

# Barksdale Airmen Sponsor Program Policy Handbook for Host Families

## Introduction

The Barksdale Airmen Sponsor Program (BASP) offers select community leaders a unique and rewarding opportunity to provide Airmen a home-away-from-home during their first assignment in the military. It also offers community leaders the opportunity to Barksdale Air Force Base and meet first-hand our fine young Air Force men and women and, the air and space leaders of tomorrow. If you have the desire and commitment to make a difference in a young Airman’s life, this is the program for you!

## Program Overview

The BASP is designed to provide Airmen with an avenue to form friendships and gather support beyond the formal work environment. If you can remember leaving behind the comfort and security of your parents’ home, then you will understand the needs of the young men and women in the BASP. Rigorous military standards can tax even the best of spirits, producing feelings of great stress to make the grade in some Airmen, and in others, moments of loneliness, homesickness and doubt. As a host family, you provide a home-away-from-home during two Airmen’s first years at Barksdale AFB. Each host family will be assigned at least two Airmen. This is for the safety of the Airmen. You serve as those Airmen’s mentor, friend, and advisor, providing a caring environment to relax away from the pressures of work and future deployments. You are also in the position to serve as a positive adult role model helping Airmen understand their role as a career Air Force Airman and reinforcing positive social values.

The BASP is run by the Military Affairs Council (MAC) of Shreveport-Bossier. The MAC is a 501 © non-profit with a history of service and ties to Barksdale AFB. The MAC, through the BASP attempts to match host families with Airmen who share the same basic characteristics. Airmen can request “by name” host families. When two families request the same Airman, we honor the wishes of the Airman.

The official relationship lasts for the duration of time that the Airman is assigned to Barksdale AFB, or when one of the two parties decides to terminate the relationship.

## Air Force Abbreviations

In order to successfully interact with an Airman, it is important to understand the life of an Airman. This section is designed to familiarize the host family with the terms and acronyms frequently used by Airmen.

AF	Air Force
AFI	Air Force Instruction – the instructions provide a set of policies and guidelines outlining Air Force operating procedures
DoD	Department of Defense
NCOIC	Noncommissioned Officer in Charge
OI	Operating Instruction-outlines how an organization conducts business
OIC	Officer In Charge

PCS	Permanent Change of Station
POV	Privately Owned Vehicle
SFS	Security Forces Squadron
Shirt/First Sergeant	Senior enlisted member responsible for squadron disciplinary and personnel issues
Squadron	A squadron typically averages 250-300 Airmen of all ranks. Additionally, each squadron and group has a full-time Commander who commands the unit.
TDY	Temporary Duty-business trip out of town
UOD	Uniform of the Day

### **Airmen Core Values**

In addition to the academic, physical, and military responsibilities the Airmen assume, they are also charged with stringent moral responsibilities. Airmen accept and live by our core values which are: Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All that We Do. These values, ingrained into individuals during Basic Training, is based upon the traditional concept that an Airman's word is a bond and that Airmen must be uncompromising, forthright, and honest in all activities throughout life.

The defense of the United States and its concept of deterring war rely heavily upon the ability of the Air Force to discharge its mission properly. In our modern world, we need Airmen of great ability, skill, and judgment. These future leaders are the Air Force Airmen of today whom you will be encouraging and advising. The self-discipline, mental toughness, knowledge and leadership skills that our country needs dictate intensive and demanding training.

Your efforts and concern as a caring participant can make a big difference in assisting an Airman who may need an occasional retreat from the daily grind on base. Your willingness to give Airmen your time, to listen sympathetically and to show your genuine concern will one day bear fruit far beyond the smiles you will earn from them today. In short, your involvement is vital to the Airman's experience and the shaping of the air and space leaders of tomorrow.

### **Airmen Life**

From overviews on academic requirements to survival training, it will be evident how vital your role as a host family is in the development of an Airman through the off-duty support you provide. The following section is designed to acquaint you with the daily life of an Airman.

**Academics** – First term enlisted Airmen are required to study and pass a variety of courses that strengthen their knowledge in the profession of arms as well as their core specialty

**Fitness-Athletic** participation is required of all Airmen. All Airmen complete a physical fitness test every six months to a year. Failure to meet standards may result in removal from the military. Airmen participate in squadron-led and/or individual physical fitness programs. In addition, base-run intramural sports are available for those who are interested.

