

2020 Office of Financial Readiness Comprehensive Communication Plan

April 2020



Program overview

It is widely understood within the Department of Defense and among congressional lawmakers that financial readiness is a key part of mission readiness of the total force. The legal basis for a military financial readiness program is found in Section 992 of Title 10, U.S. Code, which includes training, counseling and survey requirements. Please see the detailed summary of specific legal requirements.

The Department of Defense Office of Financial Readiness, within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, is the component lead responsible for implementation of Section 992 of Title 10, U.S. Code. Its mission is to lead the department's financial readiness efforts to support a mission ready force through policy, programs and advocacy.

To accomplish its mission effectively, FINRED must communicate regularly and consistently with service members and their families, as well as with internal and external stakeholders who influence financial readiness and literacy. All communication from this office must be unbiased, accurate and timely. A detailed annual communication plan, which serves as a framework for the program's communication and outreach efforts, is developed in order to insure these lofty requirements are met. The annual plan defines communication goals and objectives, identifies target audiences, lists key messages and prescribes effective outreach strategies that support FINRED's mission.

FINRED mission

Lead the department's financial readiness efforts to support a mission ready force through policy, programs and advocacy.

FINRED vision statement

Financially ready and resilient service members and families across the military lifecycle, serving as a model of financial literacy for the nation

FINRED values

- 1) Work in a collaborative environment
- 2) Focus on the service member

Overarching key messages, talking points and resources

These key messages and talking points will be used by The Office of Financial Readiness to develop communication initiatives directed at service members and their families throughout 2020. Collaborators are also encouraged to use the below message content and identified resources when communicating with the target audience on financial readiness topics. Messages are written to apply to the largest audience possible, but can be adapted for the creation of more audience-specific tactics, if needed.

Messages are organized in accordance with the Inventory of Financial Literacy Knowledge and Skills for Service Members and Families.

TA1: BASIC FINANCE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017).)</i>
<p>TLO: Recognize the importance of <u>personal financial management</u> and what resources are available. Learning how to manage your finances is a lifelong skill that will continue to pay off time and again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it comes to money management, start small and grow your skill set as you gain confidence and knowledge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Begin by understanding your current and future needs, creating a plan to work toward them and establishing savings to offset any surprises. ○ Once you have a handle on your current financial situation, lean into investment opportunities and saving for future expenses like education and retirement. ○ A personal financial manager can help you establish realistic goals and develop a plan for working toward them. Make an appointment at your Family Center or contact Military OneSource for assistance when you can't get to an installation. • Having a handle on your money will lessen the impact of surprise expenses and open up more options when you're looking to make a major purchase. • The military lifestyle means frequent change, which can also mean frequent opportunity, if you know how to handle your finances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With a little preparation and some deliberate savings, a PCS can turn into a partially funded vacation or road trip. ○ Turn unexpected orders into financial opportunities. Deployments, TDY and even TAD can add some additional funds to your bank account, if you research your financial options ahead of time. • Managing your money well can mean the difference between a fulfilling military career and one filled with security clearance obstacles or delayed promotions. • Is it a need or a want? Sometimes the toughest financial conversations are with yourself. <p>Start them young. Teach your kids about financial responsibility, and you'll be setting them up for a more secure future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get your kids involved in the family spending plan, and help them develop good habits of their own. 	<p>Overall, less than three quarters of active-duty members (70%) indicated their current financial condition was comfortable. Members in the Air Force (74%) were more likely than members in the other services to indicate they were comfortable with their financial condition. Senior officers (91%) and junior officers (89%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate they were comfortable with their financial condition.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Start the conversation by talking about a common family event that includes an element of money management, like getting a pet, buying a car or budgeting for a vacation. ○ Money as You Grow resources from the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection can help you start the money conversation with your kids. ○ Incorporate money concepts into reading time with your kids with these children’s books that make it easy. ● Get the family involved when you develop your budget. Teaching kids responsible financial habits as early as elementary school can help them become more money savvy in the future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If your kids earn an allowance, help them set up a budget of their own. ○ Show your kids just how much your family can save by deciding to dine in one more night per month. ○ Financial conversations with your kids helps to reduce the stigma of talking about money and will help them feel more comfortable asking questions and making informed decisions in the future. 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creating a Spending Plan touchpoint video ● Investing Basics: Bonds, Stocks and Mutual Funds article ● Wait...What did I Just Sign? Major Purchase article ● Dine In Tonight. Pizza slice infographic <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Financial Management Counseling Options article – Military OneSource ● Talking About Money Choices Big and Small article- CFPB ● Money as You Grow: Help for parents and caregivers resources - CFPB ● Build Your Child’s Money Skills While You Read reading list- CFPB 	
<p>TLO: Identify warning signs of members at risk for financial problems. Identifying and assisting those service members who are struggling financially isn’t just a leader’s responsibility. It’s everyone’s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help service members identify or understand potential expenses, like a luxury car, expensive jewelry or costly vacations that could make them vulnerable for taking on debt or applying for credit. ● Help service members understand the importance of maintaining an emergency fund. Unexpected expenses without an emergency fund are a major factor in carrying credit card debt, which could quickly lead them into financial trouble. ● Service members are more likely to take on debt mid-career to pay for medical or education needs or for purchasing a home and raising kids. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitioning service members need a game plan that doesn't involve high-interest debt in case their job search takes longer than expected. • Recognize the warning signs of financial trouble. If you know someone making minimum payments on credit card debt or borrowing money to pay off other debts, they likely need someone to step in and help. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask questions before there are problems. Check in with your people to make sure they, and you, feel confident about their financial plans. ○ Personal financial managers are available to assist service members and their families. Make an appointment at your Family Center or contact Military OneSource for assistance when you can't get to an installation. • A security clearance can be effected by a downturn in credit score, so plan carefully and borrow with care. If you or someone you know is unable to make payments on a loan, seek assistance from a personal financial manager to develop a plan and minimize the impact on your career. 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Funds: The First Step to Financial Freedom blog <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Financial Management Counseling Options article- Military OneSource • New Security Clearance Guidelines blog –CFPB 	
<p>TLO: Understand the fundamentals of banking services and fees.</p> <p>Learn about the banking options available to you, and make informed choices when choosing where to keep your money.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You want your money to be safe and secure — and available when you need it. Make the right choice for your money and your lifestyle by learning more about the banking options available to you. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make sure the bank you choose is backed by the FDIC, or you could risk losing your funds. The FDIC bank search will help you sort through your list. • Compare offers and services from credit unions and banks when choosing your financial institution. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider the protections and services you want, such as overdraft protection, stop payment services and ATM access, to name a few. • Banks and credit unions often charge fees if you overdraft on your account or don't maintain a minimum balance. Make sure you understand the fine print before you move your money. Check out this guide to selecting a lower-risk account. • If you have been denied an account in the past, you may still be able to manage your money with the financial institution of your choice, but the terms may be different than advertised. Carefully review the offers available to you, and consider discussing them with a personal financial manager. 	

