

4th Infantry Division & Fort Carson

Personnel – General



Yellow Book

**Counseling
Standard Operating Procedures**

**Headquarters, 4th Infantry Division
Fort Carson, Colorado**

19 February 2026

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNSELING..... 3
Purpose..... 3
Types of Counseling..... 3
Performance Counseling..... 3
Professional Growth Counseling..... 4
Event Counseling..... 5

IVY COUNSELING PACKET..... 6

TERMS OF REFERENCE..... 7

EXAMPLE PERFORMANCE COUNSELING..... 8

4ID SOLDIER RISK IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE.....9

COUNSELING

Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to standardize how the 4th Infantry Division (4ID) and Fort Carson partner organizations conduct counseling and to provide guidance on what is commonly referred to as counseling packets.

Every Soldier deserves regular and purposeful counseling. A Soldier should leave a counseling session with a clear understanding of what they are doing right, where they need improvement, and how the leader will assist them in achieving goals and meeting expectations. Leaders should leave each counseling session with a better understanding of their Soldier's concerns, problems, goals, successes, and expectations.

The Army will always have a high OPTEMPO; 4ID and Fort Carson is no different. What we can control is our Unit Training Management (UTM). UTM happens at all echelons. Commanders must protect Unit Training Plans and Training Schedules to give Soldiers and their Families predictability. This Counseling SOP utilizes a methodology to provide performance feedback, training expectations, and schedule Professional Military Education (PME) based on "The Training Schedule." Soldiers will bend over backwards for you if you provide predictability and training objectives.

This document is meant to be short, to the point, and direct so leaders clearly know what the standard is. For more counseling information, refer to ATP 6-22.1.

Types of Counseling

- *Performance*
- *Professional Growth*
- *Event*

Performance Counseling

Also known as end-of-the-month counseling. This is where leaders review subordinate **performance over the last month** and provide **guidance/expectations for the next month** (also referred to as "**last 30, next 30**"). Leaders will reference Company/Unit Training Schedules/Calendars to provide predictability and performance objectives to subordinates. Leaders will document performance talking points where the subordinate met, did not meet, or exceeded standards outlined in the previous month's counseling statement. Additionally, leaders will document talking points that cover what is expected of the subordinate the following month. Bottom line, this is where leaders document what the subordinate did and what they are expected to do. If done correctly, Soldiers will have predictability (tied to training schedules) and will know how well they are performing. **Note: Refer to the example Performance Counseling on page 8.*

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Requirements for end-of-the month counseling:

- PVT through SSG will be counseled monthly using this process. This Counseling SOP exceeds the NCO minimum requirement for quarterly performance counseling to provide more frequent feedback for our junior NCO population and still meets the intent of AR 623-3. **Note: A SSG serving in a Platoon Sergeant or Staff Section NCOIC position where he/she is being rated by a Platoon Leader or Commissioned Officer will be counseled quarterly IAW AR 623-3.*
- Monthly counseling will be completed on a DA 4856 using the General Form checkbox to utilize the last 30, next 30 methodology. See example monthly counseling on page 8.
- Avoid using paragraphs or narratives. Instead use short topic points while still capturing quantifiable data/facts (e.g., AFT score, weapon qualification, etc.). The counselor should verbally go into detail with the Soldier being counseled.
- The Plan of Action and Assessment sections are not needed for monthly performance counseling because leaders are discussing the prior month and what is expected for the following month.
- Company Training Calendar and/or Unit Training Schedule must be referenced by leaders to provide training objective guidance/expectations to subordinates.
- Initial Counseling will be the first performance counseling conducted by the leader to lay out the duties and responsibilities for the subordinate.
- SFC and above will be counseled quarterly IAW AR 623-3.
- Pay-Day Activity days are a prime opportunity for leaders to counsel their subordinates and should be blocked off on training schedules.

Professional Growth Counseling

Professional growth counseling is an opportunity for leaders to assist subordinates with professional goals by identifying what will help them progress through their career. Although not required to be formally documented on a DA Form 4856, it is important for leaders to describe to subordinates what will make them successful within their Career Management Field (CMF). A key resource for enlisted Soldiers is DA Pam 600-25 which is broken down by CMF at <https://www.army.mil/G-1#org-g-1-resources>.

