

# What to Expect When a Loved One is Deployed

While everyone's experience with deployment is unique, there are some common challenges and emotional responses that many people experience. **Here are some typical things to expect:**

- **Emotional Rollercoaster:** You may feel a wide range of emotions, from pride and patriotism to worry, anxiety, loneliness, and sadness. These emotions can fluctuate daily or even hourly.
- **Communication Challenges:** Communication may be limited or sporadic. Expect delays in responses due to time zone differences, mission priorities, and technological limitations.
- **Changes in Routine:** The absence of your loved one can disrupt daily routines and responsibilities. You may find yourself stepping into new roles or adjusting to a different family dynamic.
- **Worry and Stress:** It's natural to worry about your loved one's safety and well-being during deployment.
- **Pride and Resilience:** Despite the challenges, many families discover strength and resilience during deployments. You may uncover inner strengths and abilities you didn't realize you had.
- **Uncertainty:** Deployments often bring uncertainty about the future, including when your loved one will return and what life will look like afterward.
- **Practical Considerations:** Managing household responsibilities may fall entirely on your shoulders, adding to the stress of the situation.
- **Homecoming Preparation:** The anticipation of your loved one's return can bring mixed emotions.

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## Practical tips for navigating the challenges of having a loved one deployed:

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- **Stay Connected:** Make the most of communication channels to maintain contact with your loved one.
- **Create Routines:** Establishing routines can offer stability and help maintain a sense of normalcy.
- **Seek Support:** Reach out to friends, family, and support groups. Connecting with others who are experiencing similar situations can be comforting and provide valuable insights.
- **Take Care of Yourself:** Prioritize your well-being by eating healthily, exercising regularly, and getting enough rest. Practice relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or meditation, to manage stress.
- **Set Goals:** Setting goals can help maintain focus and provide motivation throughout the deployment.
- **Stay Informed:** Knowing what to expect can reduce anxiety and help you better prepare for any changes.
- **Prepare for Homecoming:** Start planning for your loved one's return well in advance to ease the transition..
- **Stay Positive:** Focus on the positives and celebrate milestones, both big and small, to keep morale high.

**The EAP is here to support USPS military members, veterans, and your families in addressing challenges accompanying deployment. Reach out for assistance and resources.**