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FINRED Resources: N/A Collaborator Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking Options video - FTC • Bank Search - FDIC • Choices for Where to Save tips – militaryconsumer.gov • Consumer Guide to Selecting a Lower-Risk Account - CFPB • Denied a Checking Account Based on Past Banking History article - CFPB 	
<p>TLO: Understand the fundamentals of creating and managing a <u>spending plan</u>, and the importance of updating a spending plan.</p> <p>In military life, it helps to think ahead. The same is true for your finances — set goals and make a plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spending plan is a roadmap for how you’re going to spend your money. With careful planning you can work toward paying your bills every month, saving for the future and still have some money to play with. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FINRED’s mapped out the journey for you. The Road to Financial Readiness can show you what your next step should be. • Joining the military is more than just a career move. For a lot of you, it’s also the start of living on your own. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Get off to a great start by taking two important first steps: develop a spending plan and track it. ○ Begin your budget by tracking your spending for a week or a month. Knowing where your money goes is the key to knowing if you’re making the best choices for your funds. • Military pay can change often, so your spending plan should, too. Consider an update if you’ve recently moved, grown your family or started workups for a deployment. • Revisit your spending plan every few months to check your progress. If you’re not staying on track, make changes that will help you reach your goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A personal financial counselor can help you with solutions to make your spending plan work. • Learn more about developing a spending plan and sticking to it by joining the more than 6,000 followers who are already keeping up with the experts at FINRED on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. 	<p>Of active-duty service member respondents, 72% said they routinely use the following to manage their finances: follow a monthly budget or spending plan.</p>
FINRED Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Spending Plan touchpoint video • Road to Financial Readiness touchpoint infographic • First Duty Station touchpoint video • Updating a Spending Plan touchpoint video • It Pays to Visit a Personal Financial Counselor flyer 	

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<p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting Out on Your Own article - FTC 	
<p>TLO: Understand the fundamentals and management of debt and credit. Today's credit decisions impact tomorrow's financial health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having good credit matters. Find some ways to build and raise your score, and see just how much you can save by maintaining good credit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The frequent changes that accompany military life can make short-term, small-dollar loans tempting, in spite of their high interest rates. Make sure you know your options before taking even a small loan. ○ Never feel rushed to make a credit decision, even when you need money in a hurry. There are resources available to help you make an informed choice. • As you build your credit, you may become eligible for lower interest rates on your current debt. Review the rates you're paying, and consider asking your financial institution if you're eligible for a lower one. • Be aware of the benefits and drawbacks of variable rate loans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Variable rates can be attractive when the market is doing well, but a turn in the economy could mean big increases to your monthly payment. ○ Consider the length of your loan when deciding on a variable rate versus a fixed rate loan. • Check in on your credit reports at least once a year. Each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies is required to provide you with a copy of your credit score every 12 months, upon your request. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To request your annual credit report, visit Annualcreditreport.com, which is the only official site directed by federal law to provide them. Be aware of imposter sites, which might ask for a credit card number or offer a free trial. • Your FICO credit score is what most lenders use to determine your credit risk. You can find your FICO score from each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies when you request your credit report. • Your credit score is your financial reputation, so make sure it's accurate by reviewing yours each year. Get your free credit report at Annualcreditreport.com, and quickly address any problems. • There are right and wrong ways to deal with debt collectors. If you find yourself being contacted as the result of an unpaid debt, make sure they're acting in accordance to the law and take appropriate action to correct the situation if they're not. 	<p>Among active-duty service members, 79% indicated that they were knowledgeable about monitoring their credit score/rating. Air Force (82%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item. Senior officers (93%), junior officers (85%), and senior enlisted members (83%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (69%) were less likely.</p> <p>Of all active-duty service member respondents, 77% said they routinely use the following to manage their finances: monitor your credit score/rating. Senior officers (85%), junior officers (82%) and senior enlisted members (81%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (68%) were less likely.</p> <p>Among active-duty service members, 60% indicated that they received information on credit and/or debt management. Navy (67%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Army (53%) were less likely. Senior officers (55%) and junior officers (52%) were less likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Ins and Outs of Credit article • Looking for a Credit Card? Here's How to be a Savvy Shopper blog • Financial Fundamentals: Establishing and Improving Your Credit History article 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Fundamentals: Managing and Monitoring Credit article • Dealing with Debt Collectors : Know Your Rights infographic <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Your Credit tips – militaryconsumer.gov • Annualcreditreport.com • Dealing with Debt Collectors tips – militaryconsumer.gov 	
<p>TLO: Understand fundamentals of <u>income tax and common tax benefits</u>, and potential changes to tax situation.</p> <p>Plan ahead and work your tax payments and refunds into your annual financial plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factor in taxes when you’re developing a spending plan or preparing to make a large purchase. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider your state and federal tax responsibilities, and stay informed when laws change. ○ Bookmark the IRS website for the most up-to-date information on tax laws and changes. • Tax law changes may have impacted your 2018 return. Make adjustments using this military-specific booklet to guide you toward a better experience with your 2019 taxes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You may need to make adjustments on your end to prepare for a higher tax bill, or you may be entitled to a substantial refund. Either way, preparation is important for staying on top of your overall finances. ○ If you receive a significant refund, don’t just run with the money; consider lowering your withholding for next year and investing in your future by paying off debt or making an investment. <p>Connect with the experts at the Military OneSource MilTax program for questions concerning your taxes.</p>	<p>Of the active-duty service members in the survey, 50% indicated that they received information on preparation of federal income tax return. Army (46%) members were less likely than members in the other services to indicate this item. Junior officers (47%) were less likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Cuts and Jobs Act: An Overview for Service Members and Their Families guide <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRS newsroom updates on tax reform - IRS • Tax Resource Center -Military OneSource 	

