

# ARMY FLYER

SERVING THE U.S. ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AND THE FORT RUCKER COMMUNITY SINCE 1956

VOLUME 70 • NUMBER 13 • JULY 28, 2020



PHOTO BY ANGELA EARLE

An AH-64D Apache assigned to the 1st Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, passes over Alaska Air National Guardsmen with the 212th Rescue Squadron as they engage simulated opposition forces at Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, Alaska, July 10 as part of JBER Salutes, a two-day event to show appreciation to service members and nearly 100 Anchorage-area COVID Heroes and their guests.

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# Fort Rucker residents rate on-post housing 'very good'

By Jim Hughes  
*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

The results are in from the Army's Residential Communities Initiative 2019 Fall Resident Survey and the bottom line for Fort Rucker is housing residents on post feel their homes are "very good."

While Corvias and post officials are pleased overall with what the survey revealed about the state of housing on post, they feel more still needs to be done, according to Col. Whitney B. Gardner, Fort Rucker garrison commander.

"This survey validates what we've known all along – Fort Rucker is a great home for our Soldiers and families," Gardner said. "We're happy that our on-post housing residents are largely happy with their homes, but we're also committed to doing an even better job of providing the best possible housing that we can provide."

"Our mission with Fort Rucker housing is constant improvement," the colonel added. "We will continue working closely with our partners at Corvias to keep doing just that – we owe nothing less to our Soldiers and families who sacrifice so much for our country."

Corvias is all-in on that mission, according to Melissa Bryson, the company's Fort Rucker operations director.

"The results were definitely an improvement over the spring survey – a huge improvement and much more indicative of how our residents feel," Bryson said, adding that the response rate also increased to 37% over the spring survey's 14%. "Improvements were made; however, we know we still have room to do better. Although Fort Rucker's housing is in the very good range, we want to see it higher – we want it to be in the outstanding range."

Results of the survey are available at [https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/families/2019\\_fall\\_rci\\_survey\\_summary.pdf](https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/families/2019_fall_rci_survey_summary.pdf).

Fort Rucker rated 10th in overall satisfaction with an 81.6 score. The highest rated housing was at Fort Greely, Alaska, with a 90.6 score, and the lowest was at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, with a 60.8 score.

Fort Rucker's property satisfaction scored 76.4, rating out at 15th place, and service satisfaction scored 84.7, rating out at seventh place.

"We're really happy to see how much the service side improved – there was almost a 10-point increase," Bryson said. "2019 was certainly a challenging year for military housing as a whole, and we had a lot of things we needed to focus on. Seeing that much of an increase really shows that our team was up for the challenge – they did not give up and kept pushing through."

She said Corvias also received many positive comments about the responsiveness of the maintenance teams.

"That shows that the measures we put in place and everything that we did on the service side really have paid off," Bryson added. "We'll continue to watch the comments we receive very closely. If there is anything that we need to take action on, we will do so immediately."

If there was anything disappointing about the survey, she said, it would be the responses received on property appearance and condition.

"We've put measures in place to enhance the curb appeal of Fort Rucker's housing," the



operations director said. "We definitely still have a ways to go there and we recognize that, and we will certainly do everything we can to enhance the curb appeal. With the projects we have going on, I feel that our residents are going to see huge improvements very soon."

Those ongoing projects include pressure washing sidewalks, pressure washing and cleaning playground equipment, replacing street signs, sprucing up parks and common areas, and also an overall playground improvement project that, while it has experienced some delays, is still in the works with an anticipated completion date towards the end of July, she added.

"We also see a lot of room for improvement in lawn care," Bryson said. "Measures have been put into place and we expect people will see a huge improvement in the overall appearance of the community."

Corvias also continues with its major renovation of classic homes in the Munson Heights Neighborhood, and the heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems and fix-

ture updates of homes in Allen Heights, she said, adding that people are already moving into the renovated Munson Heights homes.

"We have completed 12 of those homes (in Munson Heights) and anticipate that we will have two of those delivered each week for the remainder of the year," she said. "We've received really positive feedback from people who've moved into the homes – they seem to be very happy with how they turned out. I think they're just fantastic – beautiful on the inside and modernized. We're very pleased with how they are coming along."

Even though the Allen Heights project has experienced some delays due to the pandemic, Corvias continues to work on them as homes become vacant, she said, adding that the work is progressing nicely.

"We feel like that project will certainly take care of a lot of the issues that we've seen with those homes," Bryson added.

Prior to the end of the year, Corvias will also begin an energy project that will update homes with LED lighting, improved toilets and Wi-Fi-controlled thermostats, she said.

Bryson said residents certainly should not wait until survey time to let officials know how they feel about their homes.

"We implemented the gold standard of service in 2019, and customer service has always been a high priority for Corvias – we continue to put our customers first," she said. "We listen to what our customers tell us and we take action on what they say. We really appreciate the feedback we receive from our residents, and we hope they continue giving us feedback so we can continue making improvements."

Residents can reach Corvias officials through the resident portal, by calling 334-440-8988 or sending an email to [ruckerleasing@corvias.com](mailto:ruckerleasing@corvias.com).



# STILL SAFE, OPEN FOR BUSINESS

*Bats taking up residence in fitness center no reason to shut down*

**By Jim Hughes**  
*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

A decades-old issue has come back to roost at Fort Rucker.

A colony of an estimated 2,000-3,000 Brazilian free-tailed bats have taken up temporary residence in the Fort Rucker Physical Fitness Center above the racquetball court locker room, but officials said the new residents do not pose a health threat and won't cause any change in services at the gym, according to Evy Blutsworth, Directorate of Family, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation director.

"DFMWR is committed to providing the best customer service possible to our Army Community. After discovering the bats in the ceiling over the racquetball courts, we immediately contacted the Directorate of Public Works and environmental health to ensure our patrons and staff were safe," she said. "DPW sealed off several areas in the gym to

protect our patrons and staff, and the bats.

"This will not impact the services MWR provides," Blutsworth added. "We simply relocated equipment to allow patrons to continue to work out. During this time of COVID 19, we have had to relook at all of our programs and make necessary adjustments in order to provide services to our patrons. It is our honor to do so, while also working to ensure everyone's safety."

