



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
WILLIAM A. O'NEILL ARMORY  
360 BROAD STREET  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06105-3795

March 3, 2016

Honorable Mae Flexer, State Senator  
Honorable John "Jack" F. Hennessy, State Representative  
Co-Chairs, Veterans' Affairs Committee  
Hartford, CT 06106

IN RE Raised Bill 322, "AAC Outreach Efforts to Service Members during the First Thirty Days after Returning From Deployment"

The Connecticut Military Department is profoundly grateful for the efforts of the Veterans' Affairs Committee (VAC), to her co-chairs and committee members, for their continued support of Connecticut's armed forces, veterans and their families. The Military Department values the relationship with the VAC and appreciates our direct and candid communications. With that in mind, I respectfully request the VAC to take no favorable action on Raised Bill 322, "AAC Outreach Efforts to Service Members during the First Thirty Days after Returning from Deployment." The requirements of this bill are already implemented under federal auspices.

This bill, if passed, would statutorily require the Military Department to develop a state-funded conference for members of the armed forces, who are domiciled in this state and have returned from deployment, to be presented to returning members not later than thirty days after their return from deployment. Although commendable, this requirement would involve significant state resources and funding, including personnel, supplies and equipment, for a conference likely held every thirty days, without a guarantee that the members would attend the conference.

Thankfully, the federal government mandates a similar federal program, for both active and reserve members. For the National Guard and Reserve Components, the federal government implements this requirement under the Department of Defense (DOD) Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP). YRRP requires National Guard and Reserve Component members and their family to have access to programs, resources, referrals, and services to minimize stress on families during all phases of deployment or accumulated deployment days of 90 days or as Services direct. The reintegration phases are available at approximately 30-, 60-, and 90-day intervals, which may be extended up to 180 days following demobilization, release from active duty, or full time National Guard or Reserve duty." YRRP is implemented with federal funds and resources in a conference-like setting. Member attendance is mandatory.

I ask the VAC to take no favorable action on this bill as currently drafted. Should the VAC desire to discuss the Military Department's concerns about this bill or other matters concerning military/veteran legislation, please contact my legislative liaison, Lieutenant Colonel Timothy J. Tomcho, Judge Advocate, at (860) 548-3203 or via email at [timothy.j.tomcho.mil@mail.mil](mailto:timothy.j.tomcho.mil@mail.mil).

Sincerely,



THADDEUS J. MARTIN  
Major General  
The Adjutant General

2 Enclosures:

1. Introduction to YRRP
2. YRRP Reunion



# Introduction to the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP)



360 Broad St. Suite 112, Hartford, CT 06105  
1-800-858-2677

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) 08 directs that The Secretary of Defense shall establish a National Combat Veteran reintegration program to provide National Guard and Reserve Members and their Families with sufficient information, services, referral, and proactive outreach opportunities through the entire deployment cycle. This program is known as the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. All Yellow Ribbon events are mandatory for Service Members.

**Vision:** To provide Service Members and their Families the tools that they will need to navigate through their Mobilization journey. The intent of our program is to prepare Connecticut National Guard Service Members and their Families for the three phases of Mobilization: Pre-Mobilization, Deployment and Post-Mobilization.

**Why The Program Works:** Connecticut's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is working hand-in-hand with the Connecticut National Guard Service Member and Family Support Center to ensure that outreach care is given to Service Members and their Families; and also provides a strong partnership and coalition with Federal, State and Local organizations to ensure that Service Members and their Families receive timely and accurate information.

## Pre-Mobilization

**90 Days Prior to Mobilization:** The 90 Day Pre-Mobilization event is a full-day event that provides educational briefings on Military Pay, the Military Support Program (MSP), the Judge Advocate General (JAG), State Benefits, TRICARE, Dealing with the Media, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), the Service Member and Family Support Center, the Child & Youth Program, Casualty Notification, Transition Assistance, Military OneSource (MOS), Education, Personal Finances, Communication During Mobilization and Operations Security (OPSEC). Service Members and Family Members will also be afforded the opportunity to meet one-on-one with Subject Matter Experts during the exhibitor fair portion of the event to get specific questions answered.

## During Deployment

**Midway Deployment Briefing:** Approximately 6 months after the unit deploys, the Yellow Ribbon Program will conduct a Midway Deployment Briefing for the loved ones of those deployed. The Midway Deployment Briefing consists of a presentation that will be chosen by the unit's families that they feel will best suit their needs during their current phase of Deployment. Possible briefing topics are Communication During Deployment, Getting Ready for Re-Entry, Children and Separation, Issues of Mobilization and Maintaining a Healthy Marriage During Deployment. Each briefing is catered to meet the needs of each individual event. The Yellow Ribbon Staff works in concert with the Family Assistance Center Coordinator (FACC) and Family Readiness Group (FRG) to ensure the event meets the needs of each group.

## Child & Youth Program and Childcare

The Child & Youth Program will hold a program concurrently for dependent children between the ages of 5 and 18. The curriculum for 90 Day Pre-Mobilization event will be focused on deployment and how children can cope with the separation from their Service Member.