TA2: CONSUMER PROTECTION TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<p>TLO: Know <u>military consumer protection law fundamentals (SCRA/MLA)</u>. Military consumers are covered by all of the laws and protections afforded to civilians, as well as several, strong military-specific laws that provide an extra layer of protection to those serving their country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a military consumer, you are protected under the Military Lending Act, Servicemembers Civil Relief Act and have additional protections under the federal Truth in Lending, Fair Credit Reporting and Fair Debt Collection Practices Acts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Military consumer protections are tough on those who target service members’ finances. ○ Stay informed when there are legislative changes that could directly affect your finances by regularly meeting with a financial professional and following FINRED. • The Military Lending Act protects military service members from predatory lending practices by limiting the cost of credit (interest rates and other fees), requiring mandatory disclosures and prohibiting certain loan practices on many frequently used lending sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you suspect your loan or credit product violates the MLA, submit a complaint with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. • The Servicemembers’ Civil Relief Act covers issues such as rental agreements, credit card interest rates, life insurance and mortgage foreclosure to name a few. Know your rights and explore money saving options available to you through these powerful military-specific laws. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you suspect your rights have been violated, contact your local military legal assistance office to initiate a review of the situation. 	<p>More than half of active-duty members indicated they received information on consumer awareness (60%). Navy (73%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Air Force (57%) and Army (52%) were less likely. Junior officers (54%) were less likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You Work Hard for Your Money military-specific consumer protections infographic • Military Lending Act flyer • Servicemembers Civil Relief Act flyer • Truth in Lending Act flyer • Servicemembers’ Civil Relief Act flyer <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Debt Collection Practices Acts article - CFPB • How to submit a consumer complaint for a financial service or product - CFPB 	
<p>TLO: Recognize and identify steps to resolve <u>identity theft</u>. Identity theft can happen to anyone, but if you take steps to safeguard your information, you can reduce your risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you suspect you’ve been the victim of identity theft, act fast! Reporting the problem quickly at IdentityTheft.gov can help minimize the damage. • One of the most effective ways to safeguard your money is to freeze your credit. If your identity is stolen, lines of credit cannot be opened using your information. 	

TA2: CONSUMER PROTECTION TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It's free to put a freeze on your credit, and it only takes a few minutes. Learn more from the FTC. ● Identity theft can happen to anyone, including your children. Be sure to safeguard your family's personal information, and regularly check your credit report for unauthorized activity. ● If you suspect a company is misusing your personal data, report it. The Federal Trade Commission wants to know. ● Depending on the information or data that was stolen or compromised, there are specific steps you can take to reduce the risk that your identity will be stolen. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find step-by-step instructions on how to handle lost or stolen information from IdentityTheft.gov. 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Freeze Your Credit infographic <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IdentityTheft.gov ● Credit Freeze FAQs - FTC ● Child Identity Theft article - FTC ● Complaint Assist - FTC 	
<p>TLO: Recognize and know how to protect yourself from misleading consumer practices, and report consumer complaints.</p> <p>When opportunity and innovation show up, so do scams. Learn how to detect fraud, protect yourself and your assets, and how to stop scammers in their tracks with proper reporting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crooks defraud millions of people every year, but with the right preparation you can learn to protect yourself and your assets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fraudulent schemes often combine new technology with lies to get people to send money or give up personal information. ○ Learn how to identify scams and what to do if you're caught up in one. ○ Safeguard your money, personal information, financial records and reputation against scammers. ● Service members are often targeted by scammers. Be especially wary if someone seems overly interested in your military service or tries to gain your trust by claiming a military affiliation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Better Business Bureau has compiled some great tips and advice on how military members can protect themselves from these targeted scams. ● When it's time to enter the job market, be wary of money-making opportunities that sound too good to be true. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No legitimate companies will ever charge you money to get a job or guarantee you a job only if you pay. But job scammers will. 	<p>More than half of active-duty service members (60%) indicated that they received information on consumer awareness. Navy (73%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Air Force (57%) and Army (52%) were less likely. Junior officers (54%) were less likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item.</p>

TA2: CONSUMER PROTECTION TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it's too good to be true, it probably is. The Federal Trade Commission's scam alerts can help you stay informed and provide resources for filing complaints. • Watch out for deceptive offers of debt or credit relief. Many military-looking emails and advertisements have no military connection at all. • Be wary of fraudulent practices. Research before you make major purchases, and be cautious of people or companies who offer get-rich-quick advice. • Internet crime schemes are complex and can rope you in quickly. Keep up with some of the more common ones, or submit a tip or complaint by following along with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center. <p>When you purchase a good or service, you expect to get what you pay for. When that doesn't happen, there are several steps you can take to file a complaint and work toward a resolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting the local seller is the best place to start when you have a complaint, but when you need more help, you can reach out for state and federal assistance. Find out where to start at USA.gov. • There are dozens of agencies looking out for you as a consumer. Contact the Federal Trade Commission if a business doesn't make good on its promise. • If you get caught up in an internet scam or know someone who has, you can contact the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center. • File a complaint with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau if you experience trouble with a financial service or product. 	
<p>FINRED Resources: N/A</p> <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting Yourself from Frauds and Scams article –CFPB • Complaint Assist – FTC • Protection From Scams That Target the Military article- BBB • Job Scams article – FTC • Scam alerts - FTC • Fraud Alert flyer – FBI • Internet Crime Complaint Center - FBI • Filing a Consumer Complaint resources - USA.gov • How to submit a complaint about a financial product or service – CFPB 	

**TA3: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Statistics

(All statistics are from the DoD survey: [Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces \(2017\)](#))

TLO: Comprehend the components of service member’s military retirement system and the importance of preparing for retirement.

