



DoD Expands Housing Assistance Program

The Department of Defense has expanded the Housing Assistance Program (HAP) using funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The \$555 million allocated to the HAP will be used to provide benefits to eligible military and DoD civilians who face financial losses selling their primary residence during the current housing market downturn.

The DoD HAP has been providing financial assistance to military and DoD civilians for more than 40 years, and most recently, has been mainly used to provide benefits to personnel at base realignment and closure (BRAC) sites where government action caused a decrease in home values.

ARRA funding allows the DoD to temporarily expand this program in order to partially reimburse home sale losses in the following priority order:

- Wounded service members relocating for treatment or medical retirement, and for the survivors of those who have died while on deployment.
- Military and DoD civilians affected by the 2005 BRAC round, without the need (which existed under previous law) to prove that the base closure caused the local market decline.

• Normal military permanent change of station (PCS) moves, on a temporary basis.

In February, Congress authorized ARRA funding for a temporary expansion of the HAP in order to address unique economic pressures faced by military personnel. After conducting an extensive analysis to determine how best to prioritize the \$555 million available while maximizing assistance to as many people as possible, the DoD developed specific eligibility criteria that includes PCS retroactivity from July, 1, 2006, through December, 31, 2009, and longer for wounded warriors/surviving spouses and personnel affected by BRAC.

Special eligibility criteria and applications are available on the HAP website at <http://hap.usace.army.mil>.

Commissary Case Lot Sales for Sept.

- Sept. 3-5:** 144th Reg. Training Institute, Riverton, UT
- Sept. 5-6:** 109th Air National Guard, Scotia, NY
- Sept. 11-13:** 1/230th Air Cav Squadron, Smyrna, TN
- Sept. 12:** Navy Operations Support Ctr, Erie, PA
- Sept. 12:** ND ANG, North Fargo, ND
- Sept. 12-13:** 1092nd Eng. Battalion, Parkersburg, WV
- Sept. 12-13:** N. H. National Guard, Pease ANGB, NH
- Sept. 12-13:** Hqs 7th Brigade 98th Div, Rochester, NY
- Sept. 18-19:** Douglas Co. Fairgrounds, Roseburg, OR
- Sept. 18-20:** Guard And Reserve, Yakima, WA
- Sept. 19-20:** 107th Air National Guard, Niagara Falls, NY
- Sept. 20:** Guard And Reserve, Toledo, OH
- Sept. 25-27:** 230th SUS BDE TNARG, Chattanooga, TN
- Sept. 25-27:** Army National Guard,

Pendleton, OR

Sept. 26-27: Guard And Reserve, Tupelo, MS

Sept. 28-30: Guard And Reserve, Pago-Pago, American Samoa

Exchange Online Mall Takes Vacation Reservations

The Exchange Service's Exchange Online Mall has partnered with the U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation to help troops take a break without going broke.

Exchange shoppers can log on to the Exchange Online Mall and book a vacation, including 7-night Alaskan Cruises from \$399, Cozumel from \$28 per night and an 11-day European Dream vacation, through FMWRC's Government Vacation Rewards program.

Beyond convenience, the partnership makes it possible for military shoppers to book vacations using the Exchange Service's proprietary Military Star Card or Military Star Rewards MasterCard.

Government Vacation Rewards offers access to special military pricing on thousands of cruises, tours, vacation packages, resorts, hotels, air travel and cars.

The Soldiers Project offers free treatment

The Soldiers Project offers free psychological treatment to military service members including – active duty, National Guard, reserves and veterans – who have served or expect to serve in OEF and/or OIF.

The Soldiers Project is a private non-profit group of volunteer licensed mental health professionals including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and marriage and family therapists.

Health care practitioners provide treatment to members of their families and other loved ones. Therapists are all volunteers and the services are confidential. Soldiers Project does not report to any governmental agency.

Primarily in Southern California, the Soldiers Project in Los Angeles has more than 100 volunteer clinicians. Affiliated groups have developed in Seattle, New York and Chicago. For details, visit www.thesoldiersproject.org.



DoD photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Marcus Suarez, U.S. Navy.

U.S. Navy Cmdr. Alison LeFebvre, a physical therapist assigned to the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), escorts an El Salvadoran child to physical therapy during a medical mission at the Jose Pantoja Hija schoolhouse in La Union, El Salvador. The Comfort was on its sixth stop in support of Continuing Promise 2009, a four-month humanitarian and civic assistance mission throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.