



This Month's **ADVICE** AUGUST 2023

IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS



Military Family
Resource Centre
Montreal Region

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Canada

Andréanne's testimonial

The last few years have been very difficult for our family but we eventually found the supports that were necessary. Our son has had many difficulties at school, but we finally obtained a psychological evaluation and services for him, in the school and through a private clinic. We have learned that my husband, Mathieu will be transferred somewhere in the west of Canada, and the idea of starting over, finding services for our son, uprooting our kids from their francophone environment, losing my job (which allows us to pay for services from the private sector) scares me very much. The cost of living is higher in the west and I don't know if our family can survive if we are forced to start over. Is there anything we can do?

A little perspective:

- 1) In this example, Andréanne would like, at best, to have her husband and family stay where they are. One way for them to stay together when her husband has been notified of a posting is for her husband to request and obtain *compassionate status and compassionate posting*. Compassionate status is the status assigned to a CAF member whose personal circumstances limit the CAF member's deployability or ability to perform duties. A compassionate posting is a posting approved to alleviate the personal circumstances of a CAF member who is assigned compassionate status.
- 2) A second option is for her husband Mathieu to apply for *imposed restriction*. Imposed restriction: an approved delay in moving dependents as well as household goods and effects for one calendar year, with the possibility of extension up to a maximum of five calendar years. Imposed Restriction is a status, not a benefit. In this case Andréanne and the children would remain where they are but Mathieu would be posted. Financial arrangements are made so that the family does not suffer from having an additional lodging. The MFRC can give assistance to the family to help sustain the communication with the absent parent, and offer support to remaining parent. In addition, Support our Troops offers financial support for families with children with special needs; consult the MFRC to apply for this support.

In principle all military members and their families must move together to their new posting. Exceptions are approved by the chain of command with concern for the family, the obligation of the member to perform his or her role, and the principle of equitable treatment of all members.

If the applications are not successful, the military member can request transfer to the reserve to avoid posting. The reserve does not offer the same job security as being a regular member, but allows the reservist to accept or refuse postings. The reservist has to obtain contracts for work for which he or she is qualified, and much depends on the qualifications of the member and the availability of appropriate contracts.

If the member decides to apply for Compassionate Status or Imposed Restrictions, it is important that the Chain of Command be aware of all the reasons for the request; it is important that psychosocial services, military, MFRC or other, be used to deal with the special circumstances, and be used as references in the request; and finally the Padres should be kept informed of all issues and steps taken, so that they also may support the request of the member, if appropriate.

If, finally, the family accepts the posting, they should consult the MFRC in the new community to find what services are offered to help with integration into the new community.

Some suggestions for broaching the issue with your family:

- The parents have to discuss the issues as a couple and agree on their priorities, and how they define work/family balance. The parents should look at each option and try to project themselves into the future: will they feel happy with each other with the choices they have made? If the adults cannot agree on priorities there is a need for consultation to prevent damage to the family.
- Once the adults agree on their priorities, they can set up their plan, and then they should talk about it with the children, in an age appropriate way. If the plan involves the military member being absent (imposed restrictions) then the parents should start talking about it long before it happens. The children need to get used to the idea long before the separation happens; they need to get used to the new ways they will keep in touch with the absent parent.
- The MFRC offers counselling for all members of the family, and if the changes are stressful it is always helpful to talk them through with someone neutral who knows the military way of life.
- **Take one thing at a time**; you can't do everything at once.
- **Stay optimistic**; believe that good things will still happen.

As a parent, how can I maintain my well being?

Stay focused on the fact that the problem is the insecurity around the proposed posting, not your family.

- o Seek out concrete information about the new reality that awaits you and make plans as a family
- o Make decisions together
- o Exercise enough to get rid of some of the tension in your body
- o Do some breathing exercises



References

- Instr Pers Mil des FC 01/17 – Statut de restriction imposée (RI)
- Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman: Guide for steps to follow for requestion Compassionate Status or a Compassionate Posting
- Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman: FAQ Posting and Relocation

Do you need help?

If you have any questions, concerns or in need of support, do not hesitate to contact the psychosocial counsellor at the Montreal Military Family Resource Centre by telephone: 450-358-7099 ext. 2917 (Saint-Jean), 450 462-8777 ext. 6821 (Saint-Hubert) or by e-mail: SvcPersCRFMSoutienPsySt-Jean@forces.gc.ca.