Topics to consider:

- Professional Military Education (PME) that includes NCOPDS courses (BLC, ALC, SLC, etc.) and functional/leader courses.
- Key/Critical Development time.
- Competitions and Expert Badges.

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- Military/Civilian education.
- Enlisted Manning Cycle (EMC) preferences to include Drill Sergeant and Recruiting Duty; what is best for the Army and the Soldier's career.

Event Counseling

Event-oriented counseling involves a specific event, such as participating in promotion boards, attending training courses, and preparing for deployment or redeployment. It also addresses events such as issues with duty performance, not meeting standards, or personal issues.

Required Event-Oriented Counseling:

- Reception and Integration (R&I) Counseling: This will be done by READY Company during installation in-processing. READY Company is responsible for maintaining/updating the R&I counseling form.
- 4ID Soldier Risk Identification Questionnaire (SRIQ) and Commander's Risk Reduction Toolkit (CRRT):
 - 1SGs will conduct a SRIQ with every newly arrived SGT and below within 30 days of arrival at the company. The SRIQ is used as a guide to identify any medium to high-risk behavior. The 1SG does not need to document the SRIQ. 1SGs may delegate this task to PSGs. **Note: Refer to the SRIQ and associated instructions on page 10.*
 - Commanders will utilize the CRRT to screen for medium to high-risk behavior for all newcomers to their company.
 - These two tools are meant to be proactive, not reactive and may not require any formal counseling.
- Substandard Performance: When a subordinate does not meet a standard or violates the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Examples include AFT failure, ABCP failure, failure to report, failure to obey a direct order, etc. Leaders will document the 5Ws on a DA Form 4856 and annotate a Plan of Action. It is important to document issues to show the subordinate was counseled in case further action is pursued, i.e., non-judicial punishment, administrative separation, etc. In the counseling, ensure to add the "magic statement." Refer to AR 635-200, Chapter 17 for instructions and samples.
- Adverse Separation: Leaders will document the 5Ws on the counseling form IAW AR 635-200 and the associated chapter supporting the basis for separation. Certain separations require monthly counseling like ABCP, while others only require the 5Ws. It is important to document to help reduce the timeline if separation action is initiated. Consult with your servicing legal office for additional guidance.

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- Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions (FLAG): Leaders will document the 5Ws on the counseling form, inform the subordinate that they will be flagged, annotate a Plan of Action if appropriate, and attach documentary evidence if applicable (e.g., DA Form 705 or DA Form 5500).

- Bar to Continued Service (BAR): Refer to AR 601-280.

The IVY Counseling Packet

The IVY Counseling Packet is the 4ID and Fort Carson standard. Each tab will consist of the items below at a minimum. Units may add to the counseling packet if deemed necessary and efficient.

Battalion CSMs have the authority to determine whether the Counseling Packet is digital or in a standard tri-folder with tabs. For example, some units have success organizing their Counseling Packets within Microsoft Teams. Either way, the Counseling Packet must be inspectable and follow the standard below.

Section/ Folder	Contents
Tab 1: <i>Personal Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal Data Sheet ▪ 4ID Golden Triangle ▪ Soldier Talent Profile ▪ Privately Owned Vehicle Data Sheet (DL, Registration, Insurance) ▪ DA Form 348- Copy of Military License *
Tab 2: <i>Performance Counseling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DA Form 4856- End-of-the-Month Performance Counseling, in sequential order
Tab 3: <i>Professional Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IPPS-A Promotion Point Worksheet * ▪ Individual Weapon Qualification Scorecard ▪ DA Form 705- AFT Scorecard ▪ DA Form 5500- Body Fat Content Worksheet *
Tab 4: <i>Event Oriented Counseling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DA Form 4856-Adverse Counseling *

*If applicable

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Personal Data Sheet: Standard document used to record basic Soldier information, to include address (off post, on post housing, or barracks).

4ID Golden Triangle: All Soldiers will complete the [Golden Triangle](#) immediately upon assignment to their respective section. All Soldiers are assigned a buddy in the event of an incident. Contact can be made with either the assigned buddy or Family Member. The Golden Triangle will be validated by the immediate supervisor within the first 30 days of arrival to the unit.

