well as installation command to navigate and tailor support to the specific needs on the ground while always keeping program scope in mind.

Logistical Needs

13. Can MFLCs have badges so that they are identifiable by service members?

- **A:** Yes. MFLCs may request badges from their employer.

14. Are MFLCs allowed to put names on our business cards for professional purposes?

- **A:** Names are not associated with MFLC advertising due to the length of rotations. Since a phone number, for example, is associated with the position, this eliminates confusion when there is turnover.

15. Are MFLCs allowed to get Common Access Cards and government emails?

- **A:** CACs are only issued if the assignment location requires a CAC for the MFLC to do their job. For example, this holds true for MFLCs working at some Mobile Task Force locations and embedded with Special Operations Command units.

CYB Parent/Legal Guardian Acknowledgment Form

DD Form 3209:

https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/forms/dd/dd3209.pdf