

Military Women and Wives

Introduction: San Diego County's military community is an immense physical and human presence. Although less than 1 percent of the entire U.S. population¹ lives in San Diego County, the region is home to more than 8 percent of the Active Duty U.S. military population. Notably, 110,728² Active Duty personnel are stationed in San Diego County. Once spouses and dependent children are included the military-related population in San Diego County is approximately 229,024. **Included within the military and military related populations are an estimated 11,647 active duty women, plus 43,965 wives or partners of active duty personnel – a combined total that exceeds 55 thousand women.** Assuming that 50 percent of the dependent children within military families are female, an additional 34,675 military daughters ages 0 to 18 can be added to this total.

More demographics:

- Approximately 15 percent of the US Navy personnel stationed in San Diego County are women, with similar proportions of female officers as enlisted personnel
- Approximately 6 percent of the US Marine Corps stationed in San Diego County are women, again with similar proportions of women occupying enlisted as officer ranks.
- More than 95 percent of the 46,106 military spouses in San Diego County, approximately 43,965 are likely to be women (24,447 Navy Wives plus 19,517 Marine Corps wives).

Table A: Active Duty Military Personnel Based in San Diego County by Major Branch, Rank and Gender				
Source: Military Families in San Diego, Needs Assessment, 2010 (Promises2Kids)				
	US Navy		US Marine Corps	
	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted
Totals	55,908		54,820	
Male	7,393	40,331	5,453	45,924
Female	1,281	6,923	335	3,108

Table B: Active Duty Family Members			
Source: Military Families in San Diego, Needs Assessment, 2010 (Promises2Kids)			
	Navy	Marine Corps	Totals³
Spouses	26,203	19,957	46,160
Children			
0-5	17,757	13,569	31,326
6-11	13,757	8,398	22,155
12-18	10,725	5,144	15,869

The overwhelming majority of military spouses, e.g. not members of the military, are female; 93.3 percent of Navy spouses are female and 97.8 percent of Marine Corps spouses are female.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 308,591,926 as of 31 January 2010, at <http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>

² Includes only U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps Active Duty Service members, who comprise the significant and primary, but not exclusive, Active Duty presence in San Diego County

³ Numbers may not total precisely due to rounding errors

Table C: Marital Status of the Active Duty Military Population in San Diego County Source: Demographics 2007, Profile of the Military Community				
	Navy		Marine Corps	
	Officer	Enlisted	Officer	Enlisted
Marital Status (% married)	55.1%		45.1%	
▪ Officer O7-O10	95.1%		95.2%	
▪ Officer O4-O6	86.7%		89.4%	
▪ Officer O1-O3	57.2%		54.1%	
▪ Warrant Officer W1-W5	88.1%		88.6%	
▪ Enlisted E7-E9		86.1%		86.5%
▪ Enlisted E5-E6		66.2%		70.7%
▪ Enlisted E1-E4		30.8%		26.5%
Active Duty members in dual-military marriages ⁴	5.4%		3.8%	
▪ Female Active Duty Members	18.8%		26.0%	
▪ Male Active Duty Members	3.2%		2.3%	

The challenges currently facing military families during this time of repeated and sustained deployments are documented in a report commissioned by Promises 2 Kids⁵ and include These are:

- Higher than average divorce rate
- Emotional burdens associated with separation, including anger, frustration, sadness, and loneliness.
- logistical challenges of repeatedly re-defining family structure
- Impact of parent emotional well-being on children
- Reported use of illegal substance and prescription drug abuse among U.S. military personnel
- Prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and the impact on long-term well-being and family stability
- Elevated risk for family violence and child abuse

Economic Self-Sufficiency and Stability Concerns: Military women are far from immune from economic stressors. Among the many pressures and challenges faced by military families are financial concerns. Financial concerns are more likely to be acute in a region like San Diego, with a comparatively high cost of living. The high cost of living in San Diego combined with low pay, particularly among younger enlisted ranks combine to render many of San Diego's military families part of our communities "working poor".

