



ISC Seattle Work-Life Staff

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## *U.S. Coast Guard*



### SPONSOR'S HANDBOOK 'How to be an Excellent Sponsor'



<b>Sponsor</b>	
<b>Newcomer</b>	
<b>Current Unit</b>	
<b>Unit Phone Number</b>	
<b>Report Date</b>	
<b>Arrival Date</b>	

**OBJECTIVES:**

- *Ensure new arrivals feel as if they are well prepared members of the new unit and team.*
- *Reduce the time for new families to adjust to the new environment.*
- *Ensure new arrivals and their families have a positive first impression of the unit and local community.*

**STRATEGY:**

- *Provide proactive assistance to new members and their families*
- *Pave the way for a smooth transition from the departing unit to the arriving unit.*

**TACTICS:**

- *Assess the needs of the new member and family.*
- *Tailor the services and information to the needs of the new member and family; be responsive to them.*
- *Do the job right the first time.*

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

New Member's Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member's Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Unit SPO: \_\_\_\_\_

Housing Office: (206) 217-6480

Ombudsman: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Life Offices: (800) 872-4957 Ext 313

Relocation Manager 206-217-6615

Special Needs 206-217-6612

Child care (206) 217-6786

Employee Assistance Program: (800) 222-0364

USCG TRICARE Helpline: (888) 363-2273

TRICARE (TRIWEST): (877) 874-9378

PACMED INFO LINE: (877) 874-9378

DEERS: (800) 538-9552 (address updates can be faxed in or updated on the DEERS website)

DEERS FAX: (831) 655-8317

Transportation Office Inbound: (206) 217-6509

- If the member is bringing pets let the member know of difficulties with renting, breed restrictions or any other pertinent information.
- Encourage the new member to call you.
- Ask if there are any questions or special concerns that you can assist with.
- Offer to send additional information—be sure to follow through.
- Tell the new member about the unit check in procedures.
- Ask the new member to keep you informed of any change in arrival plans.
- Provide your duty and home phones numbers (be sure to include area codes), your e-mail address and the unit mailing address.

#### NEW MEMBER’S ARRIVAL DAY

- Personally meet the new member upon arrival in the area. If TAD or work schedules prevent this, inform your supervisor so an alternate can be selected. This may be the **most important** part of your job as a sponsor.
- Promptly introduce the new member to his/her chain of command and fellow co-workers.
- Provide a tour of the local area.
- Follow-up with the new member and his/her family providing any additional information and assistance.
- If you can afford it and are comfortable doing so provide pizza or a simple meal on one of the first nights after the member arrives.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE  
COMMANDER SECTOR PUGET SOUND

*Thank you for getting involved as a sponsor for a new member assigned to Sector Seattle. Providing excellent sponsorship is an important way of saying “welcome” to all new members. The time and effort you spend in fulfilling this role will pay big dividends in improving the quality of life and productivity of our people.*

*Don't underestimate the importance you play in this program. I am counting on you to welcome new members and their families, and to let them know we are glad to have them as a part of our team. Remember what it was like when you reported to your unit and how much you would have or did appreciate having someone to help you with your move to a new job and community. We need to make each member's transition as smooth as possible. Advance information and planning are the keys to success. Please give them your best effort as we continue trying to make their new assignment as enjoyable as possible.*

*Scott J. Ferguson*

CHECKLIST FOR SPONSOR'S LETTER

Contact the individual you are sponsoring by mail (e-mail is acceptable) within 7 days. Be sincere and friendly. Make recommendations and keep a positive tone. Put yourself in his/her place and provide the information you would want/need. Follow up with a phone call to the member at the duty station 2 weeks after your initial contact, if he or she has not contacted you.

Don't overdose on letter/email writing, tailor it to what the new member needs to know.

Use a personal tone; write as if you were sending this to a friend.

The letter should include:

- Congratulations on the assignment to the unit. Mention that you have been appointed as the sponsor and will be the point of contact until he/she has in-processed and settled in.
- Tell the new member a little about yourself. Are you married/single, any children, etc.
- Mention how long you have been at the unit, a little about the unit mission and the work day.
- Let the new member know how to forward mail.
- Offer your assistance in arranging temporary lodging. Keep in mind the time of year they will be arriving and the availability of lodging during the season.

## WHERE TO GET SOME ANSWERS

Whether it's the first or ninth time you are serving as a sponsor, you are not going to have all the answers all the time. Here are some references/places to go for additional information and assistance.

**Work Life Staff**—The relocation manager compiles the standard relocation packages and assists in spouse employment. Additional staff members assist with child care, special needs, wellness and career information. All are available to assist you and the new member. (800) 872-4957 Ext. 313

**Coast Guard Housing Office**—Mr. Ed Livingston is the Local Housing Officer. He can answer questions concerning government leases or owned quarters. (260) 217-6483.

**Servicing Personnel Office (SPO)**—The YN can assist with questions concerning orders, travel claims and entitlements.

**Coast Guard/JPPSO Transportation Office**—Information on shipment/delivery of household goods and POV shipment/pick up points in the District. Mr. Doug Rotter - (206) 217-6072

**Unit Resources**—Ombudsman, Executive Officer, Supervisor, Mutual Assistance Representative, etc.

## A NOTE FROM THE WORK-LIFE RELOCATION MANAGER

*Who met you when you arrived at your current unit? Did anyone drive you around town, introduce you to your co-workers or cook a meal for you?*

*If you were properly welcomed, you know how important a sponsor can be. If you weren't welcomed to the new unit, you are probably more aware of how important this role can be.*

*As the sponsor you are an ambassador for the Command. You represent the first glimpse this new member, and possibly his or her family, will have of the unit and local community. The impression you make will be a lasting one, especially for our newest members coming from Cape May. It is critical that the impression you make reflects the care and concern that all members of our team deserve. You have only one chance to make a favorable first impression, please take full advantage of this opportunity you have been given.*

*I encourage you to do your very best to make this transition as smooth as possible for the new member. Please use all of the available resources that are available to you. I am always available to provide you with guidance, information and resources. Please do not hesitate to call me with questions at (206) 217-6615 .*

*David J. Sweeney  
Transition Relocation Manager*

## TIPS FOR “MEETING THE NEED”

Here are some pointers about being responsive and making the new member feel like an important part of the team.

