



COMDTINST 1750.6E
10 DECEMBER 2019

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1750.6E

Subj: COAST GUARD SPOUSES' CLUBS

- Ref:
- (a) Coast Guard Ombudsman Program, COMDTINST 1750.4 (series)
 - (b) Acceptance and Accounting for Special Projects and Other Gifts to the Coast Guard from Non-Federal Sources, COMDTINST 5760.14 (series)
 - (c) Standards of Ethical Conduct, COMDTINST M5370.8 (series)
 - (d) 5 C.F.R. Part 2635
 - (e) Coast Guard Morale, Well-Being, and Recreation Manual, COMDTINST M1710.13 (series)
 - (f) Coast Guard External Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5700.13 (series)
 - (g) Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment and Services, COMDTINST 5375.1 (series)

1. PURPOSE. To provide policy, program guidance, and assign responsibilities for Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs. References (a) through (g) apply.
2. ACTION. All unit commanders, commanding officers (COs), officers-in-charge (OICs), deputy/assistant commandants, chiefs of headquarter staff elements, and reserve units must comply with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs, COMDTINST 1750.6D, is hereby cancelled.
4. BACKGROUND.
 - a. A spouses' club, sometimes referred to as a spouse association, is a private association, closely-affiliated with the command. It may be comprised of family members, Coast Guard members, and civilians associated with the command and its personnel. Some

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spouses' clubs may include the spouses of all Coast Guard service members regardless of the sponsor's rank and pay grade.

- b. Spouses' clubs have four main goals: provide a support system, create fellowship opportunities, offer community service, and furnish educational information. All clubs seek to improve the quality of life of their members, while promoting the feeling of belonging to the Coast Guard community.
 - c. The Coast Guard Ombudsman Program is governed by Reference (a). The ombudsman serves as the official liaison between the command and its families. Spouses' clubs operate distinctly from the Ombudsman Program. An ombudsman may collaborate with spouses' clubs on behalf of the command, but must not serve as a spouses' club officer (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, or in any other spouses' club position) in any military branch spouses' club or equivalent association. However, ombudsmen may participate in any military branch spouses' club or equivalent association in a personal capacity.
 - d. Spouses' clubs provide important community outreach for newcomers. For example, clubs can provide newly assigned families with relocation-related information to reduce the stress from recent moves. Clubs may support the unit's ombudsman, assist with sponsor or orientation programs, conduct or coordinate community service projects, update relocation packages, provide community support in emergencies, and provide other types of support based on the unique needs of their local community.
 - e. Spouses' clubs support Coast Guard Work-Life programs by participating in selected family-related initiatives and sponsoring workshops or other training opportunities related to service benefits. Clubs may support these initiatives by, but not limited to, publishing articles in their newsletter, sending e-mails, or donating refreshments. Spouses' clubs may serve as a contingency resource for Work-Life events when Morale, Well-Being and Recreation (MWR) funding is not available or authorized. Any gift from a spouses' club must be treated and processed as a gift offer to the Coast Guard or a Coast Guard member, from a non-federal source, and must be resolved in accordance with the guidance on gift acceptance policies provided in References (b), (c) and (d).
5. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to, nor does it impose, legally binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
 6. MAJOR CHANGES. Major changes to this Instruction include clarification of the ombudsman's role in Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs, updates of websites, references, and Federal Plain Language Guidelines.
 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
 - a. The development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it have been thoroughly reviewed by the originating office in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Management, Commandant (CG-47). This Instruction is categorically

excluded under current Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion (CATEX) A3 from further environmental analysis in accordance with "Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)", DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01 (series).