Bats in buildings are nothing new at Fort Rucker, said Joseph Wyka, DPW director, adding that post officials are working closely with U.S. Department of Agriculture personnel – along with medical officials at Lyster Army Health Clinic to ensure the facility is still safe for patrons – on handling the issue that has been present off and on for Fort Rucker for at least 30 years.

Referred to as either the Mexican or

**They're not bad neighbors to have – they're good for the ecosystem. We'd just prefer they not use our facilities to roost in.**

**– Joseph Wyka**  
*Directorate of Public Works director*



PHOTO BY RON GROVES

**A Brazilian (or Mexican) free-tailed bat in flight.**



PHOTO BY NICK HRISTOV

**Tadarida brasiliensis emerging from Carlsbad Caverns, Carlsbad Caverns National Park, N.M.**

## Bats *cont.*

Brazilian free-tailed bats, the *tadarida brasiliensis* chose the fitness center because it is a tall building and they like to drop around eight feet when they start their flights, Wyka said, adding they don't need much of an opening to get in and take advantage of a building.

"All they need is a ¾-inch hole to get in," he said, adding that all it takes is some cracked caulking or a rusted hole around a vent somewhere on a building. "They're fairly common in Alabama. They come north to migrate and find a roosting place to raise their young."

He believes these bats, which are on Alabama's protected list, worked their way in through the heating and air conditioning ventilation system high on the fitness center and decided that it was a good place to roost while females had their babies.

"During the day, they're all in there – quiet and minding their own business. Then, during the evening, right about dusk, between 7-8 p.m. or so, the females start to fly out. They eat and drink, and then they come back to nurse their young," Wyka said, adding that he observed the bats recently around the fitness center. "When the gym lights were turned off at about 8:30 p.m., they came pouring out of there. That's a good time for that to happen because when the gym lights go off, folks are not running on the track – they've gone home for the day."

"You can't see them inside the building – they're tucked up into that kind of crawl space above the racquetball court area. You might hear them, but you can't see them," he added.

Brazilian free-tailed bats primarily eat insects, including moths, beetles, and flies. They hunt their prey using echolocation and typically catch their prey in flight, according to the National Park Service.



**Brazilian free-tailed bat**

"They're not bad neighbors to have – they're good for the ecosystem," Wyka said. "We'd just prefer they not use our facilities to roost in."

"There aren't any safety concerns with them being in there," Wyka added. "We've consulted with Lyster officials – they're part of our pest control team who looks at all of these issues – and they concur that we can keep the main gym open because the bats are limited to the other part of the facility. We monitor it every day to make sure no live animals are getting in there and posing a threat, and to ensure there is no odor."

But the visitors won't be around permanently, they just need some time to raise their young so they can take care of themselves, the DPW director said.

"Around the middle of August or so, the

young ones will be old enough to fly, and once the young are able to fly they will start feeding for themselves," he said.

When that time comes, DPW employees will make their move to ensure the colony moves itself along to find a new home, Wyka said.

"When the bats fly out to feed one night, DPW will install the exclusion devices – they kind of look like elephant trunks -- that will allow bats to leave the building, but not re-enter it," he said. "The bats will go out of the pipe, but they won't climb back into it. It's a safe way to do it – it doesn't kill any animals and it allows them to raise their young, which are beneficial for us in the long run."

And while DPW personnel will do their best to deter the bats from returning to the fitness center or any other building on post,

this probably isn't the last time the post will have mammals of the flying variety taking up residence in a facility.

"We'll re-look some of our critical buildings that maybe attract the bats and do everything we can to discourage them from roosting in those places," he said. "But we can't guarantee that they're not going to find a way in. It's a cyclical, seasonal thing that we've dealt with for 30-plus years, and we will probably deal with it forever. We just do our best to keep them out of the buildings that are critical to us."

"We at DPW are patient, but we're responsive in trying to make sure that facilities are open and ready when customers need them," Wyka added. "And we'll keep doing that."

J. N. STUART [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0] VIA FLICKR

# Fort Rucker, commissaries worldwide selling protective masks

By Kevin Robinson

*Defense Commissary Agency*

FORT LEE, Va. – Commissaries worldwide, including the Fort Rucker Commissary, are now selling reusable and disposable protective masks, the Defense Commissary Agency's director of sales announced.

Two brands of masks, one reusable and the other disposable, became available to most stores worldwide in late June, said Tracie Russ, the agency's director of sales. Commissaries in Hawaii are selling a reusable mask from a local supplier.

"The safety of our customers and employees is a top priority for the commissaries," Russ said. "Providing these masks for purchase is one of many protective measures we're taking to help reduce exposure to COVID-19."

The following brands and types of masks are available for purchase in commissaries.

- \* Hanes: 10-pack, reusable, adult size, 3-ply 100-percent cotton.

- \* Midwesttrading: KN95 1-pack disposable mask and a 10-pack, 4-ply mask, fit adjustable, inner layer contains air filter.

- \* Puna Noni: (available only in Hawaii commissaries), reusable, 3-ply cotton/poly shell, removable felt filter.

The Fort Rucker Commissary has been selling the Hanes face masks since June 27, said Marisol Hennessey, store director.

"We currently only have white available at this time, although black will be available at a later date," she said. "They are made of soft 3-Ply 100% cotton – wicking cool comfort fabric— breathable, washable and reusable up to 20 washes. These are great for those who work out, as well. These face masks are located at the entrance of the store."

She added that the store also carries the

KN95 respiratory face masks in single packs, as well as disposable facemasks with ear loops in packs of 10.

"Commissaries are selling masks to meet our customers' needs, especially during this pandemic," said LaRue Smith, a category manager. "We don't want our customers taking an extra shopping trip for something they can get in their commissary and at a lower price."

"There is an expectation that the supplies will be plentiful in the future," Smith said, "but at this time we ask our customers to limit their purchase to only what they will need so that the supply will be available for all of our customers."

Since April 6, commissaries have required some form of face covering for their store employees, to comply with the April 5 Department of Defense directive mandating that standard for anyone entering military facilities.

By April 10, commissaries expanded the face covering requirement to include customers or anyone else entering a commissary. The DeCA guidance does not supersede the existing installation policies. It applies to all agency stores and other facilities worldwide where no local directive has yet been issued.

