

ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF



DATE OF INITIATION: 13 March 2020

ASSISTANCE BULLETIN NUMBER: 02-2020

NAME OF DISASTER: CORONAVIRUS (COVID -19)

SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE APPLICATION PROCESSING GUIDANCE

1. REFERENCES:

- a. Army Regulation 930-4, dated 5 May 2019
- b. Army Emergency Relief Section Reference Manual (SRM), Chapter 2, dated 15 October 2019

2. APPLICABILITY: These instructions apply to all Army AER Sections

3. PURPOSE:

This bulletin establishes special instructions and assigns responsibilities for processing AER assistance applications during the emerging, rapidly evolving novel coronavirus outbreak. Soldiers and Family members who are identified as having been exposed to the COVID-19 virus are quarantined and monitored for 14 days from the last date of exposure to prevent the possible spread of the contagious disease. During quarantine, Soldiers and Families are separated from the general population and will not have “face to face” contact with Leaders and AER Staff to process an assistance application if a “valid financial need” arises. Army Emergency Relief remains steadfast in its long-standing commitment to meet the needs of the 21st Century Soldier and Family during a crisis. The guidance below provides instructions and procedural guidelines for processing assistance applications when Soldiers and Families are quarantined or when AER Staff members are restricted from meeting “face to face” with Soldiers and Families who are not quarantined.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. HQ AER Assistance Section.

- 1) Establish a Special Event Code (STAT A) for COVID-19 assistance cases and inform select AER Sections.
- 2) Establish a secure portal account (SERV-U) for AER Officers to send and receive application data from Leaders, Soldiers and Families.
- 3) Upon notification by AER Section, review assistance cases and process EFT transaction in coordination HQ AER Accounting in a timely manner.
- 4) Provide weekly reports on number of Soldiers and Families assisted under Special Event Code COVID-19.
- 5) Receive Weekly SITREPS from AER Sections of any procedural improvements required.

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b. HQ AER Accounting Section.

- 1) Process EFT transactions in a timely manner upon receipt of signed AER Form 52 and complete AER 575.
- 2) Provide feedback to the Assistance Section of any rejected EFT transactions.

c. AER Officers.

- 1) **Recommend to Installation and Garrison leadership teams to designate at least one experienced AER Officer as a "Mission Essential Employee" to ensure Soldiers and Families continue to receive financial assistance when needed in accordance with these guidelines.**
- 2) Ensure widest dissemination of these instructions to Company, Battery and Troop levels at respective Posts, Camps and Stations.
- 3) Ensure Unit Leaders understand the electronic application processing guidelines and requirements for quarantined Soldiers and Families or when "face to face" contact is restricted for AER Staff members.

5. ELIGIBILITY:

- a. Soldiers on **Active Duty** and their eligible Family members.
- b. Soldiers **Retired from Active Duty because of longevity** and their Families.
- c. **Retired Army Reserve and National Guard** Soldiers receiving Retired pay and their Family members.
- d. **Medically Retired** Soldiers and their dependents, including both those placed on the Permanent Disability Retired List (PDRL) or Temporary Disability Retirement List (TDRL).
- e. **Members of the Reserve Component** of the Army (National Guard and Army Reserve **under Title 10 U.S.C**) on continuous Active Duty **for more than 30 consecutive days** and their eligible Family members.

6. PROCEDURE:

a. **Soldiers or eligible Family Member with Special Power of Attorney (SPOA).**

- 1) Inform Company Commander or First Sergeant of "valid financial need" (Active Duty).
- 2) Electronically forward the AER application along with all supporting documentation to Unit COC for review and signature (Active Duty).
- 3) After Unit Chain of Command review, either the Soldier or Unit COC will electronically forward the documents listed below to the local AER Section for evaluation and assistance consideration (Active Duty).
 - Completed AER Form 101, Application for Financial Assistance, with Unit COC concurrence
 - Completed AER Form 57, AER Budget Planning Sheet
 - Completed AER Form 575, AER Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization

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- Supporting documentation to “validate financial need”

NOTE: a. Retired Soldiers will submit their applications directly to the AER Section.
b. The Unit COC, Soldiers and Family members will ensure documents containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) are only transmitted electronically through a secure means i.e. SERV-U portal.
c. A Secure SERV-U Link can be requested from the local AER Officer to securely transmit documents that contain PII.

b. AER Officers.

- 1) In coordination with the Unit COC validate the “financial need.”
- 2) Accept and process AER assistance applications through the secure (SERVE-U) portal or other electronic means i.e. Enterprise Mail.
- 3) Ensure documents containing PII are only transmitted electronically through a secure means i.e. SERV-U portal.
- 4) Input assistance case information into netFORUM.
- 5) Use STAT A Code “[COVID 19]” and under “Assistance Details” select “Disaster Assistance” as the request category in netFORUM.
- 6) Approve cases at local approval level thresholds or forward case(s) of \$4K or more to HQ AER.
- 7) Inform the HQ AER Assistance Section via email that a case requires EFT disbursement. The email must contain the Case ID# and a valid email address of the applicant.
- 8) Follow-up to ensure Soldiers are in receipt of funds.

7. The point of contact for the bulletin is CSM(R) Charles Durr, (703) 601-2771 or charles.durr@aerhq.org

If you require additional guidance or have specific questions during non-business hours please contact an HQ AER caseworker through the Army Operations Center at 703-697-0218.

C. Eldon Mullis

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COL, USA, Retired

Deputy Director and Chief Operating
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Enclosures:

AER Form 101, Application for Financial Assistance (Fillable)

AER Form 57R, AER Budget Planning Sheet (Fillable)

AER Form 575, AER Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Authorization (Fillable)

AER File Share Instructions