Depending on the needs and demographics of the unit a childcare program may be offered for dependent children under the age of 5. The Yellow Ribbon Program will contract for an outside childcare agency to provide care for those dependent children who are not eligible for the Child & Youth Program. If childcare is not offered for your event, you may request reimbursement for care provided to allow your participation in the event.

Registration for the Child & Youth Program and childcare portion of the events are absolutely mandatory so that we can ensure proper child to adult supervision ratios are maintained.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program offers programming specific to Reunion & Reintegration and Post-Deployment. You will receive an overview of these events towards the end of the deployment cycle.

**Service Member Readiness + Family Readiness = Mission Readiness**



[www.facebook.com/CTNGfamilies](http://www.facebook.com/CTNGfamilies)





# Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) Reunion



360 Broad St. Suite 112, Hartford, CT 06105  
1-800-858-2677

As your deployment journey is coming to an end, we would like to update you on the Post-Mobilization Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP) events that are in store for you and your Service Member. These events are a continuation of the Pre-Mobilization Program and Mid-Deployment events that have been offered. These events are again mandatory for your Service Member. Your participation as a Family Member is highly encouraged. Please watch your mail for your invitation and registration information as RSVPs are required for all Yellow Ribbon Program events.

## Deployment

**Reunion and Reintegration Conference\*:** Prior to the return of a unit, Family Members are invited to attend a Reunion and Reintegration Conference aimed at preparing Family Members for the return of their Service Member. This event provides briefings on Family/Couples Reintegration, the Demobilization Process, Dealing with the Media, Conflict Resolution and Combat Stress. During this event we also have a panel comprised of Service Members who recently returned from mobilization and Family Members who have had loved ones deploy previously, to share their experiences about mobilization and reintegration.

## Post Deployment

**In State Demobilization:** Once returned to Connecticut, Service Members will be required to attend a demobilization program at Camp Niantic called Reverse Soldier Readiness Processing (R-SRP). You will receive a FACT Sheet dedicated to this topic prior to your loved one's return.

**14 Day Call:** In order to ensure that the reintegration process is going smoothly, the Service Member and Family Support Center staff will contact each Primary Point of Contact and the Rear Detachment will contact each Service Member approximately 14 Days after completing the R-SRP. If Service Members are unable to be reached the Rear Detachment will make a visit to the Service Member's home to make sure the reintegration process is going smoothly. If the Service Member is going to be out of town, they are required to provide accurate contact information to their chain of command.

**30 Days Post Mobilization\*:** The 30 Day Post-Mobilization event is a half-day event, held at a non-military location, that provides seminars on Couples Enrichment, Single Soldier Enrichment and safety. The 30 Day Post-Mobilization event will also have a mandatory exhibitor fair where Service Members and Families will be required to meet one-on-one with each provider. The exhibitor fair will include the Federal VA, Veterans Healthcare System, Education Services, Military Support Program (MSP), TRICARE, Met Life Dental, Personal Financial Counselor, VET Center and many others.

**60 Day Post-Mobilization\*:** The 60 Day Post-Mobilization event is a half day event, held at a non-military location, that provides briefings on Readjustment, Anger Management, Substance Abuse Prevention and a presentation entitled, "What Condition is My Condition," which provides Service Members and Families the tools to help them diffuse crisis situations. Subject matter experts are also on hand to address any questions or concerns.

**90 Days Post Mobilization:** This is the Unit's first official drill weekend back since deployment. Service Members will go through a medical screening (TB Test and Post Deployment Health Reassessment), have one-on-one counseling with VET Center staff. They will also participate in the unit's Freedom Salute Ceremony; all Family Members are welcome to attend this event only. This ceremony honors the men and women who served and acknowledges the sacrifices they have made.

**180 Day Check:** 180 days after the unit has returned from combat, each Service Member will attend one last day of briefings that are connected to their deployment. During this drill, the Service Member will be re-evaluated and be able to follow up with any concerns that they are having. This will include a follow up on their Post Deployment Health Reassessment, a Post Traumatic Stress brief, a medical readiness evaluation and a VA counseling follow up. This is a Service Member only event.

\*The Child & Youth Program will hold a program concurrently for dependent children between the ages of 5 and 18. The curriculum will be focused on the reintegration aspect of the reunion cycle and highlighting the continued resources and supports available to them even though their Service Member has returned home. Depending on the needs and demographics of the unit a childcare program may be offered for dependent children under the age of 5. The Yellow Ribbon Program will contract for an outside childcare agency to provide care for those dependent children who are not eligible for the Child & Youth Program. If childcare is not offered for your event, you may request reimbursement for care provided to allow your participation in the event. Registration for the Child & Youth Program and Childcare portion of the events are **absolutely mandatory** so that we can ensure proper adult to child supervision ratios are maintained.



**Service Member Readiness + Family Readiness = Mission Readiness**



[www.facebook.com/CTNGfamilies](http://www.facebook.com/CTNGfamilies)