The Blended Retirement System supports service members’ long-term goals with adaptable, flexible and personalized retirement options.

- For new service members and those who chose to opt into the Blended Retirement System, FINRED’s [Guide to the Blended Retirement System](#) is a must-have resource for learning how to optimize your retirement benefits.
- With the Blended Retirement System, between your eighth and 12th years of service you could receive a cash sum, known as [continuation pay](#) when you agree to additional years of service.
 - Make a plan for your continuation pay before it hits your account. A personal financial manager can help you prepare and make the most of your cash.
- With the Blended Retirement System, you don’t have to serve a full 20 years to receive retirement benefits. You are automatically vested in any funds or contributions you make into your TSP account, and after two years of service, you will also be vested in the [matching service contributions](#).
- The [lump sum payment](#) option with BRS gives you another option for receiving payments at retirement.
 - Service members covered through BRS who qualify for retired pay may be eligible to elect either a 25% or 50% discounted portion of their monthly retired pay as a lump sum in exchange for reduced monthly retired pay. Monthly retired pay returns to the full amount when the service member reaches their full Social Security retirement age, which for most is age 67.
- Even if you didn’t opt into BRS, your most junior service members will be participating in the program. It’s in your best interest as a leader to [understand it](#) and encourage positive actions to maximize their return.

Plan for retirement with confidence. Know your options and make choices that reflect your long-term goals.

- Retirement planning is a journey, and the outcome heavily depends on the choices you make along the way. Learn about your options and retirement strategies from [multiple sources](#) to develop a way ahead that works for you.
- As a service member, you will either participate in the Blended Retirement System or, if grandfathered in, the legacy system. Both military retirement programs provide peace of mind for your retirement, but also require your active participation in order to personalize the outcome.
 - Spend time discussing your options with your family and make sure your disbursements, matching funds and incentives are planned in a way that complement your financial goals.
 - Regardless of which plan you participate in, actively saving and planning for retirement will make the transition to the civilian community an easier one. Even [little changes](#) can make a big difference.

Of all active-duty service member respondents, 64% indicated that they were knowledgeable about understanding investment or retirement plan options, other than TSP. Air Force (67%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item. Senior officers (85%) and junior officers (71%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (56%) were less likely.

More than half of active-duty service members (57%) said they routinely use the following to manage their finances: contribute to investments or retirement plan other than TSP. Senior officers (84%) and junior officers (73%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (47%) were less likely.

More than half of active-duty service members (61%) indicated that they received information on retirement planning. Navy (66%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Army (54%) were less likely.

TA3: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both military retirement programs still include tax-free shopping benefits through the commissary and exchange services and medical benefits that can save you thousands. ● The Thrift Savings Plan is available to all service members regardless of the retirement system they participate in, and opening an account may be one of the best retirement savings decisions you make. ● Military spouses who intend to retire from the workforce also need to plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check out the Department of Labor’s Top 10 Ways to Prepare for Retirement to make sure you’re on track too. ○ Set yourself and your family up for a great retirement with these suggestions on how you, as a working military spouse, can prepare for retirement. ● Maximize your retirement savings as a couple, and create security for a non-working spouse by contributing to individual IRAs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Non-working spouses can have their own retirement funds through a spouse-funded IRA, sometimes called a Spousal IRA. See if you and your spouse qualify, and start increasing your retirement security. ● Saving for retirement requires patience and discipline. It’s the ultimate long-term financial goal. Resist the urge to borrow from your future by taking early disbursements from your retirement savings. 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guide to the Blended Retirement System ● Continuation Pay flyer ● Defined Contribution flyer ● Lump Sum Payment flyer ● Blended Retirement System leaders card ● Invest in Yourself, Not the Coffee Shop infographic <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● List of retirement resources – Investor.gov ● Thrift Savings Plan participation information – TSP.gov ● How to establish a Thrift Savings Plan information – TSP.gov ● Top 10 Ways to Prepare for Retirement guide - DOL ● Retirement Savings for Spouses article – SaveandInvest.org ● Retirement Topics -IRA Contribution Limits article - IRS 	
<p>TLO: Discuss the reasons, needs, types and options for purchasing insurance. As a service member you accept certain risks, but your financial future shouldn’t be one of them. Purchase adequate insurance to protect your investments and assets, and be prepared for the unexpected.</p>	<p>On the survey, 6% of active-duty service members indicated that they received information on purchasing life insurance.</p>

TA3: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: <u>Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017)</u>)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure major purchases, like your home, car and household goods are protected with adequate insurance. A lack of coverage may hurt you financially if you experience major unexpected damage or loss. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find some great tips on protecting your investments and assets at USA.gov. ○ Natural disasters, like floods, can take a major toll on your finances if you're not properly covered. Understand your risk and determine if you need additional coverage. • You may be required or encouraged to purchase costly insurance if you borrow close to the full value of an asset, such as private mortgage insurance when you buy a house with a conventional mortgage or Guaranteed Auto Protection insurance when you buy a car. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If possible, consider delaying your purchase until you save enough to avoid a need for the additional insurance. It's one more way to keep money in your pocket. • If you live in a rental property or on an installation, you may be required to maintain adequate renter's insurance to protect your property. Although not required by law, some landlords do require it as part of the lease process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Even if renter's insurance is not required, it's still a good idea to explore your options and see how you could benefit from coverage. • You are an asset to your family. Be sure to financially protect them with adequate life insurance if the unexpected should occur. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance is in place for service members, but you may still want to look into additional coverage for you and your family. • Frequent relocations mean that as a service member, you will likely need to update your insurance policies at least every few years. Use these opportunities to make sure you have adequate coverage and even shop around for the best rates. • If you're shopping for insurance, be sure to research companies and compare rates before accepting a proposal. 	<p>Senior officers (51%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources: N/A</p> <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying Insurance tips - USA.gov • Why Buy Flood Insurance article - FEMA • What is Guaranteed Auto Protection Insurance article - CFPB • Renter's Insurance: Do I Really Need It? article – MilitaryOneSource • Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance information - VA 	