- b. This Instruction will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment. All future specific actions resulting from the general policy in this Instruction must be individually evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Coast Guard NEPA policy, and compliance with all other applicable environmental mandates.
8. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) web sites. Internet: <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/directives/> and CG Portal: <https://cgportal.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
9. PROCEDURE.
- a. This Instruction does not establish rights or benefits to develop a spouses' club at a specific Coast Guard unit. COs/OICs will refer to Enclosure (2) of Reference (e) for guidance on administration and oversight of a private association, which grants COs/OICs authority to approve the development of a spouses' club at their command.
 - b. Use of Command Name, Seals, Logos, or Insignia.
 - (1) The spouses' club may use the name of the command in the name of the club, with the approval of the command CO/OIC.
 - (2) Spouses' clubs must not use the seals, logos, or insignia of the United States Coast Guard, Coast Guard components, or Coast Guard commands/units on letterhead, correspondence, titles, or in association with any spouses' club program, location or activity. Community Relations Division, Commandant (CG-09223) may authorize the use of the Coast Guard emblem or mark in appropriate circumstances. Refer to Chapter 3 of Reference (f) for additional information.
 - (3) The spouses' club status as a private association must be clearly identifiable. Printed material, websites, social media sites, and electronic media must include the prominent disclaimer: "This is a non-federal entity. This non-federal entity is not part of or endorsed by, the Department of Homeland Security or the United States Coast Guard and it has no governmental status."
 - c. Spouses' clubs sanctioned by their commands must adhere to the following guidelines in all fundraising activities:

- (1) Spouses' clubs must not solicit cash or non-cash donations on behalf of the command or imply that the Coast Guard officially endorses their fundraising activity.
- (2) As a private association, a spouses' club may fundraise. However, no Coast Guard member can officially endorse a Coast Guard spouses' club or engage in spouses' club fundraising activities in their official capacity.
- (3) Spouses' club members are generally permitted to solicit cash and non-cash donations for the spouses' club from non-federal sources.
- (4) Spouses' club members must not solicit any cash or non-cash donation for the spouses' club from any non-federal source that is a "prohibited source." See paragraph 12 for the definition of a prohibited source.
- (5) Spouses' clubs are permitted to accept unsolicited cash or non-cash donations to the spouses' club from all non-federal sources, including prohibited sources.
- (6) No spouses' club member, who also is a Coast Guard military member, is permitted to wear his or her uniform for any face-to-face donation solicitation. No spouses' club member, who also is a military member or federal employee, is permitted to use his or her federal title, position, status, or authority to solicit any non-federal source for any cash or non-cash donation to the spouses' club. When soliciting a cash or non-cash donation for the spouses' club from non-federal sources, spouses' club members must inform each non-federal source that the spouses' club is not part of the Coast Guard and, instead, is an affiliated private association and that all donations are strictly voluntary.
- (7) Spouses' club-sanctioning commands are responsible to ensure that spouses' clubs comply with the following solicitation rules:
 - (a) Spouses' clubs must obtain command permission to use Coast Guard property to conduct a fundraiser (e.g., baked goods sale, hot dog sale, car wash, etc.).
 - (b) Spouses' club members are prohibited from using orientation cruises, flights, or any other special access to Coast Guard real or personal property as a fundraising prize.
 - (c) Commands with questions regarding the spouses' club fund raising activities must seek advice from their servicing legal office.

d. Gifts.

- (1) A spouses' club may accept solicited and unsolicited gifts to the spouses' club without command approval.
- (2) A spouses' club must not accept a gift on behalf of a command or the Coast Guard.
- (3) COs/OICs must not accept a gift on behalf of a spouses' club.

- (4) Gift donations from a spouses' club to a Coast Guard command or to Coast Guard personnel must be processed in accordance with References (b), (c), or (d) as applicable.

e. Command Support.

- (1) Commands may permit properly-approved spouse's clubs to operate on Coast Guard property. Clubs must obtain the permission of the unit CO/OIC in writing and are subject to the constraints and requirements of Reference (e) regarding the use of Coast Guard facilities by private associations. Additional information about solicitation of funds and property from outside sources is available in Reference (c).
- (2) Commands may provide limited logistical support, such as access to command spaces, use of equipment, and command representative for spouse club events, based on the criteria listed in References (e) and (g).
- (3) Use of Coast Guard appropriated or non-appropriated funds are not authorized to support spouses' clubs. Per Reference (e), the morale fund, when available, may help fund activities that are for the benefit of all unit members.
- (4) Commands cannot routinely permit spouses' clubs to use Coast Guard nonappropriated fund or appropriated fund office equipment for spouses' club purposes. However, if the spouses' club purpose is not to conduct internal spouses' club business but, instead, is to benefit all members of the command, commands are permitted to allow spouses' clubs to use non-appropriated fund office equipment and appropriated fund office equipment on a no-cost, not-to-interfere basis.
- (5) Spouses' clubs must not use the Coast Guard e-mail system for either incoming or outgoing spouses' club e-mail.
- (6) Commands are permitted to allow spouses' clubs to use the unit's mailing address as the spouses' club's mailing address.
- (7) Commands are prohibited from giving a spouses' club any unit members' home address, personal e-mail, or any other personally identifiable information (PII).
- (8) Commands with questions regarding the propriety of spouses' club development or fundraising activities shall seek advice from their servicing legal office.