☉ **Listen**—many times stress associated with a move can be reduced merely by talking to someone who cares and can answer questions.

☉ **Determine the needs and exceed them**—sometimes new members don’t know what they need, so when they answer “nothing” be suspect (of course don’t go overboard either). Think about what things you wish you knew before the move. Are there key items they need to bring with them?

☉ **Be a sponsor for the whole family**—ask questions about the new family. What will they need to make the transition easier? Is there a unit Ombudsman who can speak to the spouse?

☉ **If you miss a call, always call back the same day**—even if you have to do it after hours. This is considered an official call and can be placed from the unit phone. Tell the new member who to call if you are going TAD or will be unavailable to answer his/her questions.

☉ **Be open and honest but stay positive**—let the new member and family form their own opinions about the unit and local area. Negative comments can impact a move.

☉ **Use your resources**—if you can’t respond to the need get some help from your supervisor, Work Life, etc.

## Sponsor/Unit Welcome Aboard Package

After you talk with your new member, you should assemble a unit specific sponsor package that includes unit information, local materials, your personal letter, and a Welcome Letter/Copy of Welcome message from your command.

- Your personal letter should be detailed and convey a warm welcome. Include your address and home/duty phone numbers. If you and the newcomer have spouses, having your spouse add a personal letter can be greatly appreciated.
- Often you can get a free relocation or newcomer’s package that will contain information on your city, including local maps, from the Chamber of Commerce.
- Information on the local housing situation is also very helpful. If there is government owned quarters a copy of the floor plan is always a welcome resource. Are there realtors who specialize in rental properties or will the new member have to rely on ads in the local newspaper? Housing is the most common stressor during a move so the more information you can provide the better.

**REMEMBER, THE SPONSOR’S JOB IS NOT DONE UNTIL NEW MEMBER AND FAMILY ARE HERE AND SETTLED IN!**

**For all units, the standard Welcome Aboard package contains:**

- Work-Life & EAP brochures
- General area and community information
- A list of helpful websites
- TRICARE/PACMED information
- State DMV information
- Renting and Relocating guide
- Planning Your PC
- Maps
- USPS address change information
- Relocation Check list
- Household Goods Transportation Information

Additional items can be added to the package such as:

- New Spouse Handbook
- School immunization requirements
- Spouse Employment Resources
- Moving with Elderly Parents
- PCS Coloring Books
- Information for moving with pets



**NEWCOMER NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The needs of each newcomer will be different, and it's your job to find out what they are and how best to meet them. It's not good enough to just say, "let me know what you need". Good sponsorship is proactive! At a minimum, you should accomplish the items in this checklist. Ensure a completion date is indicated for each item. Contact the newcomer within 7 workdays of your sponsor assignment. If you or the member are deployed, highlight the anticipated return date and make contact as soon as you can. When you speak to the newcomer, determine his or her needs by using the needs assessment form below. Confirm if the member would like to receive a standard Welcome Aboard Package. These packages are mailed from the Work-Life's relocation office at the unit or member's request.

**Obtain the following information:**

New Member's phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Home mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Marital status? \_\_\_\_\_

Will the family accompany member? \_\_\_\_\_

School information necessary?

- Elementary
- Middle
- High School
- College

Does the member have pets? \_\_\_\_\_

Would they like a local newspaper sent? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the member need information on:

- Housing? \_\_\_\_\_
- Childcare ? \_\_\_\_\_
- Hotels? \_\_\_\_\_
- Kennels? \_\_\_\_\_
- Medical Specialists? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Spouse Employment? \_\_\_\_\_
- Specific Activities (clubs, sports, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival information:

- Date? \_\_\_\_\_
- How? Flying/Driving \_\_\_\_\_
- Flight number? \_\_\_\_\_
- Arrival Time? \_\_\_\_\_
- What airport? \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of people? \_\_\_\_\_

Additional notes:

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## WHAT YOU NEED TO DO AS THE SPONSOR

Don't despair if this is your first time as a sponsor. Very likely, the person you are sponsoring is quite capable of handling a normal move without too much assistance. Keep in mind that being a sponsor is being a friend. To understand your basic responsibility as a sponsor, simply think of the kind of help you would want if you were making this move.

Be an active sponsor. If you don't know how to respond to a particular issue, seek assistance from your supervisor, administrative yeoman, Executive Officer, Sector support staff or the Work-Life Staff. Ignoring a problem doesn't make it go away, and it could have a devastating effect on the person or family you are sponsoring.

### **Standard Welcome Aboard Package**

The standard Welcome Aboard package ensures that the newcomer and his/her family have generic information on their new duty station and the surrounding area. Ask if the member has requested a standard Welcome Aboard package. These packages are mailed by request from the Work-Life relocation office for all members assigned within the 13th District AOR. If the newcomer has not requested his/her packet and would like one, **call** the relocation office as soon as possible at (206) 217-6615 or (800)872-4957, ext. 313.