Aviation-All Airmen at Barksdale are either aircrew members or work to support the USAF mission to fly, fight and win!

Work days- Not all Airmen work Monday-Friday nor do all work from 7:30am-4:30pm. Rather, some work shifts and some work weekends on a regular basis. This will require some flexibility on your part to meet the needs of your Airman. In addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Wing often supports short-notice taskings. Please be understanding if your Airman has to cancel plans with only a few days' notice (or less).

Deployments-You can expect that your Airmen will probably deploy during their first year or two at Barksdale AFB. Deployments typically last 6 months.

### **Sexual Assault**

Sexual Assault. For allegations of sexual assault, Barksdale AFB has a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARV) and victim advocates (VA) available to ensure the respectful and dignified care of the victim. If an Airman victim of sexual assault confides in a host family that they were sexually assaulted, the victim should be encouraged to call the SARC immediately at 456-7272 in order to discuss restricted (confidential) and unrestricted (non-confidential) reporting options.

The Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC). The SARC serves as the single point of contact for integrating and coordinating sexual assault victim care from an initial report of sexual assault, through disposition and resolution of issues related to the victim's health and well-being for all Barksdale AFB personnel. Whether a victim comes forward through restricted or unrestricted channels, the immediate priority is to care for the victim. The SARC and VA are trained first responders that can help the victim understand the dynamics of sexual assault, put them in touch with other helping agencies to facilitate recovery and help the victim through the investigative and legal processes.

Restricted Report of Sexual Assault. Restricted (confidential) reporting enables Airmen who are victims to report allegations of sexual assault to the installation SARC without triggering a law enforcement investigation. This reporting option gives the victim access to medical care, counseling, chaplain services and a victim advocate, but does not initiate the investigative process. Due to the confidential nature of this reporting option, it is critical that a victim's chain of command (Squadron Commander, First Sergeant) and law enforcement not be notified of the sexual assault as they are considered mandatory reporters. If a disclosure is made to the victim's chain of command or law enforcement, a victim will lose confidentiality and an unrestricted report will have to be made.

Unrestricted Report of Sexual Assault. Unrestricted (non-confidential) reporting enables all victims to report allegations of sexual assault through standard reporting channels including the victim's chain of command, law enforcement (security Forces Squadron and AF Office of Special Investigations), and the installation SARC. Unrestricted reporting is the preferred reporting method by the Department of Defense and the Air Force because it allows the SARC to provide the widest range of support services to the victim and enables prosecution of alleged perpetrators when investigations warrant those charges. In an unrestricted report, law enforcement conducts an investigation after which commanders and legal authorities may pursue prosecution for the alleged perpetrator. The victim making the unrestricted

report has access to medical care, counseling, chaplain services, and a victim advocate. At the request of the victim, the SARC and the VA can work with the victim's commander to address duty or disciplinary concerns.

**Independent Report.** Should information about a sexual assault be disclosed to command or law enforcement from someone other than a victim, an investigation into the allegation will be initiated, and it will be considered an independent report. Commanders must report all sexual assaults that they become aware of when it involves individuals in their supervisory chain of command. Law enforcement personnel are required to investigate all crimes that they become aware of to include sexual assault. To preserve a victim's restricted reporting option, it is important that a host family, the victim's disclosure to you be kept private.

**Bottom Line.** All victims of sexual assault can have their questions answered confidentially and receive assistance by contacting the SARC at 456-7272. Contacting the SARC first preserves options for the victim!

### **Your Role as a Host Family**

Airmen from Barksdale AFB are held to a very high standard as professionals who are responsible for multi-million dollar pieces of equipment. It is imperative that you understand these standards and help set the Airmen up for success. While the Airmen you interact with will typically be the age of an average college student, their responsibilities are generally far greater. Failure to live up to their professional responsibilities will have the potential to seriously injure fellow Airmen and can have career-ending effects.

### **Alcohol and the Airman**

Louisiana Law providing Alcohol to Minors – Alcohol use as it relates to the Airman is in accordance with Louisiana laws; the individual must be 21 years of age or older to buy or consume alcohol. While those over the age of 21 may drink alcoholic beverages, it is not encouraged. Remember, alcohol use has been linked to sexual assaults. Do not condone situations where alcohol use can lead to criminal activity. We strongly request that no alcohol be involved with the BASP program, or offered to your assigned Airmen or Airmen visiting.