Since the start of the outbreak, most retail stores experienced a run on anything resembling personal protective equipment. In those days, the closest that agency stores had for PPE were disposable gloves.

Through May, glove sales increased by nearly 32 percent. In addition to sales of masks, commissaries have also increased its volume of disposable gloves and hand sanitizers.



DECA GRAPHIC

Army Lt. Col. Angela Parham, DECA's director of health and safety, reminds customers that wearing PPE is only one part of the preventive measures required to help combat COVID-19.

"DOD's face covering mandate aligns with CDC guidance to help prevent asymptomatic people, who may not know they're infected, from spreading the virus to others," Parham said. "Even when you wear a mask or other face covering, it is still important to

practice good hand hygiene, social distancing and refrain from touching your face."

Commissary customers should continue to refer to the federal government's response to coronavirus, COVID-19 website and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Coronavirus site for updates and guidance regarding this virus. Updates related to the commissaries can be found on DeCA's Coronavirus page.



# HERO'S MANTLE

## ACS specialist earns Army Safety Guardian Award

By Jim Hughes

*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

A Fort Rucker Army Community Service specialist never expected to be considered a hero, or even had any idea on how to be one, but now she has an award that proves she is worthy of a hero's mantle.

Susan Hesser received the Army Safety Guardian Award from David Parker, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center chief of staff, during a ceremony in Bldg. 5700 July 17 for her actions in helping a vehicle accident victim on I-65 in January.

"Your actions really say a lot about your character," Parker told Hesser during the presentation. "Your care for humanity to think to stop and see what's going on in that car, your quick thinking to stabilize her neck, and your calmness in keeping the victim and her mother calm really say a lot about you. If more people did what you did, this would be a better world. It's really refreshing to hear what you did during these times we're living in right now."

The award is given out for extraordinary actions and heroism that save people from harm or protect Army equipment, he added.

"I wish more people, when they see something that requires action to help people, would stop and do what she did – the world would be a better place," he added. "These days, it is very uncommon for folks to do something like she did for fear of the (COVID-19) virus, or for fear of doing something wrong. What she did was not anything normal in my eyes – it was extraordinary."

Hesser's ascent into hero status took place in January as she was returning to Fort Rucker after a visit with a Gold Star mother in Mobile.

As she and then-Lyster Army Health Clinic medic Sgt. 1st Class Tanya Foderingham (who will receive the same award at her new assignment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina) were traveling down I-65, traffic slowed down and eventually they came upon the aftermath of a three-car accident, with one car in the median. They then noticed the injured person in that car, and also that no one else had stopped to help, Hesser said.

"They immediately pulled the vehicle over to assist the accident victim. While working to get the driver's side door open, the woman began to complain about pain in her back and then briefly lost consciousness. Ms. Hesser quickly retrieved a towel from the back seat of the car, folded it and placed it under the woman's neck, and called 911," according to the award citation.

"Once the accident victim regained consciousness, the pair worked together to calm the woman. When the victim's phone rang, Ms. Hesser calmly informed the woman's mother of her daughter's accident. Ms. Hesser then moved to the backseat of the car to help hold the woman's neck stable while SFC Foderingham checked the victim's pupils and pulse. The team remained with the woman and kept her calm for nearly 40 minutes until emergency responders arrived."

Despite having the hardware to prove her hero's status, Hesser shrugs off the mantle.



PHOTO BY JIM HUGHES

**Susan Hesser, ACS specialist, receives the Army Safety Guardian Award from David Parker, CRC chief of staff, during a ceremony in Bldg. 5700 July 17 for her actions in helping a vehicle accident victim in January.**

"I'm extremely humbled, honored and thankful for this award," she said. "I feel like I didn't do anything extraordinary or heroic in any way, for me it was just the right thing to do. When I saw the woman in there, I thought of my mother and my sister right away, and there was no way I could leave (the victim) behind either."

She added that she had never given any forethought to what she would do in an emergency situation such as this one.

"This was my first time ever witnessing anyone in an accident, and I didn't really know what to expect or what to do. You see this stuff on TV, but that doesn't prepare you for it. I tried to do the best that I could, and when I spoke with the young lady's mom, that's what gave me more fire to want to be there for her and help her out."

Hesser said that Foderingham directed her actions and she gave the senior NCO much of the credit for the response, adding

that she never did find out what happened to the victim after emergency response personnel removed her from the scene.

She also admitted that, despite the resulting pain of sitting awkwardly for so long in the backseat, getting dirty from walking in the mud and breaking three fingernails, she would do it all again if the need ever arises.

"Without a doubt," Hesser said. "Although I might take a couple of days off work afterwards next time – I was sore for a few days."

"I never thought I'd be the one to get an award," she added. "I'm used to being the person that likes to hang out in the background and cheer for everyone else -- talk them up and be that cheerleader. To be the one in the spotlight is definitely not something I'm used to. At the same time, it feels kind of good."

She said she plans to display the award prominently in the entryway of her home.

Hesser's award is the 15th Army Safety Guardian Award given out in 2020, according to CRC officials.

# EAGLE RISING

## WOCC, MOAA induct 23rd member into distinguished society

By Jim Hughes  
*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career College and Military Officers Association of America officials inducted the Order of the Eagle Rising Society's 23rd member during a ceremony July 7 at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum.

Retired CW5 Robert J. Letendre, who served in the Army from 1966 to 1999, is “truly the epitome of the quiet professional,” according to retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, MOAA president and CEO, and also guest speaker for the virtual event put out over Facebook Live.

“As I read his biography, it became very evident that he displayed highest standards of integrity, moral character and professional competency, and served the warrant officer community and the Army with great distinction,” Atkins said from a video connection broadcast on Facebook and in the museum. “His accomplishments and his awards are numerous, and he is well deserving of the Eagle Rising Society Award.”

Once Letendre's career in the Army was over, he still had more to give, Atkins said.

“A life member of MOAA himself, he lives the MOAA mantra of never stop serving,” the CEO said. “He continued serving as a member of the Fort Stewart (Georgia)

retired Soldier council and volunteering at the Orlando International Airport United Service Organization.