TA3: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<p>TLO: Understand purpose and implications of <u>estate planning</u> (beneficiaries, wills, trusts, power of attorney, etc.).</p> <p>Take control of your assets by creating an estate plan that allows you to dictate your wishes in the case of your death or other emergency.</p> <p>When estate planning is done well, it can put you at ease about the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate planning is an ongoing process that needs to be revisited when significant life events take place, like marriage or the birth of a child, and periodically in between. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As a service member, your estate plan may need to be reviewed more regularly due to frequent changes associated with the military lifestyle. Consider an update if you deploy, purchase a house, become a landlord or live apart from your family. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fortunately, developing and reviewing an estate plan is a no-cost service for service members and their families. Set up an appointment with an attorney at your installation’s legal assistance office to begin your estate plan or to update components of it. • The goals of your estate plan should be to take care of your family, determine who gets your property, appoint the people who will ensure your wishes are carried out and make sure your personal health care requests are known. • Having a basic will is a good start, but a complete estate plan takes it a few steps further and can significantly lessen the burden on your family if you die. Consider including these additional documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A power of attorney gives someone the legal authority to act on your behalf. You can make it general or as specific as you need. ○ A living will, which is also called an advanced medical directive, gives you a voice in medical situations when you’re unable to make your wishes known. ○ A testamentary or non-testamentary trust is a legal document that can help you manage or protect your assets, provide additional guidance on caring for your children or tackle tax planning. A trust can help bypass the expense and delay of probate court. ○ Including information about how you want your funeral and burial to be conducted removes a significant emotional, and possibly financial, burden from your family. ○ Consider how much life insurance you and your family need. Service members are automatically enrolled in Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance, but depending on your personal situation, you may want to consider additional coverage. 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Introduction to Estate Planning flyer • Estate Planning for the Service Member video • Make Your Wishes Known: Estate Planning for Service Members and Families blog • The Importance of Having a Will blog • Understanding Trusts blog 	

TA3: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	<p style="text-align: center;">Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i></p>
<p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation legal assistance office locator – Military OneSource • Burial Benefits information - VA • Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance information - VA 	

TA4: COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	<p style="text-align: center;">Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i></p>
<p>TLO: Know the components of basic pay and allowances throughout military career. Service members receive several tax-free allowances in addition to their basic pay, which significantly adds to the value of their paycheck.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic pay is determined by rank and time in service, and while allowances are also influenced by rank, your location and current mission play a part in determining your actual paycheck, too. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When developing a spending plan, make sure you check the latest rates for any allowances you will be receiving. ○ If you discover an inconsistency or error, check with your finance office right away to get it corrected. • Knowing how to read your Leave and Earning Statement, or LES, is crucial to ensuring you are receiving all pay and allowances you’ve earned. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each service presents information a bit differently on their LES forms, so make sure you’re schooled up on the one designed for you. • Service members receive allowances in addition to their base pay to cover the cost of things not provided by the military, such as housing or food. Some allowances offset the cost of expenses incurred as a result of military orders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allowances can fluctuate based on personal circumstances and orders. Be sure to check with your finance office if you’re unsure of how much you should be receiving. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic Allowance for Subsistence, or BAS ▪ Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH ▪ Clothing Allowance ▪ Dislocation Allowance, or DLA ▪ Family Separation Allowance, or FSA ▪ Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance, or FSSA 	<p>Among active-duty service members, 79% indicated that they received information on military compensation. Air Force (81%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Army (76%) were less likely.</p> <p>Of all active-duty service member respondents, 87% indicated that they were knowledgeable about understanding their leave and earnings statement (LES). Air Force (89%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Marine Corps (82%) were less likely. Senior officers (97%), junior officers (91%) and senior enlisted members (90%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (79%) were less likely.</p>

TA4: COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decode Your Leave and Earnings Statement touchpoint video <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of military allowances – militarypay.defense.gov <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic Allowance for Subsistence, or BAS ○ Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH ○ Clothing Allowance ○ Dislocation Allowance, or DLA ○ Family Separation Allowance, or FSA ○ Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance, or FSSA 	
<p>TLO: Examine the impact of <u>special pay and entitlements</u>.</p> <p>Service members may be eligible to receive special pay or entitlements in addition to their basic pay and allowances. Depending on orders and operating conditions, service members could be eligible for several types of special pay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more than 60 types of special or incentive pay that are authorized. Check with your finance office to ensure you’re receiving all payments you are entitled to. • Learn about the payments you may be eligible to receive and make a plan for maximizing the additional funds. • Some of the most common types of special pay include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hardship Duty Pay, or HDP ○ Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay, or HFD/IDP ○ Assignment Incentive Pay, or AIP ○ Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay, or HDIP 	<p>On the survey, 55% of active-duty service members indicated that they received information on financial planning for military absences/moves. Navy (60%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Army (49%) were less likely. Junior officers (49%) were less likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources: N/A</p> <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of military special and incentive pay – militarypay.defense.gov <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hardship Duty Pay, or HDP ○ Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay, or HFD/IDP ○ Assignment Incentive Pay, or AIP ○ Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay, or HDIP 	
<p>TLO: Discuss <u>TRICARE options and costs</u>.</p> <p>Medical benefits are a significant financial value to service members and their families.</p>	