- f. The National Council of Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs (NCCGSC). The NCCGSC located in Washington, DC, is an advisory committee composed of Coast Guard officer and enlisted spouses. This Council provides guidance regarding the development of bylaws and the suggested structure of spouses' clubs. Individual spouses' clubs are encouraged to register with the NCCGSC at www.nationalcouncilofcgsc.org/ to enable the dissemination of club-related information as it becomes available.

10. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the directives clearance process, and it has been determined there are no

further records scheduling requirements, in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., NARA requirements, and Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. The Family Services Division, Commandant (CG-1112), must:
 - (1) Develop, publish, and maintain this Instruction to ensure compliance.
 - (2) In conjunction with the NCCGSC, publish and maintain a Spouses' Club Handbook to assist commands and spouses' clubs in maintaining appropriate support programs and activities. NCCGSC will maintain ownership of the handbook at www.nationalcouncilofcgsc.org.
 - (3) Serve as the liaison to the NCCGSC.
- b. The HSWL SC and HSWL RP staff must:
 - (1) Ensure wide dissemination of information about Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs.
 - (2) Assist families seeking information regarding this Instruction and/or spouses' clubs.
- c. COs/OICs:
 - (1) Must review bylaws prior to permitting a spouses' club's use of the command name. COs/OICs will ensure the spouses' club does not improperly use the command name in such a way that implies Coast Guard endorsement or is discrediting to the command or the Coast Guard.
 - (2) Must revoke a spouses' club permission to use the command name, when the spouses' club is not complying with applicable rules or conditions.
 - (3) Must deny any spouses' club request to endorse or support spouses' clubs events or fundraisers.
 - (4) May designate an official liaison to the spouses' club. The liaison may:
 - (a) Officially represent the command and act in an advisory capacity to the spouses' club in discussions of mutual interest;
 - (b) Serve as a conduit of information between the command and the spouses' club;
 - (c) Be an officer, senior enlisted member, or civilian employee of the command; and,
 - (d) Not direct or be involved in matters of management or control of the spouses' club.

12. DEFINITIONS.

- a. **Gift.** References (b), (c) and (d) define the term “gift.” A gift is anything that has monetary value. A gift can be tangible or intangible. For example, an automobile or forgiveness of debt owed on a car can each be a gift. Free hotel lodging can be a gift.
- b. **Prohibited Source.** References (b), (c), and (d) define the term “prohibited source.” A prohibited source is any person or entity that is seeking official action by the Coast Guard; does or seeks to do business with the Coast Guard; conducts activities regulated by the Coast Guard; or, has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of your official duties. An organization is a prohibited source if a majority of its members would individually be considered a prohibited source.
- c. **Government Property.** References (c) and (d) define the term government property. Government property includes any form of real or personal property in which the Government has an ownership, leasehold, or other property interest. This includes computers, internet access, office supplies, the Government mails, telephones, fax machines, printing and reproduction facilities, Government records, Government vehicles, Government vessels, and Government aircraft. It also includes any right or other intangible interest that is purchased with Government funds, including the services of contractor personnel.
- d. **Private Association.** Reference (e) defines the term private association. A self-sustaining, non-federal entity, incorporated or unincorporated, that are operated on Coast Guard installations with the written consent of the unit CO or higher authority, by individuals acting exclusively outside the scope of any official capacity as officers, employees, or agents of the Federal Government or its instrumentalities.

13. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

14. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Units and individuals may recommend changes by writing via the chain of command to Commandant (CG-1112); U.S. Coast Guard Stop 7907; 2703 Martin Luther King Jr, Ave SE; WASHINGTON, DC 20593-7907.

D. L. THOMAS /s/
 Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
 Director, Health, Safety and Work-Life