“He is about service: service to his team, service to his family and service to his community. He embraces mission and others first,” Atkins said. “Mr. Letendre, thank you for your dedication and your commitment to our nation, your selfless service and your leadership – then and now.”

Col. Ross F. Nelson, USAWOCC commandant, presented the award to Letendre, who then addressed the physical and virtual audiences.

“During the last decade of my career, I was honored and privileged to work with many fine senior warrant officers – and each and every one of them are just as deserving of this award,” Letendre said. “In fact, eight of my former cohorts are already members of this society.”

“Some of the most gratifying work I've done with the Army, and much of it was mentioned before in my biography, was working on those study groups that helped to develop warrant officer training, leader development and the personnel management system to make our force of warrant officers the force multiplier it is in the Army,” he said. “Today,



PHOTO BY JIM HUGHES

**Col. Ross F. Nelson, U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career College commandant, inducts retired CW5 Robert J. Letendre into the Order of the Eagle Rising Society July 7 during a ceremony at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum.**

our warrant officers are not just recognized as technical and skilled experts, but they are also known for being advisers to commanders and being professional leaders. In fact, right now, we have senior warrant officers assigned to major Army command staffs, which has been a great leap from when I was on active duty.

“Last year, I was at the AUSA (Association of the U.S. Army) convention, and I hadn't been in many years, so I was pleased to see that warrant officers were on the agenda and at the meetings. I spoke to some of them, and told them I was a WO5 back in 1995. Then, a young CW3 walked up to me and said, ‘Thank you for paving the way.’ That meant a lot to me.

“It really makes me proud of the work I was able to (accomplish) with some of my fellow senior warrant officers, to help bring the Army's warrant officer corps up to the standard that is today,” Letendre added. “And this is just the beginning – there's still a lot more that can be done. We're always looking

to advance and improve everything that we do.”

Letendre then thanked his family, including his wife of 53 years, Lucy.

“She has been faithfully supporting me all of that time,” he said. “And to my children, who endured multiple reassignments, including five PCSs in eight years, their strength and resilience in overcoming those challenges made it much easier for me to get my job done and not worry about them. They have their own families now, and I'm so proud of them and what they've accomplished in their lives.”

Established in 2004 as a joint venture between MOAA and the USAWOCC, the Order of the Eagle Rising Society annually recognizes one individual who has contributed significantly over his or her lifetime to the promotion of the warrant officer community in ways that stand out in the eyes of the recipient's seniors, subordinates and peers, according to MOAA and WOCC officials.

# CONNECTING

## DOD launches new online tool to help families with special needs

By Jim Hughes  
*Fort Rucker Public Affairs*

The Department of Defense Office of Special Needs and Military OneSource launched a new digital tool recently to guide military families with special needs to the specific information and resources they need.

The tool, called EFMP & Me, conveniently connects families anytime and anywhere with tools and information about the Exceptional Family Member Program, according to Amanda Goodson, Fort Rucker Army Community Service EFMP coordinator.

Using the tool, families can learn about support services, preparing for a move or deployment, responding to changes in education or medical needs, and adjusting to new life situations, she said.

“You don’t have to have an account to use EFMP & Me, but having one does help

if you want to save your searches and make checklists,” Goodson said, adding that the tool provides phone numbers down to the local level to help Soldiers and families get the information they need to take advantage of all that EFMP has to offer.

“The EFMP process can be a bit confusing because we’re separated – there’s the ACS side of the house, which is me, and then the medical component of the program through Lyster Army Health Clinic,” she said. “Many people don’t realize we’re two separate entities. All enrollments and updates for enrollment, disenrollment, overseas screenings and that sort of stuff, which are the busiest parts of EFMP, go through Lyster.

“Many people can also struggle with how to apply for EFMP, what forms they need to

# EFMP & ME



GRAPHIC BY DAVID AGAN

fill out, if they can see a civilian doctor to get the forms done – this application through Military One Source really helps to clear up a lot of that confusion,” Goodson added. “EFMP & Me will tell them the forms they need and provide them the local phone numbers – it kind of walks them through the steps they need to take.”

EFMP exists to help military families with members with special needs, whether they be medical or educational, she said, adding that there two main functions of EFMP.

“One is to coordinate assignments. If a Soldier with a family member with an EFMP-documented special need gets an assignment, that special need is considered during the assignment process,” Goodson said. “If there is a dependent who has asthma and needs certain therapies, or a child with autism – a very common diagnosis in EFMP – they make sure that the resources are available to that family before they make an assignment.

“The second is for EFMP to provide family support services to get them in touch with local resources if they have issues with housing or anything like that,” she said. “We’re here to help them navigate those channels.

“A lot of times people think EFMP is only for children or dependents with medical special needs, but we have a lot of children enrolled on this post with no medical needs

associated with autism, but with a lot of educational needs,” she said. “We see parents who are struggling with a school system off post to get the learning resources that their children need, and through this tool on Military OneSource, they can find out what their education rights are and how to advocate for themselves.”

She added that because the medical part of the program is so widely used by the people who need it, many times the ACS side of the program is overlooked.

“We are here to advocate for them, or if they need special equipment we can get them in touch with financial readiness or Army Emergency Relief for access to loans and grants,” Goodson said. “Our goal is to ensure military family members with special needs get the help they need to thrive in Army life.”

EFMP & Me is one part of a broad system of support for military families with special needs. That support starts with EFMP Family Support on installations and includes the Military OneSource network, which provides 24/7 support to service members and families anywhere in the world. Click here to access the EFMP & Me tool. Contact Military OneSource EFMP Resources, Options and Consultations for free, around-the-clock support, tools, assistance and more. Call 800-342-9647 or live chat with a consultant.

**Our goal is to ensure military family members with special needs get the help they need to thrive in Army life.**

**– Amanda Goodson**  
**ACS EFMP coordinator**



# MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

## Army Family Action Plan asks people to share their issues

**By Kent Thompson**  
*Fort Rucker ACS Chief*

The Army Family Action Plan is your platform to voice quality-of-life issues, feedback, ideas and suggestions.

It's the best way to let Army leadership know about what works, what doesn't and how you think problems can be resolved. We give active-duty and reserve component Soldiers, Army civilians, retirees, survivors, and family members a primary tool to help identify issues and concerns, and shape their standards of living.

