

Program Overview

Key Spouses are a peer-to-peer support system for Air Force spouses and families.

Key Spouses are appointed in writing by the unit commander to perform a vital communication role between the unit and its families.

Key Spouses assist families in finding and utilizing the available base and community resources.

Key Spouses help prepare families for separations due to deployments, TDYs, and remote tours and provide support to these families during their time of need.

Key Spouses work closely with their unit leadership and the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

Key Spouses follow Privacy Act, confidentiality, and mandatory reporting guidelines.



Leadership Guide to the Beale Key Spouse Program

Partners in Readiness

For More Information

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Framework for Support

Deployments, remote tours, and extended TDYs are a military fact of life. Our active duty members are gone more often and for longer periods of time than in the past. These can be trying times for the family members left at home as they face the many challenges of separation. Spouses are left juggling the home, kids, and careers without the physical support of the military member.

Spouses and families are not left alone during these times. Key Spouses are volunteers appointed by their respective squadrons to assist with quality of life programs and services.



The Key Spouse Program provides a framework for stability and support for the

families by maintaining regular contact with family members and referring them to base agencies and squadron resources.

By facilitating the flow of communication between spouses, leadership, and base agencies, the Key Spouse program enhances mission readiness.

Partners in Readiness

The Key Spouse program is a partnership between the Key Spouses, organization leadership, including the unit Commander and First Sergeant, and the Airman and Family Readiness Center. Each of these partners plays a critical role in the success of the program.

- **Key Spouse** – Serves as the communication link between the Commander, First Sergeant, and unit families and provides information and referral services to unit families.
- **Unit Commander** – Establishes and maintains the Key Spouse Program within the unit. He or she determines the direction of the program and provides unit support.
- **First Sergeant** – Serves as the Key Spouse's main point of contact and is the vital link between the Commander and the Key Spouses. He or she organizes and coordinates all aspects of the program and reports directly to the Commander.
- **Airman and Family Readiness Center** – Acts as the primary "go to" agency for Key Spouses and provides oversight and coordination regarding all family readiness issues. They also provide Key Spouse training and referral support.

Program References and Resources

In 1997, the United States Air Force rolled out several test program models for the Key Spouse Program. Results indicated that these programs had a positive impact on mission readiness by establishing a link between families and squadron leadership. In March of 1999, ACC issues a memorandum for all ACC Wing commanders, recommending support of this key initiative.

Guidance for the Key Spouse Program is provided by the Wing Commander in BAFB Policy 11. The wing's goal was to create a structure closely linking leadership with its family members, thus enhancing mission readiness through information, outreach, and support.

Resources for the development and implementation of the Key Spouse program at Beale include the "Key Spouse Program Commander's Reference Guide" designed for wing and squadron leadership and the "Key Spouse Program Reference Guide" designed for Key Spouses. The Airman and Family Readiness Center holds basic training classes for new Key Spouses and advanced training sessions for ongoing Key Spouse development.