TA4: COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRICARE benefits can be shaped to best reflect the needs of individual service members and their families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The TRICARE plan you chose to participate in will dictate the out-of-pocket costs you incur, so choose your plan with your finances in mind. • If you're considering transitioning out of the military, or you've already begun the process, be sure to research and include the cost of health care in your future budget. 	
FINRED Resources: N/A Collaborator Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRICARE website 	
TLO: Discuss survivor and dependent benefits. The Survivor Benefit Plan is a way for service members who retire from the military to ensure their loved ones continue to receive retirement payments after the former service member's death. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With proper planning, eligible family members can continue to receive an annuity after their retired service member dies and traditional retirement payments end. • Retirement plans must extend beyond the needs of the individual service member. The Survivor Benefit Plan does just that. 	More than half of active-duty service members (64%) indicated that they were knowledgeable about understanding the Survivor Benefit Plan. Senior officers (68%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas senior enlisted members (63%) were less likely.
FINRED Resources: N/A Collaborator Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survivor Benefit Plan program overview – militarypay.defense.gov 	
TLO: Understand future financial benefits afforded by the Department's Career Investment Programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enabling Learning Objectives for this TLO are still under development.</i> 	

TA5: SAVING AND INVESTING TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
TLO: Understand interest and how the concept of compounding works. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it comes to investing, compound interest will help you maximize your return, but if you're taking out a loan, simple interest will help you save. 	

TA5: SAVING AND INVESTING TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Simple interest is based on the principal amount of a loan or deposit. It can be calculated by multiplying the principal x the interest rate x the term of the loan. ○ Compound interest, which can be called interest on interest, is based on the principal amount plus the interest earned over a period of time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compound interest is more difficult to calculate than simple interest and can be most easily calculated by using a compound interest calculator. ▪ When calculating compound interest, it's important to know how often the interest will be compounded. The more often it's compounded, the more your investment will grow. ● The longer you let money sit in an account earning compounding interest, the more you will benefit from the initial investment. 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding Interest and How to Calculate It article <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compound interest calculator – Investor.gov 	
<p>TLO: Recognize the importance and be able to develop a savings/emergency fund. When your plan starts with savings, you set yourself up for financial freedom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Military life can create some unique goals and options for your savings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With an anticipated promotion, should come an anticipated review of your budget. Celebrate the pay raise, but also the increase to your savings. ○ Work with a personal financial manager to maximize the extra funds you'll accrue while on deployment, on TDY or even during a PCS. ● Your savings matter, so pay yourself first. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make sure your rainy day fund is full before you start saving up for your list of wants. ○ Want to sleep better at night? Put away at least three months' worth of living expenses to prepare for the unexpected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency travel, an unexpected car repair or other surprise expense doesn't have to plunge you into debt. Be prepared. ● Establish a savings goals and develop a plan for achieving it. Start small and increase your contribution to savings as you become more comfortable with your budget. ● Re-evaluate your savings goals when you review your budget. Be sure to increase the amount you're saving if your monthly expenses increase. ● Save smarter by automatically setting aside tax refunds and portions of your paycheck. A personal financial counselor or manager can show you how and suggest an appropriate amount for your budget. 	<p>On the survey, 85% of active-duty service members indicated that they were knowledgeable about establishing an emergency savings fund. Air Force (89%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item. Senior officers (97%) and junior officers (93%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (77%) were less likely.</p> <p>Of active-duty service members, 80% said they routinely use the following to manage their finances: contribute to a savings account. Senior officers (92%) and junior officers (90%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas senior enlisted members (77%) were less likely.</p>

TA5: SAVING AND INVESTING TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you have an unexpected financial need, consider all of your options, such as banks, credit unions and military relief organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Military relief societies are there to support you in case of emergencies like car and appliance repairs, short-notice travel or even dental needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Army Emergency Relief Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Air Force Aid Society Coast Guard Mutual Assistance 	<p>Survey results showed that 70% of active-duty service members said they routinely use the following to manage their finances: contribute to and/or maintain an emergency savings fund. Air Force (73%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item. Senior officers (87%) and junior officers (84%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (65%) were less likely.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion touchpoint video • Emergency Funds: The First Step to Financial Freedom blog • It's Time to Schedule a Checkup – for Your Finances <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Army Emergency Relief website • Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society website • Air Force Aid Society website • Coast Guard Mutual Assistance website 	
<p>TLO: Describe the fundamentals of investing. Boost your savings with smart investments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no guarantees that you will make money from your investments, but if you do your homework, you will reduce your risk. • Learn more about how to make smart investments that boost your wealth by talking to a personal financial counselor or manager. • Stay ahead of investor fraud by knowing how to spot a scam. • Investing is a long-term approach that requires research and patience. Don't feel pressured to make hasty decisions. 	

TA5: SAVING AND INVESTING TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do your homework first. Make sure you understand how investment opportunities work and who the key players are before jumping in. ○ These military-specific resources, developed by the Securities and Exchange Commission, are a great place to begin learning more about investing as a service member. ○ Make sure you're working with a professional. Before committing funds, research your investor's credentials with the SEC. ○ If you want to get into investing, here are 10 suggestions from investor.gov to help you understand the basics and protect your money. ● Compound interest is what makes investing a long-term approach. Calculate your potential yield for extra motivation to stick with it! 	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Other Investment Opportunities article ● Investing Basics: Bonds, Stocks and Mutual Funds article ● Understanding Interest and How to Calculate It article <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is Risk? article – Investor.gov ● Telltale Signs of Fraud – smartcheck.gov ● Military resources- Investor.gov ● Investment Advisor Public Disclosure website - SEC ● Saving and Investing for Military Personnel 10 suggestions - Investor.gov ● Compound Interest Calculator – Investor.gov 	
<p>TLO: Understand and be able to manage a Thrift Savings Plan account.</p> <p>As a service member, the Thrift Savings Plan is available to you, regardless of the retirement program you participate in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include contributions to your TSP in your regular financial planning, and be sure you strive to max out your contribution annually. ● If you participate in the Blended Retirement System, you will be automatically enrolled in the Thrift Savings Plan, but increasing your contribution to the maximum allowed, is up to you. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are automatically enrolled in TSP on or after Oct. 1, 2020, your contribution amount will begin at 5%. ○ If you were automatically enrolled prior to Oct. 1, 2020, your contribution began at 3% and will remain at 3% unless you make adjustments to it. 	<p>Of active-duty service members, 68% indicated that they were knowledgeable about understanding Thrift Savings Plan. Senior officers (84%), junior officers (73%) and senior enlisted members (71%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (60%) were less likely.</p> <p>Of active-duty service members, 65% said they routinely use the following to manage their finances: contribute to the Thrift Savings</p>