Housing costs – while a significant percentage of military families live on base housing many don't and have to compete with the general population for affordable housing. The Lincoln Military Housing partnership model has improved the quality of government-sponsored military family housing in San Diego County, but the fact remains that at least 70 percent of military families live in non-government sponsored private housing.⁶ San Diego ranked as the 13th

⁴ Active Duty members married to another Active Duty member or to a Reserve member

⁵ Military Families in San Diego County Needs Assessment November 2010 Conceived and commissioned By Promises 2 Kids (funded by The Leichtag Family Foundation)

⁶ This figure supplied by Bonnie New, Director of Web Marketing & Conservation, Lincoln Military Housing, 17 May 2010 and represented as an "official estimate coming from the Navy"

most unaffordable housing market out of 227 metro areas surveyed in 2010 figures reported by the National Association of Home Builders.

Cost of Living: By nearly any set of metrics, San Diego County is an expensive place to live. Various estimates put San Diego's cost of living between 30 percent and 50 percent above the national average.⁷

Pay: For enlisted ranks Basic Pay combined with Basic Allowance for Housing⁸ amounts to between \$38,779.20 and \$59,072.40 per year with the majority of enlisted personnel at the lower end of the scale, see Table D for additional details. According to the 2008 California Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard, the minimum needed by a family with two young children to meet basic needs in San Diego County is \$59,450.⁹ By contrast, median household income for San Diego families is \$63,727¹⁰, equating to \$5,310.58 per month.

Table D: Basic Pay and Housing Allowance for Active Duty Members in San Diego County by Pay Grade Source: Demographics 2007, Profile of the Military Community			
Rank	Monthly Basic Pay Range	Monthly Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Range	Totals
Enlisted			
E1-E5	\$1,338.60 to \$2,924.70	\$1,893 to \$1,998	\$3,231.60 to \$4,922.70
E6-E9	\$2,249.70 to \$7,096.50	\$2,133 to \$2,412	\$4,382.70 to \$9,508.50
Officers			
O1-O5	\$2,745.60 to \$8,198.40	\$2,013 to \$2,793	\$4,758.60 to \$10,991.40
O6-O10	\$5,788.50 to \$18,675.30	\$2,820 to \$2,847	\$8,608.50 to \$21,522.3

Employment: Employment is relevant because so many military spouses are employed or seek employment. Nearly half of Active Duty officer spouses – 48 percent - are either employed in the civilian labor force or seeking work. For spouses of Active Duty enlisted personnel, the figure is even higher – 55 percent.¹¹

⁷ 36% above the national average according to www.rent.com accessed 8 May 2010 at <http://www.rent.com/rentals/california/san-diego-and-vicinity/san-diego/>. 46.78% higher than the national average according to Sperling's Best Places accessed 8 May 2010 at http://www.bestplaces.net/city/san_diego-california.aspx. 37.8% higher than the national average according to www.city-data.com, data for San Diego County, accessed 8 May 2010, http://www.city-data.com/county/San_Diego_County-CA.html.

⁸ It should be noted that the Basic Pay + Basic Allowance for Housing do not reflect supplemental, deployment-related OIF/OEF Military Pay Entitlements such as Hostile Fire Pay (HFP)/Imminent Danger Pay (IDP), Combat Zone Tax Exclusion (CZTE), and Family Separation Allowance (FSA).

⁹ The 2008 California Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard, The Insight Center for Community Economic Development, May 2008: <http://www.insightcced.org/uploads/cfes/sss-exec-summ-final-050908.pdf>.

¹⁰ "Fact Sheet, San Diego County, California, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates", U.S. Census Bureau: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFacts?_event=Search&geo_id=04000US06&_geoContext=01000US%7C04000US06&_street=&_county=San+Diego+County&_cityTown=San+Diego+County&_state=04000US06&_zip=&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=geoSelect&_useEV=&pctxt=fph&p

¹¹ **Demographics 2007, Profile of the Military Community**, published by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy), data provided by DMDC.