

Puzzle Pieces.

These bits of information may seem insignificant. However, to a trained adversary, they are small pieces of a puzzle that highlight what U.S. forces are doing and planning. Remember, the elements of security and surprise are vital to the accomplishment of U.S. goals and collective DoD personnel protection.

Where and how you discuss this information is just as important as with whom you discuss it. Adversaries' agents tasked with collecting information frequently visit some of the same stores, clubs, recreational areas, or places of worship as you do. If anyone, especially a foreign national, persistently seeks information, notify the authorities immediately.



Terrorists have said they are hunting people and their families at home. An Al Qaeda handbook tells its terrorists to seek out “Information about government personnel, officers, important personalities, and all matters related to those (resident, work place, times of leaving and returning, wives and children, places visited).”¹

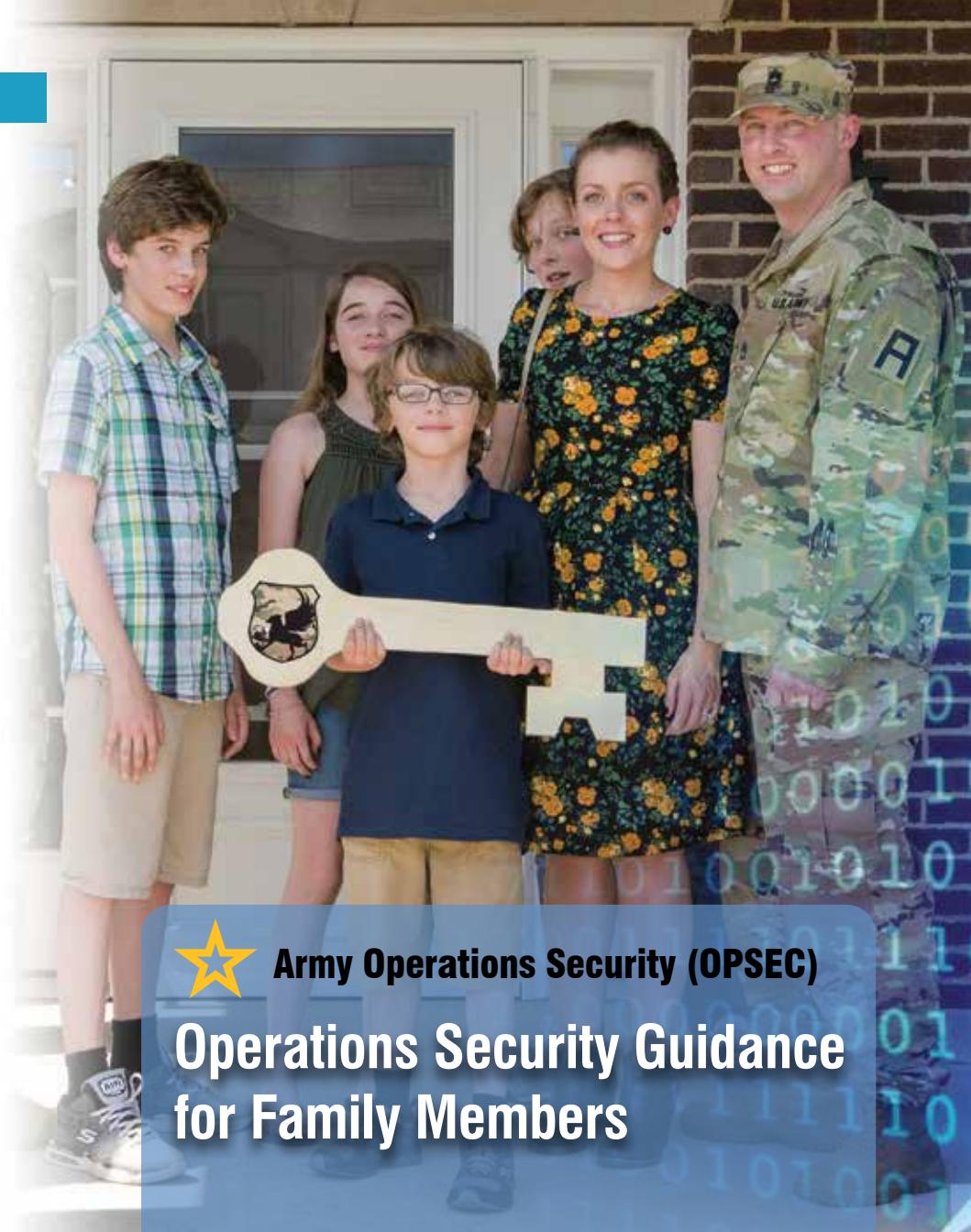
¹ US Central Command website
<https://www.centcom.mil/VISITORS-AND-PERSONNEL/SOCIAL-MEDIA-SECURITY/>

HQDA Antiterrorism Division

Email: usarmy.pentagon.hqda.list.aoc-at-division@army.mil



Always Ready, Always Alert
Because someone is depending on you



 **Army Operations Security (OPSEC)**

Operations Security Guidance for Family Members

There are many countries and organizations that would like to harm Americans and degrade U.S. influence in the world. It is possible and not unprecedented for spouses and family members of U.S. Military personnel to be targeted for intelligence collection. This is true in the United States and especially true overseas. Family members play a crucial role in ensuring safety just by protecting known information about military day-to-day operations. Understanding critical information and identifying the methods adversaries use to collect this information is vital to the success of the operations security (OPSEC) program.

Be Alert.

Foreign governments and organizations can collect significant amounts of useful information by using spies. A foreign agent may use a variety of approaches to befriend someone and get sensitive information. This sensitive information can be critical to the success of a terrorist or spy and, consequently, deadly to Americans. Their methods have become very sophisticated. The Internet has become the preferred method of gathering information. Family members may unwittingly provide all the necessary information to compromise the military members' mission.

Be Careful.

There may be times when the military spouse cannot talk about the specifics of his or her job. It is very important to conceal and protect certain information such as flight schedules, ship movements, temporary duty locations, and installation activities, just to name a few.

Cover Photo by Kevin Fleming, ASC Public Affairs. Photo Credit: U.S. Army

Something as simple as a phone discussion concerning where the military spouse is going on temporary duty, or deploying to, can be very useful to U.S. adversaries.

Protect Critical Information.

Even though this information may not be classified, it is what the Department of Defense calls "critical information." Critical information deals with specific facts about military intentions, capabilities, operations, or activities. If an adversary knew this detailed information, U.S. mission accomplishment and personnel safety could be jeopardized. It must be protected to ensure an adversary does not gain a significant advantage. By being a member of the military family, some bits of critical information might be known. Do not discuss them outside of the immediate family and especially not over the telephone or through e-mails. Be careful of the information shared on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.

- Examples of Critical Information
- Detailed information about the mission of assigned units.
- Details concerning locations and times of unit deployments.
- Personnel transactions that occur in large numbers (e.g., pay information, power of attorney, wills, or deployment information).
- References to trends in unit morale or personnel problems.
- Details concerning security procedures.
- Family members' personal information.