The AFAP is a grassroots-level process that identifies issues of concern for the global Army. AFAP is a program that gives all members of the Army family the opportunity to influence their own quality of life and standard of living.

You can submit issues at the Fort Rucker Army Community Service office located in Bldg. 5700, Rm. 350. There are AFAP submission boxes also located at the commissary, post exchange, child and youth services and community recreation division that provide a template form that people can use to submit their issue and possible resolution. You can find the template also at [https://home.army.mil/rucker/index.php/download\\_file/view/1363/1055](https://home.army.mil/rucker/index.php/download_file/view/1363/1055). Army OneSource (<https://www.myarmyonesource.com>) also facilitates AFAP issues online and makes sure your concerns get the attention they deserve. The information you submit gives Army leadership insight and helps foster a satisfied, informed, and resilient Army community.

What qualifies as an AFAP issue? Issues that affect the global Army are good AFAP

issues. The focus should be on improving facilities, or changing policies or regulations – issues that make things better for everyone. Issues may be on pay and allowance; readiness; retention and training; single Soldier issues; PCS moves; medical; dental; schools; childcare; Army and Air Force Exchange Service; Directorate of Family, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities; and volunteering.

Any issues raised should include a suggested solution to fix the issue.

What is not an AFAP issue? Issues should focus on improving the quality of life for everyone and should not be an individual's pet rock. Individuals having problems with a facility or particular organization should report those issues directly to the commander or manager of that facility. Another option for individual issues is to go online to <http://ice.disa.mil/> to make a customer comment



about any military installation and its services.

AFAP makes a meaningful difference. Since AFAP was created in 1983, over 698 issues have been submitted, resulting in 128 legislative changes, 186 Department of Defense or Army policy changes, and 210 improved programs or services.

### EXAMPLES OF RESOLVED ISSUES AT FORT RUCKER

- \* Commissary bagger employment opportunities for youth
- \* CYS special needs staffing and training
- \* Customer handicap parking at Bldg. 5700
- \* Length of time to receive veterans Affairs disability rating
- \* Communication breakdown in information of medical policies
- \* Eligibility for youth services membership

- \* Teen center food services
- \* Safety hazard on Division Road
- \* Fort Rucker issue #255 – Investment of Service Members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Death Gratuity Funds for Survivors – was sent by the garrison commander to be included in the Training and Doctrine Command AFAP conference held in May 2011.

This issue was prioritized and selected by the TRADOC commander, and sent to the Headquarters Army AFAP conference where it was prioritized and voted as the No. 1 issue.

### EXAMPLES OF AFAP RESULTS AT THE ARMY LEVEL

- \* Dedicated special needs space in child, youth, and school services
- \* Distribution of Montgomery GI Bill benefits to dependents
- \* Annual leave carryover increase from 60 to 75 days
- \* Extended educational benefits for Spouses
- \* Dental and visual insurance coverage for federal employees
- \* Medical coverage for activated reserve component families
- \* Military pay table (targeted pay raises)
- \* Military Thrift Savings Plan
- \* TRICARE for Life for eligible retirees
- \* Funding for Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers
- \* Active-duty enlisted Soldier compassionate reassignment stabilization
- \* SGLI increases
- \* Minimum standards for Army child care
- \* In-state tuition for military dependents

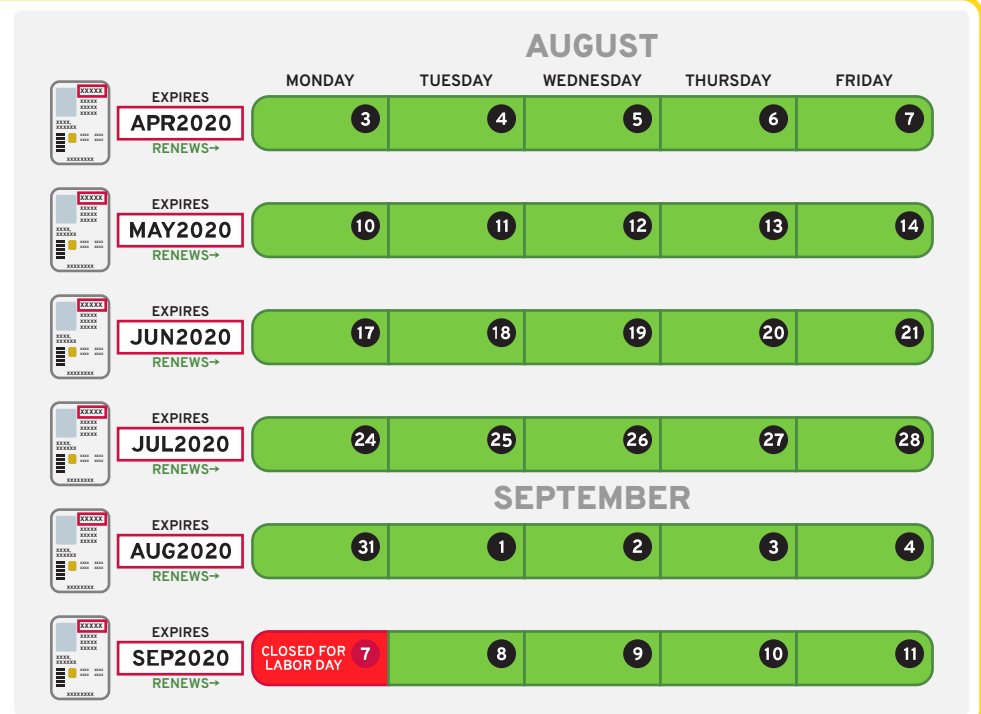
As the September 30, 2020, expiration date for all extended Common Access Cards approaches, the Directorate of Human Resources will begin processing renewals based on the card's original expiration date. DHR will only issue renewal CACs at this time. The virtual process for DEERS updates, dependents, retirees and DAVs will continue. The appointment system will reopen soon for all eligible patrons to schedule an in-office visit. Please check out the new website, <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco>, regularly for updates.

