

MFAN Launches Emergency Grocery Support Fund for Military Families

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MFAN Launches Emergency Support for Military Families During Shutdown, Calls on Americans to Join Effort

ARLINGTON, Va. – The ongoing government shutdown is disrupting the lives of military families by delaying moves, pausing benefits, and eroding the fragile framework that supports 5.2 million service members and their loved ones. While the Pentagon, Department of Homeland Security and White House leadership ensured that the October 15 paycheck was issued, there is still no end in sight to the shutdown and no plan in place to pay service members on November 1.

In response, the Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN) has launched a nationwide grocery support initiative to ensure military families have access to food and essential items during this uncertain time.

The program provides boxes of shelf-stable food and Defense Commissary Agency gift cards to military families across the United States. Each box is designed to feed a family of four for approximately one week. This rapid-response effort was made possible through early investments from dedicated partners, whose support enabled MFAN to act quickly and provide immediate assistance.

With uncertainty mounting, MFAN is calling on all Americans including private citizens, philanthropists, and companies, to help expand this lifeline for military families.

“Our MFAN team knew we had to do something to support the families we serve,” said Shannon Razsadin, CEO of MFAN. “We’ve seen through our research that families are already vulnerable, and the stories we are hearing during this time of uncertainty are heartbreaking. We’re relieved service members are receiving a paycheck this week, but this is a short reprieve for many families who have no idea what the next few weeks will bring. We hope others will join us as we lean into this challenge.”

Standing with Military Families

MFAN has led the fight against food insecurity in the military community since 2017. During the pandemic, MFAN distributed more than 1.5 million meals to military families across the country through its food distribution network. Through MFAN's independent survey of military families in 2023, 24% of active-duty families reported food insecurity during regular government operations, soaring to 51% of families following a military move. This data led to the ‘PCS Pantry Restock Box’ program, currently in operation at five military installations, which supports families

with a grocery box and nutrition funds directly following a permanent change of station, or PCS move. These moves typically occur every 2-3 years for military families and can involve thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket costs.

This new emergency grocery effort builds that legacy, leveraging data, technology, and private-sector partnerships to deliver immediate relief during this time of crisis.

“Military families are tough, but that toughness does not equal invulnerability. We’ve seen how stress builds when pay, housing, and healthcare are in question,” Razsadin added. “Our work is about meeting families where they are, ensuring food isn’t one more worry, and reminding them they are seen, supported, and never alone. Every donation, every partnership, and every act of generosity matters.”

How to Help or Get Help

- Donate or partner: Visit www.combatmilitaryhunger.org to join the effort.
- Military families in need: Apply at www.militarymeals.org to receive grocery support. Eligible families will receive a grocery box designed to feed a family of four for one week shipped directly from Umoja Health in Houston, TX within 2–5 business days.

Families can also access MFAN’s Military Family Resource Hub at www.mfan.org/resources for connections to local food pantries, emergency financial assistance, and mental health support.

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About the Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN)

The Military Family Advisory Network is a national nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that all military families thrive. Through research, programs, and partnerships, MFAN delivers solutions that strengthen military family well-being and readiness. Learn more at www.mfan.org.

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