Soldier Talent Profile (STP): Standard document that provides leaders a snapshot of the Soldiers assignment history, line scores, PME, Military/Civilian education, last NCOER thru date, YMAV, AEA code, ETS, Time on Station, and other relevant data

Privately Owned Vehicle Data Sheet: Standard POV document that captures

- 1) Year/Make/Model
- 2) Driver's License #, issuing state, and expiration date
- 3) Insurance Company and expiration date
- 4) Registration State and expiration date
- 5) Basic Rider Course completion (if operating a motorcycle; same info above required)

Although POV inspections are no longer required, they are highly encouraged prior to four-day weekends and block leave periods.

Military License: DA Form 348, if the Soldier is licensed on a tactical vehicle.

IPPS-A Promotion Point Worksheet: Type in "OML/Promotion Points" in the IPPS-A search bar > click PPW Report > print. Leaders should assist Soldiers in updating their promotion points.

Scorecards and Qualifications: In the future, Individual Weapon Qualification Scorecards, AFT Scores, and Body Fat Content data will be visible on the Army Training Information System (ATIS). Until ATIS captures this data, a copy of each must be included in the Counseling Packet. **Note: The DA Form 5500 is not required if the Soldier meets the screening table and/or achieves a 460 AFT score with 80 points in each event.*

DEVELOPMENTAL COUNSELING FORM

For use of this form, see ATP 6-22.1; the proponent agency is TRADOC.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

AUTHORITY: 5 USC 301, Departmental Regulations, 10 USC 3013, Secretary of the Army.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: These records are created and maintained to manage the member's Army and Army National Guard service effectively, to document historically a member's military service, and safeguard the rights of the member and the Army.

NOTE: For additional information, see the System of Records Notice A0600-8-104b AHRC, <https://dpcid.defense.gov/Privacy/SORNs/index/DOD-wide-SORN-Article-View/Article/570051/a0600-8-104b-ahrc/>.

ROUTINE USE(S): There are no specific routine uses anticipated for this form; however, it may be subject to a number of proper and necessary routine uses identified in the system of records notice specified in the purpose statement above.

DISCLOSURE: Disclosure is voluntary.

PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Name (Last, First, MI) SGT Snuffy, Joe	Rank/Grade SGT	Date of Counseling 07-Nov-2025
Organization 4ID, Fort Carson	Name and Title of Counselor SSG Smith, John/ Squad Leader	

PART II - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Purpose of Counseling: (Leader states the reason for the counseling, e.g. Performance/Professional/Event-Oriented counseling, and include the leader's facts and observations prior to the counseling.)

Approach: Non Directive Combined Directive

Type of Counseling: General Form Professional Growth Performance Event Oriented

October End-of-the-Month Performance Counseling:

-October Performance (Last 30 days)

-November Guidance and Expectations (Next 30 days)

*The purpose of monthly performance counseling is to cover the last 30 days and the next 30 days. The last 30 days should focus on the Soldier's performance. The next 30 days should focus on what is expected from the Soldier and is tied to the Company's training calendar/schedule. If the counseling is done correctly, every month the leader is providing the subordinate feedback and expectations while providing predictability. The "next 30 days" portion of the counseling is directly tied to the following month's "last 30 days." In other words, the leader provides expectations for the following month and then tells the Soldier how they did at the end of that month...the cycle repeats once a month.

PART III - SUMMARY OF COUNSELING

Complete this section during or immediately subsequent to counseling.

Key Points Discussion:

LAST 30 DAYS:

AFT:

-You scored a 450 on 9 October, which exceeded the Company's standard of 400 with 80 points in each event.

-Your Soldier, PFC Pistolbelt, scored a 425 with at least 80 points in each event.

Gunnery Prep:

-You and PFC Pistolbelt had zero deficiencies in the platoon OCIE layout.

-You and PFC Pistolbelt successfully passed GST I with first-time GOs.

-We were able to successfully complete Gate to Live Fire within 2-hours, which allowed us 6-hours to do proficiency training within the simulator.

BFV Gunnery:

-As the BFV Gunner, you took charge and conducted prep-to-fire checks, conducted crew rehearsals with PFC Pistolbelt, and attacked each range which resulted in us achieving a score of 945 and the Company's Top Brad Crew.

-Great job assisting other crews with valuable feedback as their VCE.

NEXT 30 DAYS:

Recovery Operations (10-day Model) Provide me daily updates on the following.

-After OPS PMCS of our BFV (5988E), Machine Guns, and Personal Weapons to include cleanliness and serviceability.