TA5: SAVING AND INVESTING TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember, the TSP is a long-term investment in your future. You have to stick with it to see the real rewards that come with compounding interest. There are different types of TSP accounts you can open. Be sure to do your homework and opt for the one that works best for your goals. 	<p>Plan. Navy (74%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Army (59%) were less likely. Senior officers (75%) and junior officers (69%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior enlisted members (59%) were less likely.</p>
FINRED Resources: N/A Collaborator Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thrift Savings Plan information – TSP.gov Thrift Savings Plan Options: Making Your Retirement Dollars Work for You article – Military OneSource 	

TA6: MAJOR PURCHASE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<p>TLO: Analyze the implications and identify strategies for financing a <u>major purchase</u>. Plan ahead and make smart funding choices, so that buying the big things doesn't get you down.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and saving for a major purchase is the best way to get the things you want without negatively impacting your finances. But when time isn't on your side, make sure your purchase doesn't leave you with buyer's remorse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take your time and research options for your purchase. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider these tips for researching online purchases. If you have to finance your purchase, look into several loan offers before choosing one. Consider your long-term goals and where this purchase fits in. Work with a personal financial manager to develop some purchasing strategies you'll feel good about. Having good credit can make a big difference if you need to rent a home, buy a car or obtain insurance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a big purchase is on the horizon, put some time into researching and improving your credit score. It could really pay off. 	
FINRED Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow With Confidence: Know the True Cost of Your Loan car loan infographic 	

TA6: MAJOR PURCHASE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
Collaborator Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing Products Online article - FTC 	
<p>TLO: Analyze financial implications and identify strategies for <u>buying a car</u>. Make sure your car-buying experience is a good one and doesn't leave you with financial regret.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing a car is a major investment. Make sure you take your military lifestyle into account while making your decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have a plan for deployment, long-term TDY or an overseas PCS before you buy or lease a car. ○ Check in with a personal financial manager to get advice on the car-buying process, and explore purchase, lease and financing options that are a good fit for your lifestyle and goals. ○ If you're overseas or returning from 30+ days overseas, you may be able to purchase a new vehicle tax-free. Check with your exchange to see what benefits you may have earned while away. • Not all "new" cars come straight from the factory. Consider whether a used or pre-owned vehicle will work for you. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between deployments and PCSs, it's not hard to find used cars for sale on an installation. Before you hand over a check in the lemon lot, make sure you do some homework on the vehicle's history. Ask the important questions before you buy. ○ If you're prepared to purchase a used car, take time to check the vehicle history, repair records, recalls and safety test to ensure the car you're buying is as good as it looks on paper. ○ Follow these steps to make sure you stay in control of your money and feel good about your purchase. 	<p>Of active-duty service members, 58% indicated that they received information on purchasing a vehicle. Navy (66%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item, whereas members in the Army (51%) were less likely. Junior enlisted members (62%) were more likely than members in the other paygrades to indicate</p>
FINRED Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It Pays to Visit a Personal Financial Counselor flyer Collaborator Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying a Used Car article – militaryconsumer.gov • Used vehicle history resources – vehiclehistory.gov • Take Control of Your Auto Loan article –CFPB 	
<p>TLO: Understand the financial implications of <u>purchasing and owning a home</u>. Homeownership is a substantial commitment. Consider all of your goals and options when making the decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the amount of moving you do, the question of renting or buying a home seems to come up a lot, and the answer must be tailored to your personal and financial goals. Here are some thoughts to consider as you weigh your options. 	<p>Of active-duty service members, 39% indicated that they received information on purchasing real estate. Navy (43%) members were more likely than members in the other services to indicate this item. Senior officers (44%) were more likely than members in the</p>

TA6: MAJOR PURCHASE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you know you can talk over your housing plans with a HUD counselor? Call 800-569-4287 to get advice on buying a home, renting, default or foreclosure avoidance. You can also set up an appointment with an official housing counselor by locating an office near you. • If you decide to purchase a home, research your finances and the mortgage options ahead of time. Start your shopping with these tips. • The VA Home Loan is a substantial benefit available to service members, veterans and surviving spouses who are looking to purchase a home for personal occupancy. There are eligibility and purchasing requirements that need to be considered, but for those who choose a VA loan, there can also be significant benefits. <p>As a service member, you'll likely be weighing your housing options every few years. Developing a budget in conjunction with this decision can really impact whether or not you love where you live.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At most duty stations, you will have a choice of where to live — on or off the installation, in government or privatized housing, or in a home that you purchase. Consider how your options impact your finances before finalizing your decision. • Consider the allowances associated with the area and work them into your budget. Once you've developed your new spending plan, use the amount you've factored in for housing, utilities and insurance to drive your housing search. • Even if you know you want to live on the installation, you may have to make a plan B in case you end up on a waiting list. • Even local moves can be expensive. Take your time when deciding where to live, so you're less likely to make a change mid-tour. 	<p>other paygrades to indicate this item, whereas junior officers (34%) were less likely.</p>
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider Your Housing Options. Is Renting Right for You? flyer • Consider Your Housing Options. Is Buying Right for You? flyer <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying a Home- Active Duty article - militaryconsumer.gov • Buying a Home information and resources - HUD.gov • Find a Housing Counselor - HUD.gov • Homes & Mortgages resources -FTC • Preparing to Shop for your Mortgage tips - CFPB • VA Home Loan information - VA 	
<p>TLO: Understand <u>education financing</u>, including available benefits, obligations and repayment options. Educational diplomas and certificates can carry a lot of weight. Research ways to make sure they don't also carry a lot of debt.</p>	