### **Host Family Activities**

Airmen do not expect to be entertained or taken out to expensive meals or events. On the contrary, they are looking for the warmth and friendship of your family in their home-away-from home. Letting them become part of your family is the greatest gift you can give. They may want to use your phone to call parents or friends, but you are not required to overextend yourself financially. If the Airman does not have a cell phone, you should suggest that Airmen acquire a calling card in order to pay their own bills. Ultimately, the freedom to make a sandwich, drink a soda, sleep, watch TV, or just hang out combined with your willingness to listen and your concern for them as individuals are the most precious gifts Airmen can receive.

## **Airman/Host Family Relationships**

Airmen will strive to please you by good behavior to earn a return invitation. They are expected to be courteous guests and to express their gratitude. Airmen are taught to address military superiors and their elders as “Sir” or “Ma’am”. Relations between host family and their Airmen need not be excessively formal and we rely on your good judgement in this area. However, if you experience problems with one of your Airmen, please contact the First Sergeant and Military Liaison immediately.

## **Host Family Dividends**

Aside from the personal satisfaction you receive in hosting Airmen, you may be asking yourself what you get in return. Airmen will normally invite you to events as their guest, traditionally military events such as promotion ceremonies, to show their appreciation. They will also volunteer to help you with tasks or projects as they are genuinely grateful for your caring and seek to find ways to demonstrate their gratitude. While BASP provides many dividends, participants often gain their most satisfying moments merely by interacting with their Airmen. By sharing a family atmosphere, these family ties can continue for years.

## **Airmen and Cars**

While many Airmen have their own vehicle, this is not the case with all of them. Lending your vehicle is not a responsibility or a requirement. If you choose to do so, you must realize that you do so at your own risk with possible negative outcomes in terms of damage to property belonging to others. Safe alternatives to borrowing are commercial transportation, carpooling, and prior coordination of rides with host families. Any host family member may pick up the Airmen. Most likely one of your Airmen will have a car; please encourage your Airmen to carpool to your house. If you need to pick up an Airman from base, host families who do not have regular access to Barksdale AFB will be placed on an Entry Access List (EAL) or be provided a pass to allow for access as required.

## **The Host Family’s Role in Correcting the Airmen**

Airmen need to learn from their mistakes...that’s part of their training. Overlooking an error or mistake will only encourage them to continue the behavior. One experienced host family recommends establishing house rules for Airmen visiting your home. They further added that it is unfair to expect Airmen to follow your rules if you don’t tell them what the rules are. Perhaps the most important things you want to remember about house rules are that the rules must clearly and accurately reflect your expectations of Airmen behavior in your home. Suggested house rules you may want to address include the following:

- We each have a right to our own opinions and the right to disagree with the opinions of others.
- If I request a phone call to let me know if you’re coming over for the weekend, then please call me early so I may adjust my plans accordingly.
- If you are unable to visit for an extended length of time, a courtesy call or e-mail from time to time is required to let me know how you’re doing.

Other areas you may want to address from the start include:

- Your policy on bringing additional Airmen to your home
- Cleaning up after themselves while visiting your home (this may include a list of duties such as making the bed if they slept over)
- Put things back where they found them
- Clothing standards around the home
- Address your feelings on picking up your two Airmen at the base and how you feel about last minute phone calls requesting an off-day visit
- Your policies on your Airmen arriving unexpectedly for a meal or bringing a friend for a meal

#### Helpful Hints

- Be a sounding board
- Communicate your house rules and regulations
- Give Airmen responsibilities as a family member
- Expect the same courtesy from an Airman as you would a family member
- Teach your Airmen and learn together
- If possible, have an open house to meet the Airmen's parents if they visit
- Take pictures for the Airmen's families and future reunions
- Enjoy your time together; Airmen feel host families are influential and positively impact their future
- We do not recommend you buy alcohol for Airmen

#### Important Phone Numbers

Military Liaison Number: 318-456-9270 for Lt McAuliff or 318-456-0552 for SMSgt Tucci

Command Post: 318-456-2151 Chaplain: 318-456-2111

SAPR Office: 318-456-6836/ 24/7 Hotline: 318-456-7272

Security Forces: 318-456-2551

#### Conclusion

On behalf of Barksdale Air Force Base, we wish to express our appreciation to you for your active involvement in the BASP. As a partner in caring, not only will you play a significant role in the life of an Airman, but you may also find it to be one of life's most rewarding experiences.