For CACs that originally expired through the end of the month listed, please see the renewal schedule below:

- CACs expiring in April 2020 and prior will be renewed Aug. 3-7.
- CACs expiring in May 2020 and prior will be renewed Aug. 10-14.
- CACs expiring in June 2020 and prior will be renewed Aug. 17-21.
- CACs expiring in July 2020 and prior will be renewed Aug. 24-28.
- CACs expiring in August 2020 and prior will be renewed Aug. 31 – Sept. 4
- CACs expiring in September 2020 and prior will be renewed Sept. 8-11  
(Please note the ID card section will be closed Sept. 7 in observance of the Labor Day holiday).

To schedule an appointment, call the ID card section at (334) 255-2182 or (334) 255-1893; appointments are being scheduled manually.

DHR expects their new appointment system at <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco> to be available for ALL cards expiring after Oct. 1, 2020.



# ARMY FLIER

## COMMAND

**Maj. Gen. David J. Francis**  
Fort Rucker Commanding General

**Col. Whitney B. Gardner**  
Fort Rucker Garrison Commander

## EDITORIAL STAFF

**Jimmie E. Cummings Jr.**  
Director of Public Affairs

**Jim Hughes**  
Command Information Officer

**David Agan**  
Digital Media Manager

The "Army Flier" is an authorized publication for the Fort Rucker community, published under the authority of AR 360-1.

Contents are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or Fort Rucker.

The "Army Flier" is published digitally bi-monthly by the Fort Rucker Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 131, Sixth Avenue, Fort Rucker, AL, 36362.

Questions, comments or submissions for the "Army Flier" should be directed to the editor at [usarmy.rucker.us-ag.mbx.atzq-pao@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.rucker.us-ag.mbx.atzq-pao@mail.mil).

The PAO staff reserves the right to edit submissions selected for publication. For more information about the "Army Flier," call (334) 255-1239.

## ON THE WEB:



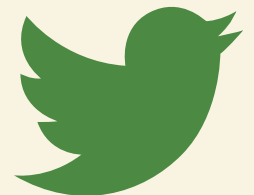
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**Deadline for submissions is one week before publication.**



U.S. ARMY



# Installation Housing Office Plain Language Briefing

## USAG Fort Rucker





# Welcome to the Garrison Housing Office

- The Fort Rucker Housing staff are employed by the Army to assist Service Members and their Families with housing matters and advocate on their behalf with community partners/agencies both on and off the installation
- The Housing Service Office (HSO) provides referral services and tenant/landlord dispute services
- The Installation Housing Office provides oversight of the privatized company managing on post housing and provides tenant/landlord dispute services
- The Garrison Housing Manager manages the Installation Housing Office and reports directly to the Director, Public Works and Garrison leadership

## Garrison Leadership

Garrison Commander: COL Whitney Gardner

Garrison Command Sergeants Major: CSM Jasper Johnson

Garrison Deputy Garrison Commander/Manager: Mr. Chester Witkowski

Garrison Housing Manager: Mr. Van Danford





# Privatized Housing Contacts

- Corvias Military Living, sometimes referred to as the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) Company, is the privatized company that owns and manages the family housing on this installation
- Corvias is the property management company that manages the day to day operations of the privatized housing to include ensuring prompt and professional maintenance and repair, property concerns, and rent/billing issues. This is your landlord for privatized housing

Corvias Contacts:

Operations Director: Melissa Bryson

Facilities Director: Jared Alexander

Maintenance Supervisor: Stacey Wood/Dennis Deese





# Privatized Housing - Tenant Bill of Rights



## Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights

The Department of Defense is fully committed to ensuring our Nation's most valued resource—its military service members and their families—have access to safe, quality, and well-maintained homes and communities on DoD installations.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 set out eighteen rights of military service members and their families (Tenants) residing in privatized housing. The Department of Defense commits to ensuring that privatized housing Tenants receive quality housing and fair treatment from the Military Housing Privatization Initiative project owners (MHPI companies) that operate and maintain privatized housing.

It is paramount that residents receive the full benefit of each right. The Department of Defense, through each of its Military Departments, will work diligently and expeditiously to develop the processes and procedures needed to implement these rights and make Tenants aware of them. However, many of the rights set forth by Congress pertain to legal matters that do not lend themselves to unilateral action by the Department. To the extent it is not already the case, the Military Departments commit to working with the MHPI companies to incorporate these rights and procedures into appropriate project legal documents. In some cases, more work is required before the benefits of these rights are fully available to tenants.

The Department commits to providing the full benefit of the following 15 rights by May 1, 2020.

1. The right to reside in a housing unit and a community that meets applicable health and environmental standards.
2. The right to reside in a housing unit that has working fixtures, appliances, and utilities and to reside in a community with well-maintained common areas and amenity spaces.
3. The right to a written lease with clearly defined rental terms to establish tenancy in a housing unit, including any addendums and other regulations imposed by the Landlord regarding occupancy of the housing unit and use of common areas.
4. The right to a plain-language briefing, before signing a lease and 30 days after move-in, by the installation housing office on all rights and responsibilities associated with tenancy of the housing unit, including information regarding the existence of any additional fees authorized by the lease, any utilities payments, the procedures for submitting and tracking work orders, the identity of the military tenant advocate, and the dispute resolution process.
5. The right to have sufficient time and opportunity to prepare and be present for move-in and move-out inspections, including an opportunity to obtain and complete necessary paperwork.
6. The right to report inadequate housing standards or deficits in habitability of the housing unit to the Landlord, the chain of command, and housing management office without fear of reprisal or retaliation, including reprisal or retaliation in the following forms: (A) unlawful recovery of, or attempt to recover, possession of the housing unit; (B) unlawfully increasing

the rent, decreasing services, or increasing the obligations of a Tenant; (C) interference with a Tenant's right to privacy; (D) harassment of a Tenant; (E) refusal to honor the terms of the lease; or (F) interference with the career of a Tenant.

