



SECTION ONE - GETTING STARTED

INTRODUCTION

The Veteran Family Journal is designed to be a working journal. It contains checklists, information, resources and open spaces to keep track of your unique priorities as you transition from the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to post-service life.

“Our family uses positive quotes like, ‘Change your thoughts and change your world’ and ‘Believe you can and you’re halfway there’ to remind us our transition journey takes effort, but it can still be positive.”

Spouse of a medically released Veteran



VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAM

- Funded by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and managed by Military Family Services (MFS) to provide medically releasing CAF members, medically released Veterans and their families services to successfully transition to post-service life. MFS is the conduit between VAC and Military Family Resource Centres (MFRC) that provides annual funding for the programs and services delivered under the Veteran Family Program (VFP).
- The VFP extends the Military Family Services Program (MFSP) to eligible medically releasing CAF members, medically released Veterans and their families.
- Veteran Family Program Coordinators (VFPC) are employed specifically from the VFP budget.

THE VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAM CAN BE ACCESSED:

- in person at local Military Family Resource Centres across Canada
- by calling the 24/7 Family Information Line at 1-800-866-4546
- by emailing FIL@CAFconnection.ca
- online at www.CAFconnection.ca/VFP
- The program can also be accessed through referral, from Veterans Affairs Canada offices and other networked community service providers.

VFP TRANSITION PROGRAMS

Located in 32 MFRCs, Veteran Family Program Coordinators are available to provide information and referral expertise to support families accessing civilian service providers. The following programs and resources are available to medically releasing CAF members, medically released Veterans and their families at Military Family Resource Centres across Canada.

“In our home, an Operational Stress Injury means the person occasionally has trouble collecting their thoughts in a productive and rational way. Communication and coping skills practically have to be relearned and family involvement through the process is vital in achieving any form of recovery.”
 Spouse of a recently medically released Veteran.

VFP TRANSITION PROGRAMS	DETAILS
Care for Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information about Operational Stress Injuries (OSI), the effect they can have on caregivers and strategies for coping. • Supports caregivers that are supporting a loved one with an OSI. • Available as an online resource that can be accessed individually. • Developed in partnership with Veterans Affairs Canada, Royal Ottawa Health Care Group and the Federal Government.
Families in Transition Sessions (F.I.T.S.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers both medical release process and family transition information using a family-centric approach. • Facilitated group information sessions.
Living Life to the Full	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on improving motivation, thoughts and behaviours for successful transitions. • Facilitated group sessions. • Offered in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association.

VFP TRANSITION PROGRAMS	DETAILS
Mental Health First Aid for Veteran Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on increasing skills and confidence to engage in conversations about mental health while decreasing stigma and promoting recognition of common mental health problems. • Facilitated group sessions. • Tailored to the Veteran community and those that support them. • Offered in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada.
SISIP Financial Planning Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides financial information for members of the military community. • Specific financial workshop targeted to transitioning and transitioned 3B medically releasing member.
Shifting Gears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aimed at helping family members see the transition to post-service life as a time of growth and development. • Facilitated group sessions.
Veteran Family Journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool for navigating your personal transition journey and identifying your needs. • Includes various tools and worksheets, as well as extended family care plans and other useful resources.

MILITARY FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM

- MFSP services are determined by Department of National Defence (DND) in response to essential needs of CAF families.
- MFSP is a publicly funded program directed by DND and delivered by MFRCs. As a division of Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS), MFS acts as the conduit between DND and MFRCs to deliver the necessary annual funding to the centers.
- MFSP services are offered through MFRCs across Canada. In Canada MFRCs are not-for-profit organizations managed by volunteer Boards of Directors.

WHO CAN HELP?

The following are descriptions of some key service providers who can help ease your family's transition journey from military to post-service life.

VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAM COORDINATOR (VFPC)

Information and referral specialists for medically releasing CAF members, medically released Veterans and their families are available through the MFRC.

- Coordinates intake, information and referral services and helps identify family needs and develop family care plan.
- Provides education and awareness of the programs, services and resources offered through the MFRC.
- Facilitates awareness sessions, briefings, presentations, support groups, workshops on change management and transition process.
- Assists in the referral, navigation and access to community programs and services (e.g. legal, financial, family counselling, education, employment, etc.).
- Develops and maintains strong community partnerships with civilian and military organizations and stakeholders in order to provide comprehensive support and avoid duplication of community services.
- Collaborates with DND, VAC and civilian service providers to raise awareness, accessibility, create community partnerships and improve interconnected services and continuity of care for transitioning families.

FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER (FLO)

- FLOs are social workers who are available to families of medically releasing ill and injured CAF members and families of the fallen. FLO support is delivered through MFRCs and Integrated Personnel Support Centres (IPSC).
- Provides and/or supports the development of education, awareness sessions, briefings and resources pertaining to: bereavement, transition, change management, crisis management, family violence, impact of injury, etc.
- Counsels family members in crisis or imminent crisis and/or provides interim support.
- Makes appropriate referrals to relevant community service providers and conducts group and individual counselling sessions.
- Tailors the entire suite of MFSP services to respond to needs and assists families in their navigation of, and access to, relevant programs and services.
- Maintains and develops strong community partnerships with both civilian and military organizations.
- Collaborates on the coordination and provision of general information briefs for chain of command, CAF personnel, and CAF communities.
- Is a member of the Designated Assistant (DA) Disengagement Team.

VETERANS SERVICE AGENT

- Provides targeted assistance in response to client needs, including determining client eligibility and approving benefits for VAC programs and refers to VAC case management services.
- Screens clients using departmentally approved tools and identifies potential issues/concerns.



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- Provides targeted assistance in response to client needs, including determining eligibility as per VAC eligibility guidelines, active interviewing, assessing information gathered and making decisions on VAC programs and services as per delegated financial authority.
 - Refers clients to VAC Case Managers for potential assessment and VAC case management services, provides contact information and/or communicates with external organizations to facilitate the provision of benefits and services to clients, as appropriate.
 - Collaborates, consults with, and serves as a member of the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) and liaises with other VAC service areas, as required.
 - Provides information and advice with respect to client eligibility for internal/external programs and benefits.
 - Initiates applications for VAC programs and services, as required.
 - Follows-up on client cases/referrals, as per program requirements and ensures that standards are adhered to when documenting client information.

VAC CASE MANAGER

- Determines eligibility for case management services.
- Provides support through case management and assessment to access eligible VAC support programs and services for CAF members, Veterans and their families.
- Conducts and obtains comprehensive assessment and assists in identifying needs, complexities and risks.
- Identifies and prioritizes client needs based on issues, barriers and strengths while considering appropriate strategies, resources and best approaches.
- Develops, implements and manages comprehensive case management plans while consulting with internal and external interdisciplinary team members.
- Monitors and evaluates case management plan for interventions to determine new or additional assessment information requirements to effectively meet the needs of the client.
- Provides casualty support services and case management services while ensuring continuum through CAF and VAC transition services.

CF NURSE CASE MANAGER

- Assists CAF members in navigating the health care system by coordinating care as they return to duty or transition to post-service life.
- Coordinates, discusses and monitors health care needs, health care related activities and benefits.
- Coordinates any complex medical needs.
- Develops a plan describing activities for return to duty or transition to post-service life and access to provincial health care.
- Supports the development of a transition plan alongside meeting health goals.
- Collaborates with VAC Case Managers to ensure continuity of services.

