

SEC. 582. YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a national reintegration program to provide eligible individuals with sufficient information, services, referral, and proactive outreach opportunities. This program shall be known as the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

(b) PURPOSE OF PROGRAM.—The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program shall consist of informational events and activities for eligible individuals and community members to facilitate access to services supporting their health and well-being.

(c) EXECUTIVE AGENT.—The Secretary shall designate the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness as the Department of Defense executive agent for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

(d) OFFICE FOR REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall establish the Office for Reintegration Programs within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The office shall administer all reintegration programs in coordination with State National Guard organizations. The office shall be responsible for coordination with existing National Guard and Reserve family and support programs. The Directors of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard and the Chiefs of the Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, and Air Force Reserve may appoint liaison officers to coordinate with the permanent office staff.

(B) PARTNERSHIPS AND ACCESS.—The office may enter into partnerships with other public entities, including the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Department of Veterans Affairs for access to necessary substance abuse, mental health treatment, and other quality of life services from local State-licensed service providers. Service and State-based programs may provide access to curriculum, training, and support for services to members and families from all components.

(2) CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN REINTEGRATION.—The Office for Reintegration Programs shall establish a Center for Excellence in Reintegration within the office. The Center shall collect and analyze “lessons learned” and suggestions from State National Guard and Reserve organizations with existing or developing reintegration programs. The Center shall also assist in developing training aids and briefing materials and training representatives from State National Guard and Reserve organizations. The Center shall develop and implement a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program in supporting the health and well-being of eligible individuals.

(3) GRANTS .—The Office for Reintegration Programs may make grants to conduct data collection, trend analysis, and curriculum development and to prepare reports in support of activities under this section.

(e) ADVISORY BOARD.—

(1) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense shall appoint an advisory board to analyze the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program and report on areas of success and areas for necessary improvements. The advisory board shall include the Director of the Army National Guard, the Director of the Air National Guard, Chiefs of the Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, and Air Force Reserve, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, an Adjutant General on a rotational basis as determined by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and any other Department of Defense, Federal Government agency, or outside organization as determined by the Secretary of Defense. The members of the advisory board may designate representatives in their stead.

(2) **SCHEDULE.**—The advisory board shall meet on a schedule determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(3) **INITIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**—The advisory board shall issue internal reports as necessary and shall submit an initial report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives not later than 180 days after the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the establishment of the Office for Reintegration Programs. The report shall contain—

- (A) an evaluation of the implementation of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program by State National Guard and Reserve organizations;
- (B) an assessment of any unmet resource requirements; and
- (C) recommendations regarding closer coordination between the Office of Reintegration Programs and State National Guard and Reserve organizations.

(f) SUPPORT TEAMS.—The Office for Reintegration Programs may employ personnel to administer the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program at the State level. The primary function of team members shall be—

- (1) to implement the reintegration curriculum through the deployment cycle described in subsection (g);
- (2) to obtain necessary service providers; and
- (3) to educate service providers and community based organizations regarding the unique military nature of the reintegration program.

(g) OPERATION OF PROGRAM.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**— The Office for Reintegration Programs shall assist State National Guard and Reserve organizations with the development and provision of information, events, and activities to support the health and well-being of eligible individuals before, during, and after periods of activation, mobilization, or deployment.

(2) **FOCUS OF INFORMATION, EVENTS, AND ACTIVITIES.**—

(A) **BEFORE ACTIVATION, MOBILIZATION, OR DEPLOYMENT.**—Before a period of activation, mobilization, or deployment, the information, events, and activities described in paragraph (1) should focus on preparing eligible individuals and affected communities for the rigors of activation, mobilization, and deployment.

(B) **DURING ACTIVATION, MOBILIZATION, OR DEPLOYMENT.**—During such a period, the information, events, and activities described in paragraph (1) should focus on—

- (i) helping eligible individuals cope with the challenges and stress associated with such period;

- (ii) decreasing the isolation of eligible individuals during such period; and
- (iii) preparing eligible individuals for the challenges associated with reintegration.

(C) **AFTER ACTIVATION , MOBILIZATION , OR DEPLOYMENT .**—After such a period, but no earlier than 30 days after demobilization, the information, events, and activities described in paragraph (1) should focus on—

- (i) reconnecting the member with their families, friends, and communities;
- (ii) providing information on employment opportunities;
- (iii) helping eligible individuals deal with the challenges of reintegration;
- (iv) ensuring that eligible individuals understand what benefits they are entitled to and what resources are available to help them overcome the challenges of reintegration; and
- (v) providing a forum for addressing negative behaviors related to operational stress and reintegration.

(3) **MEMBER PAY .**—Members shall receive appropriate pay for days spent attending such events and activities.

(4) **MINIMUM NUMBER OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES .**—The State National Guard and Reserve Organizations shall provide to eligible individuals—

- (A) one event or activity before a period of activation, mobilization, or deployment;
- (B) one event or activity during a period of activation, mobilization, or deployment; and
- (C) two events or activities after a period of activation, mobilization, or deployment.

(h) OUTREACH SERVICES.—As part of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, the Office for Reintegration Programs may develop programs of outreach to eligible individuals to educate such eligible individuals about the assistance and services available to them under the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. Such assistance and services may include the following:

- (1) Marriage counseling.
- (2) Services for children.
- (3) Substance abuse awareness and treatment.
- (4) Mental health awareness and treatment.
- (5) Financial counseling.
- (6) Anger management counseling.
- (7) Domestic violence awareness and prevention.
- (8) Employment assistance.
- (9) Preparing and updating family care plans.
- (10) Development of strategies for living with a member of the Armed Forces with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury.
- (11) Other services that may be appropriate to address the unique needs of eligible individuals who live in rural or remote areas with respect to family readiness and servicemember reintegration.
- (12) Assisting eligible individuals find and receive assistance with military family readiness and servicemember reintegration, including referral services.

(13) Development of strategies and programs that recognize the need for long-term follow-up services for reintegrating eligible individuals for extended periods following deployments, including between deployments.

(14) Assisting eligible individuals in receiving services and assistance from the Department of Veterans Affairs, including referral services.

(15) Resiliency training to promote comprehensive programs for eligible individuals to build mental and emotional resiliency for successfully meeting the demands of the deployment cycle.

(16) Stress management and positive coping skills.

(i) SUICIDE PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY HEALING AND RESPONSE PROGRAM.—

The Office for Reintegration Programs shall assist the Defense Suicide Prevention Office and the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury to collect and analyze information, suggestions, and best practices from State National Guard and Reserve organizations with suicide prevention and community response programs.

(j) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DEFINED.—For the purposes of this section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means a member of a reserve component, a member of their family, or a designated representative who the Secretary of Defense determines to be eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.