7. The right of access to a Military Tenant Advocate or a military legal assistance attorney, through the housing management office of the installation of the Department at which the housing unit is located to assist in the preparation of requests to initiate dispute resolution.
8. The right to receive property management services provided by a Landlord that meet or exceed industry standards and that are performed by professionally and appropriately trained, responsive and courteous customer service and maintenance staff.
9. The right to have multiple, convenient methods to communicate directly with the Landlord maintenance staff, and to receive consistently honest, accurate, straightforward, and responsive communications.
10. The right to have access to an electronic work order system through which a Tenant may request maintenance or repairs of a housing unit and track the progress of the work.
11. With respect to maintenance and repairs to a housing unit, the right to the following: (A) prompt and professional maintenance and repair; (B) to be informed of the required time frame for maintenance or repairs when a maintenance request is submitted; and (C) in the case of maintenance or repairs necessary to ensure habitability of a housing unit, to prompt relocation into suitable lodging or other housing at no cost to the Tenant until the maintenance or repairs are completed.
12. The right to receive advice from military legal assistance on procedures involving mechanisms for resolving disputes with the property management company or property manager to include mediation, arbitration, and filing claims against a Landlord.
13. The right to have reasonable, advance notice of any entrance by a Landlord, installation housing staff, or chain of command into the housing unit, except in the case of an emergency or abandonment of the housing unit.
14. The right to not pay non-refundable fees or have application of rent credits arbitrarily held.
15. The right to expect common documents, forms, and processes for housing units will be the same for all installations of the Department, to the maximum extent applicable without violating local, State, and Federal regulations.

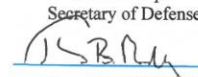
With respect to the remaining three rights—access to maintenance history, process for dispute resolution, and withholding of rent until disputes are resolved—the Department will continue to work with the MHPI companies and, as necessary, Congress to ensure the benefits of these rights are fully available. While the Department develops standardized, formal processes for these rights, service members and their families will be able to leverage the support available from their respective Military Departments to address and resolve relevant housing issues. Tenants seeking assistance should continue to engage their housing office, installation leadership, or chain of command.



Mark T. Esper  
Secretary of Defense



Ryan D. McCarthy  
Secretary of the Army



Thomas B. Modly  
Acting Secretary of the Navy



Barbara M. Barrett  
Secretary of the Air Force

\* Copy is available upon request







# Privatized Housing - Tenant Bill of Rights

The Military Housing Privatization Initiative ***Tenant Bill of Rights*** requires the Garrison Housing Office provide a plain language brief to all residents of privatized housing prior to lease signing and again 30 days after move-in on all rights and responsibilities associated with tenancy of the housing unit

- You have the right to reside in a housing unit and a community that meets applicable health and environmental standards. (Right 1)
- You have the right to reside in a housing unit that has working fixtures, appliances, and utilities and to reside in a community with well-maintained common areas and amenity space. (Right 2)
- You have the right to a written lease with clearly defined rental terms to establish tenancy in a housing unit, including any addendums and other regulations imposed by the Landlord regarding occupancy of the housing unit and use of common areas. (Right 3)
- The right to a plain-language briefing, before signing a lease and 30 days after move-in, by the installation housing office on all rights and responsibilities associated with tenancy of the housing unit (Right 4)
- You have the right to have sufficient time and opportunity to prepare and be present for move-in and move-out inspections, including an opportunity to obtain and complete necessary paperwork. (Right 5)





# Privatized Housing - Tenant Bill of Rights

- You have the right to report inadequate housing standards or deficits in habitability of the housing unit to the Landlord, the chain of command, and Installation housing office without fear of reprisal or realization, including (A) unlawful recovery of, or attempt to recover, possession of the housing unit; (B) unlawfully increasing the rent, decreasing services, or increasing the obligations of a tenant; (C) interference with a tenant's right to privacy; (D) harassment of a tenant; (E) refusal to honor the terms of the lease; (F) interference with the career of the tenant (Right 6)
- You have the right to access to a Military Tenant Advocate or a military legal assistance attorney, through the Installation housing office to assist in the preparation of requests to initiate dispute resolution (Right 7)
- The right to receive property management services provided by the Landlord that meet or exceed industry standards and that are performed by professionally and appropriately trained responsive and courteous customer service and maintenance staff. (Right 8)
  - The Fort Rucker Installation Housing Office serves as your Military Tenant Advocate.
  - Contact: Chief Housing Division, 22470 Christian Road, (334) 255-2984 or Housing Manager, Building 5700 (Soldier Service Center) (334) 255-9230





# Privatized Housing - Tenant Bill of Rights

- You have the right to receive advice from military legal assistance on procedures involving mechanisms for resolving disputes with the property management company or property manager to include mediation, arbitration, and filing claims against the Landlord. (Right 12)
  - SJA Office POC: 334-255-2547 Bldg. 5700, Suite 320 Fort Rucker, AL 36362
- You have the right to have multiple, convenient methods to communicate directly with the privatized Landlord maintenance staff, and to receive consistent, honest, accurate, straightforward and responsive communications. (Right 9)
- You have the right to have access to an electronic work order system through which a tenant may request maintenance or repairs of a housing unit and track the progress of the work. (Right 10)
  - Corvias Property Management
  - 334-230-5134
  - 22470 Christian Rd Fort Rucker, AL 36362
  - <https://fortruckercorvias.residentportal.com>







# Privatized Housing - Tenant Bill of Rights

- You have the right to the following: (A) prompt and professional maintenance and repair; (B) to be informed of the required time frame for maintenance and repairs when a maintenance request is submitted; and (C) in the case of maintenance or repairs necessary to ensure habitability of a housing unit, to prompt relocation into suitable lodging or other housing at no cost to the tenant until the maintenance or repairs are completed. (Right 11)
- Displaced Resident Policies
  - ASAIE&E Memorandum, SAIE, Feb 14, 2020, Army Residential Communities Initiative Company Minimum Standard Resident Displacement Guidelines
  - ASAIE&E Memorandum, SAIE, Jan 23, 2020, Subject: Procedures for Approving Privatized Housing Habitability after Remediation, Mitigation, Stabilization and abatement
  - IMCOM Memorandum, Headquarters Installation Management Command, IMPW-H, JAN 31 2020, subject: Procedures for Certifying Housing Habitability for Army Family Housing, Leased Housing, Unaccompanied Housing and Privatized Homes
  - IMCOM Memorandum, Headquarters Installation Management Command, IMPW-H, MAR 11 2020, subject: Command Guidance Army Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) Company Minimum Standard Resident Displacement Guidelines
  - ASA IE&E Memorandum, Dated XXX,
    - “Housing Maintenance Quality Assurance and Environmental Hazard Oversight Program” provides
    - clear standards and details of required oversight of Army housing maintenance

