

2026 Strategic Communications Plan

January 2026



U.S. Department of War





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Executive Summary

To support the financial well-being of its members, the Department of War (DOW) communicates with Service members, their families, leaders and service providers, as well as internal and external collaborators to enhance financial readiness and literacy efforts through a collection of resources.

Recognizing that financial readiness directly impacts mission readiness, this annual plan serves as a framework for the DOW's communication and outreach efforts in the military financial readiness space. It aligns with the Department's priorities and is intended to further the delivery of training and learning objectives outlined in the Inventory of Financial Literacy Knowledge and Skills (the Inventory). This plan identifies communication goals, key audiences, and tactics.

DOW's Office of Military Compensation and Financial Readiness (MC&FR) created this plan to foster collaboration among DOW organizations with common goals. It does not prescribe or assign tasks to any other organization. Rather, it offers a glimpse at the efforts the Department's Financial Readiness (FINRED) Program will undertake throughout the year.

Further, it is a living document that will be reviewed quarterly and adjusted as needed. It will identify the most timely and appropriate topics, as well as which outreach methods best match the evolving needs and changing environments of Service members and their families.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Enhance audience engagement with DOW financial literacy resources by strengthening its position as a trusted, unbiased and nonjudgmental source of financial education across digital platforms.

Objective: Increase measurable engagement rates (likes, shares, comments and click-throughs) on DOW financial literacy content by developing and promoting educational posts that emphasize the DOW's trusted, nonjudgmental source.

Goal 2: Foster an environment of financial resilience by using digital channels to normalize knowledge-seeking behaviors and reduce perceived stigmas within the military community.

Objective: Achieve an increase in digital content interactions that reference help-seeking behaviors (e.g., use of financial counseling, peer support or military aid programs), reducing stigma and normalizing financial readiness support.

Goal 3: Promote broader awareness of the economic benefits of military service throughout the military life cycle by highlighting relevant financial topics across digital channels.

Objective: Publish digital features (e.g., articles or digital design pages (DDPs)) over the next year that highlight the economic benefits of military service to increase awareness across Service members' career stages. Benefits include housing allowances, retirement plans and education benefits.

Goal 4: Sustain and evolve DOW financial readiness communication channels so they remain current, relevant and widely shared across digital platforms.



Objective: Conduct a content audit and implement updates to existing digital financial readiness materials each quarter to ensure accuracy, relevance and alignment with evolving platform trends and user engagement metrics.

2026 Communications Calendar

This calendar serves as a year-long framework for strategic communications planning, organized by quarter. It identifies observances and key dates to guide content creation across digital platforms. Engaging collaborators and stakeholders in developing and reviewing the calendar ensures alignment with organizational communication priorities, shaping digital communications throughout the year. FINRED will oversee quarterly calendar reviews in line with the annual Comprehensive Communications Plan, fostering collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders as needed.

First Quarter 2026: January-March	
Digital Calendars: January, February, March	
Quarterly Theme: Financial Wellness, Tax Season	
Key Dates, Seasons and Observances:	
National Consumer Protection Week	March 1-7
Other Key Dates for Social Media Promotion:	
New Year's Day	Jan. 1
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Jan. 19
Presidents Day	Feb. 16
Coast Guard Reserve birthday	Feb. 19
Navy Reserve birthday	March 3



Second Quarter 2026: April-June	
Digital Calendars: FINCAP, April, May, June	
Quarterly Theme: Financial Capability: Building Your Financial Foundation	
Key Dates, Seasons and Observances:	
National Financial Capability Month (FINCAP)	April
Month of the Military Child	April
Peak PCS season	May-August
Month of the Military Caregiver	May
National Military Appreciation Month	May
Military Spouse Appreciation Day	May 8
Other Key Dates for Social Media Promotion:	
National Gold Star Spouses Day	April 5
Air Force Reserve birthday	April 14
Tax Day	April 15
Army Reserve birthday	April 23
Armed Forces Day	May 16
Memorial Day	May 25
National 529 Day	May 29
Army birthday	June 14
Juneteenth National Independence Day	June 19
FINRED and Collaborator Outreach Events:	
DOW Financial Readiness Training Symposium	TBD



Third Quarter 2026: July-September	
Digital Calendars: Military Consumer Month, July, August, September	
Quarterly Theme: Protecting Your Assets	
Key Dates, Seasons and Observances:	
Peak PCS season (continued)	May-August
Military Consumer Month	July
Back-to-school season	August
National Preparedness Month	September
National Suicide Prevention Month	September
Other Key Dates for Social Media Promotion:	
Independence Day	July 4
Coast Guard birthday	Aug. 4
Marine Corps Reserve birthday	Aug. 29
Labor Day	Sept. 7
9/11 Remembrance Day/Patriot Day	Sept. 11
Air Force birthday	Sept. 18



Fourth Quarter 2026: October-December	
Digital Calendars: Financial Planning Month, October, November, December	
Quarterly Theme: Planning Your Financial Future	
Key Dates, Seasons and Observances:	
Financial Planning Month	October
National Veterans and Military Families Month	November
National Family Caregivers Month	November
Federal Benefits Open Season: Flexible Spending Accounts and TRICARE	November-December
Other Key Dates for Social Media Promotion:	
Navy birthday	Oct. 13
National Day of the Deployed	Oct. 26
Marine Corps birthday	Nov. 10
Veterans Day	Nov. 11
Thanksgiving Day	Nov. 26
National Guard birthday	Dec. 13
Space Force birthday	Dec. 20



DEPARTMENT OF WAR (DOW) OFFICE OF MILITARY COMPENSATION AND FINANCIAL READINESS LINK-BACK GUIDE

For Promoting Awareness and Sharing Resources

Overview

The Department of War (DOW) Financial Readiness (FINRED) Program is dedicated to supporting Service members and their families in achieving personal financial readiness, which is vital for mission readiness.

This link-back guide equips .gov and .mil partners with tools to promote the FINRED website (<https://finred.usalearning.gov>) and its trusted resources. Partnering with FINRED expands access to vital financial tools and resources while simultaneously enhancing partner organizations' online visibility and credibility.

How You Can Help

We appreciate your support in amplifying FINRED's impact. We will return the favor by linking to trusted agencies and organizations that support DOW FINRED's mission. Here are a few ways you can help:

1. Link to FINRED (and Request a Link-Back)

Help us spread the word by adding a link to DOW FINRED (<https://finred.usalearning.gov>) on your webpage. Share this HTML snippet with your website administrator to get started:

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<a href="https://finred.usalearning.gov" target="_blank">Office of Military Compensation and Financial Readiness</a>
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We provide a list of Federal departments and agencies on the DOW FINRED website. If you would like to be included in this link-back list, please contact support@usalearning.net and we will consider your request.

2. Send an Email

Facilitate outreach coordination by sending an email to your colleagues and end users.

3. Follow and Post (or Repost) on Social Media

Stay connected and follow @DoDFINRED on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube. Please share or repost content from our social media accounts:

QR Code



Enhance user engagement and help mobile device users easily access the DOW FINRED website with our QR code, included as an external file named "finred-qr-code.png"