-Be prepared for platoon BII layout. Ensure we have accountability, cleanliness, and serviceability of all BFV BII.

-OCIE layout for accountability, cleanliness, and serviceability.

CCTT/STX (Transition to Tactical):

-Our section will be conducting CCTT on 19 NOV.

-PLT CCTT STX will be on 21 NOV.

-Same fundamentals you used during Gunnery will apply in STX.

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

This form will be destroyed upon: reassignment (*other than rehabilitative transfers*), separation at ETS, or upon retirement. For separation requirements and notification of loss of benefits/consequences see local directives and AR 635-200.

4ID Soldier Risk Identification Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEADERS

This questionnaire is designed to assist company-level leaders to identify potential risks among their Soldiers. The purpose of this questionnaire is for leaders to have one-on-one conversations with newly-arrived Soldiers to not only to get to know them better, but to ask questions to ensure they are getting what they need and to identify any possible risk factors that could be a bigger problem if not addressed early. This questionnaire is not all inclusive, but acts as a guide for leaders. Commanders, First Sergeants, and Platoon Sergeants have the requisite experience to direct and guide junior Soldiers who are having issues. Some of these issues are simple and some may require a mid-to-long-term counseling to overcome. Leaders should reference the Ft. Carson CARES Resource Guide <insert web page> to find an appropriate resource for some of these complex issues. Leaders will utilize this questionnaire for all SGTs and below (at a minimum) who arrive to the Company within the first 30 days.

#	CATEGORY	LEADER QUESTIONS
1	Support & Resources	Are you experiencing any difficulties with Housing, Household Goods, Child Care, Smart Voucher, CIF, etc.?
2	Occupational/Performance	What is your latest AFT Score? Did you have to be taped? What was your score on your weapon qualification? What did you score on the ASVAB and/or what do your line scores look like (e.g., GT Score)?
3	Financial	Do you have financial concerns, such as inability to cover basic monthly expenses, difficulty meeting child support payments, or inability to repay loans? What kind of car do you drive or do you plan on purchasing a new car?
4	Physical & Mental Health	How many hours of sleep do you average? Do you have a current medical profile? How often do you consume alcohol and how much? When was the last time you used marijuana or THC? Do you have a history of depression and/or anxiety and have you been prescribed medication? Did you require any type of morale or medical waiver to join the Army?
5	Personally Owned Weapons	Do you own a firearm? How many? Where are they stored? Is it registered on post? Do you have a concealed carry permit? Do you understand the rules of transporting a POW on/off post?
6	Relationships	Tell me about how your relationship is with your spouse or significant other? Do you have immediate family concerns? Who is in your Golden Triangle?
7	Coping & Resilience	Have you experienced difficulty coping with a loss (e.g., death of a close friend, family member, or team member)?
8	External Concerns	Has anyone (e.g., spouse, family member, friends, fellow Soldier) expressed concerns about your behavior?
9	Thrill Seeker	How many speeding tickets have you had? Do you own a motorcycle or thinking about purchasing one?
10	Immediate Risk	Has the Soldier expressed any suicidal thoughts or actions, or expressed a desire to harm others?
<p>Based on the concerns above and leader's knowledge of the Soldier, the Soldier may be considered to be at low, moderate, or high risk if the statements below are representative.</p> <p style="color: red;"><i>Note: For Soldiers deemed to be at moderate or high risk, senior leadership (Battalion commander/equivalent or higher) should be notified.</i></p>		
LOW		Soldier has no significant problems or has problems for which he/she is receiving appropriate support. The potential for adverse outcomes appears to be low.
MODERATE		Behaviors or concerns that place the Soldier at risk of serious problems if not addressd through appropriate actions (e.g., Soldier experiencing serious financial, legal, family/relationship, alcohol, or other concerns, and is experiencing difficulty getting adequate assistance; Soldier exhibiting a pattern of serious risk taking behavior). Senior leadership (Battalion commander/equivalent or higher) should be notified.
HIGH		Behaviors or concerns that potentially place the Soldier or others in danger or harms way (e.g., life threatening risk taking behavior, serious performance problems that jeopardize teammembers safety, threat to self or others). Senior leadership (Battalion commander/equivalent or higher) and appropriate support channels should be notified immediately.

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ALWAYS