\* Copy is available upon request





# Privatized Housing - Tenant Bill of Rights

## *Phone Call & In Person Submissions Work orders*

*Call 334-230-5134 or visit any community office to place a work order.*

## *Resident Portal Submissions*

<https://fortruckercorvias.residentportal.com>

Residents can track work order progress in real time in resident portal

- EMERGENCY WORK ORDERS - RESPONSE TIME: EIGHT HOURS OR LESS
- URGENT- COMPLETION TIME: THREE-WORKING DAYS OR LESS
- ROUTINE- COMPLETION TIME: TEN-WORKING DAYS OR LESS

*Work order or maintenance ticket to be closed only once the tenant and Installation Housing Office signs off*

- The right to have reasonable advance notice of any entrance by the Landlord, Installation housing staff, or chain of command into the housing unit, except in the case of an emergency or abandonment of the housing unit. (Right 13)
  - Resident will receive a minimum 24HR notification by phone





- The right to not pay non-refundable fees or have application of rent credits arbitrarily withheld. (Right 14)
- The right to expect common documents, forms, and processes for housing units will be the same for all Army Installations, to the maximum extent applicable without violating local, state, or federal regulations. (Right 15)







# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities



## Military Housing Privatization Initiative

### Tenant Responsibilities

This document highlights important responsibilities of Military Service Members and their families (Tenants) residing in Privatized Housing.

1. **Prompt Reporting.** The responsibility to report in a timely manner any apparent environmental, safety, or health hazards of the home to the Landlord and any defective, broken, damaged, or malfunctioning building systems, fixtures, appliances, or other parts of the home, the common areas, or related facilities.
2. **Care for the Home.** The responsibility to maintain standard upkeep of the home as instructed by the housing management office.
3. **Personal Conduct.** The responsibility to conduct oneself as a Tenant in a manner that will not disturb neighbors, and to assume responsibility for one's actions and those of a family member or guest in the housing unit or common areas, including the responsibility not to engage in any inappropriate, unauthorized, or criminal activity in the home or common areas.
4. **Access by Landlord.** The responsibility to allow the Landlord reasonable access to the rental home in accordance with the terms of the tenant lease agreement to allow the Landlord to make necessary repairs in a timely manner.
5. **Rules and Guidelines.** The responsibility to read all lease-related materials provided by the Landlord and to comply with the terms of the lease agreement, lease addenda, and any associated rules and guidelines.

*\* Copy is available upon request*





# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities

- The Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights highlights 5 important responsibilities for Service Members and their Families while they reside in privatized family housing.
  1. The responsibility to report in a timely manner any apparent environmental, safety, or health hazards of the home to the Landlord and any defective, broken, damaged, or malfunctioning building systems, fixtures, appliances, or other parts of the home, the common areas, or related facilities.
  2. The responsibility to maintain standard upkeep of the home as instructed by the housing management office.

Automobiles, motorcycles or mopeds may not be parked on patios, porches, sidewalks or grassy areas. In homes that have one parking space, motorcycles may be parked on the front porch. Vehicles are not to be stored inside the home. Inoperable, unlicensed, or abandoned vehicles will be towed away at the Resident's expense. At no time will vehicles be permitted to be on jacks. Parking for boats, recreational vehicles, pop-up campers, camper shells, and trailers of any kind is prohibited in the community. They may be stored at the Fort Rucker Recreational Vehicle Park Storage Facility located near the Equestrian Center. Please contact the Skills, Arts & Crafts Shop at 255-9020 for rates





# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities

3. The responsibility to conduct oneself as a Tenant in a manner that will not disturb neighbors, and to assume responsibility for one's actions and those of a family member or guest in the housing unit or common areas, including the responsibility not to engage in any inappropriate, unauthorized, or criminal activity in the home or common areas.
  - Please contact the Resident Management Office at 334-440-8988 for any community issues or concerns.
4. The responsibility to allow the Landlord reasonable access to the rental home in accordance with the terms of the tenant lease agreement to all the Landlord to make necessary repairs in a timely manner.
5. The responsibility to read all lease-related materials provided by the Landlord and to comply with the terms of the lease agreement, lease addenda, and any associated rules and guidelines.





# Garrison Housing Services Office (HSO)

The goal of the HSO is to implement and maintain a high quality worldwide resource for relocation services that is innovative, comprehensive, and the first choice of information and support when Soldiers and families relocate.

- Non-discriminatory listings of adequate and affordable rental and for-sale housing
- Counseling/referral on eligible installation services (i.e. legal, education, Exceptional Family Member Program)
- Preliminary inquiries to validate housing discrimination complaints
- Liaison with community and government officials / organizations (on and off post)
- Housing data exchange with other DoD housing offices
- Liaisons with Army Community Services in support of the Housing Relocation Assistance Program
- Housing market area data for use in developing market analyses Rental negotiations and lease review







# Garrison Housing Services Office (HSO)

- One-Stop, Full Service from Arrival to Departure for the Following:
  - Home buying counseling
  - Landlord-tenant dispute resolution
  - Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) data submission
  - Property inspections
    - ❑ NEW---Per FY20 NDAA: If tenant is not available for pre-assignment walkthrough inspection, Housing Office must attend on tenant's behalf
    - ❑ NEW---Per FY20 NDAA: The Housing Manager shall initiate contact with resident 15 day and 60 days after move in regarding the satisfaction of the resident.
  - Administrative assistance with utility company fees/deposits, connections, and billings
  - Informational briefings (in- and out-processing, entitlements), community outreach





# Furniture Safety & Additional Information

- Tenants are permitted to anchor any furniture, television, or large appliance to the wall of the unit for purposes of preventing such item from tipping over without incurring a penalty or obligation to repair the wall upon vacating the unit if the Landlord does not anchor the furniture for the tenant.
- Community features include:
  - Community Centers with family activities and events
  - Fitness room, resident computer lab, meeting room, Wi-Fi Café or Media Center
  - 3 Community Pools
  - Playgrounds
  - No security deposits or hook-up fees for utilities
  - Family support services
  - Lawn care, trash service and recycling program
  - 24 hour response maintenance team





# End of Brief