TA6: MAJOR PURCHASE TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Statistics <i>(All statistics are from the DoD survey: Financial Literacy and Preparedness of Members of the Armed Forces (2017))</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition assistance and the GI Bill are just two of the education assistance programs that will help you keep money in your pocket while you continue your education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Explore voluntary education resources to learn more about what’s out there for service members looking to further their education. • Make sure you explore all of your options before committing funds. • Military spouses have access to loans and scholarships for funding education, as well. Visit your Family Center or contact Military OneSource to learn more about military spouse-specific programs. • Student loans are a target for scammers. • If you entered the military with student loan debt, there are several programs that may help you pay it off faster or even forgive some of the debt. Know your options and take control of your financial future. <p>Learn more about Zero Percent Student Loan Interest Relief and see if you qualify for assistance.</p>	
<p>FINRED Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero Percent Student Loan Interest Relief factsheet <p>Collaborator Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Education website – Military OneSource • Paying for Your Education article – militaryconsumer.gov • Education benefits for spouses - Military OneSource • FTC Continues to Crack Down on Student Loan Scams article-FTC • Federal Student Loan Benefits for Members of the Armed Forces guide – studentaid.gov 	

2020 Financial Readiness Annual Communication Calendar

First Quarter 2020: January-March	
Quarterly focus: Basic finance - Recognize the importance of personal financial management and what resources are available. Major purchases - Analyze financial implications and identify strategies for buying a car.	
Campaigns: None currently scheduled	
Mini-campaigns: Credit Education Month (March) National Consumer Protection Week (March 1-7)	
Key dates, seasons and observances:	
Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week	1/27-1/31
National Consumer Protection Week	3/3-3/9
White House fiscal year 2021 budget release	TBD
Other key dates for social media promotion:	
January promotions	1/1
New Year's Day	1/1
Data Privacy Day	1/28
February promotions	2/1
March promotions	3/1
Second Quarter 2020: April-June	
Quarterly focus: Planning for the future - Discuss the reasons, needs, types and options for purchasing insurance.	
Campaigns: Financial Capability Month (April)	
Key dates, seasons and observances:	
Month of the Military Child	4/1-4/30

National Retirement Planning Week	4/6-4/10
PCS season	5/1-8/31
Month of the Military Caregiver	5/1-5/31
National Military Appreciation Month	5/1-5/31
Financial aid applications due	6/30
Other key dates for social media promotion: (Official service pages will be monitored for significant promotion lists and monetary incentive programs.)	
April promotions	4/1
National Gold Star Spouses Day	4/5
Tax Day	4/15
National High Five Day	4/16
Teach the Children to Save Day	4/24
FINRED Training Symposium	4/28-4/30
May promotions	5/1
Military Spouse Appreciation Day	5/8
Armed Forces Day	5/16
West Point and Naval Academy graduations	5/22
Memorial Day	5/25
Air Force Academy graduation	5/28
National 529 Day	5/29
June promotions	6/1
Army birthday	6/14
Third Quarter 2020: July-September	
Quarterly focus: Compensation, benefits and entitlements - Examine the impact of special pay and entitlements. Consumer protection - Recognize and identify steps to resolve identify theft.	
Campaigns: Military Consumer Month (July)	
Key dates, seasons and observances:	
PCS season (continued)	7/1-8/31
Back-to-school season	7/1-9/30
Other key dates for social media promotion: (Official service pages will be monitored for significant promotion lists and monetary incentive programs.)	

July promotions	7/1
Independence Day	7/4
August promotions	8/1
Coast Guard birthday	8/4
September promotions	9/1
Labor Day	9/7
9/11 Remembrance Day	9/11
Air Force birthday	9/18
Fourth Quarter 2020: October-December	
Quarterly focus:	
Saving and investing - Understand and be able to manage a Thrift Savings Plan account.	
Campaigns:	
National Financial Planning Month (October)	
Key dates, seasons and observances:	
Financial aid application period opens	10/1
Federal fiscal year 2020 begins	10/1
World Investor Week	TBD
National Retirement Security Week	10/18-10/24
Military Family Month	11/1-11/30
Other key dates for social media promotion:	
October promotions	10/1
Navy birthday	10/13
National Day of the Deployed	10/26
November promotions	11/1
Marine Corps birthday	11/10
Veterans Day	11/11
Thanksgiving Day	11/26
December promotions	12/1
National Guard birthday	12/13

Legal Requirements for a Military Financial Readiness Program

The legal requirements for a military financial readiness program are found in Section 992 of Title 10, U.S. Code (U.S. Code, 2017), which includes training, counseling and survey requirements.

Training

The law outlines the following components of a financial literacy training program for service members and requires individual branches of the military to implement them:

- Financial services provided by the military
- Financial services routinely offered by private-sector sources
- Practices relating to the marketing of private-sector financial services to members
- Other matters relating to financial services available to service members
- Any other financial practices the branch of service considers appropriate

The law further requires that training be provided to service members under the following circumstances:

- As a component of the initial entry training
- Upon arrival at the first duty station
- Upon arrival at each subsequent duty station for service members in pay grades E-4 or below or O-3 or below
- On the date of promotion of the member for service members in pay grades E-5 or below or O-4 or below
- When the service member vests in the TSP
- When the service member becomes entitled to receive continuation pay, at which time the training shall include, at a minimum, information on options available to the member regarding the use of continuation pay
- At each major life event during the service of the member, including marriage, divorce, birth of first child, or disabling sickness or condition
- During leadership training
- During pre-deployment training and during post-deployment training
- At transition points such as transition from an active component to a reserve component, separation from service or retirement
- As a component of periodically recurring required training provided at a military installation
- Any other events or circumstances that the branch of service determines

Counseling

In addition to financial literacy training, the law also requires financial counseling services for service members and their spouses within the following parameters:

- For larger installations (at least 2,000 assigned active-duty service members), the law requires counseling through a full-time, qualified financial services counselor.
- At smaller installations, the law allows counseling to be provided by service members or DOD civilians as an additional duty, through contract or via civilian organizations operating under formal agreements with the DOD.
- Counseling that includes information on life insurance offered by private-sector sources must also include information about Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

Surveys

The law requires that the DMDC annually assess the status of the financial literacy and preparedness of service members and that survey results are used as a benchmark to evaluate and update financial literacy trainings.