



Coalition and Valued Associates Advocacy and Actions...

ALA members and our military resale partners will not be surprised to learn that:

Commissaries and exchanges ranked as the number one used DoD services by active duty service members, veterans and their families.

According to the results of the Blue Star Families fifth annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey released this week, the five most used DoD services were:

- Commissary and Exchange – 95%
- Military Health Care System – 82%
- Morale, Welfare and Recreation – 72%
- Base Housing – 61%
- Child Development Centers – 33%

More than **6,200 service members, veterans, and military spouses participated in the survey**, with more than half identifying themselves as active duty spouses. Sixty-five percent of respondents were affiliated with enlisted service personnel. Sixty-four percent of respondents were in the 25-44 age group, and fifty-two percent were in the ranks of E5 to E9.

The survey covered a wide range of topics with **more than two-thirds of military family members expressing concern about their military pay and benefits, and changes to their retirement benefits.**

Nearly fifty percent of service members and spouses indicated that financial issues were their top stressor during their time in the military, and 60% of respondents indicated that their family's current financial condition caused "some stress" or a "great deal of stress." The top three obstacles to financial security were:

- Spouse employment – 40%
- Uncertainty in military life – 38%
- Uncertainty in potential changes in benefits – 34%

Even more telling, **sixty-two percent of respondents said they have "no" or "hardly any" confidence in the federal government.**

According to Dr. Debbie Bradbard, Ph.D., Director of Research and Policy for Blue Star Families, "We have policy changes happening at the national level, but the impact will be felt at the family level, and people are waiting to see what that means to them personally."

Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families helped design the survey, and many of our Coalition valued associate member organizations helped distribute it to their members.

To learn more, we suggest you read the [2014 Military Lifestyle Executive Summary](#).