

Sponsor's Guide to Onboarding & Acculturation

8th Army Onboarding & Acculturation Program

Congratulations on being selected as a Sponsor!



Introduction

You have been selected as a sponsor because you exemplify the Army's and our organization's values and mission, you are familiar with formal/informal organizational structures and culture and have excellent communications and interpersonal skills.

This guide has been created to help you be effective and successful in your role as sponsor, and to explain the 8th Army Onboarding and Acculturation program and your responsibilities. It also includes tips and tools that you can use to ensure new employees successfully transition into the organization.

Ideally, sponsors will:

- Help new employees feel welcome and reduce anxiety.
- Project a positive perception of the Command and the employee's new team.
- Help create a bond between the new employee and the organization.
- Help new employees understand the structure, culture, values, policies, procedures, and practices of the Command.
- Support new employees during their onboarding experience.

You can make a significant difference in how quickly the new employee becomes productive while directly affecting employee engagement and retention. Using the resources from the Army's Civilian Onboarding and Acculturation Program will make your job easier as you welcome new employees into your daily operations. If you have any questions regarding your role as a sponsor for new employee onboarding and acculturation, please contact your supervisor, or your organization's Civilian Human Resources, or DHRM office.

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ONBOARDING & ACCULTURATION

What is Onboarding and Acculturation (O&A)?

A successful O&A program makes a positive impression on a new employee and creates a welcoming feeling that confirms their decision to work for the Army. An effective O&A program starts when the job offer is extended and continues through the first year of employment. It consists of a series of activities, including new employee orientation. Orientation generally involves a first-day session at the local Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) where new employees review and complete necessary payroll and benefits paperwork, and familiarize themselves with the organization's structure, mission, and policies. If you have any questions regarding new employee orientation, please contact your organization's Civilian Human Resources Office, G-1 Office, or local CPAC.

Onboarding is the process of integrating and acculturating new employees to the Army and their unit, helping them to understand job expectations and how their position aligns with their organization's mission, and quickly equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and key relationships to become productive members of the Army Profession. Acculturation is a socialization process that supports new employees by helping them learn, adjust to, internalize, and ultimately embody the organizational culture.

Why is O&A Important?

Making a good impression is paramount! Employees arrive at their new jobs excited and engaged. Your job, as their sponsor, is to channel that energy toward success by helping them feel welcome and become fully integrated into the organization. A carefully planned and well-executed onboarding process will help you do that.

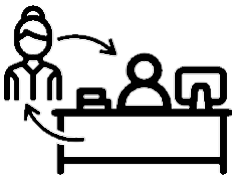
Effective employee onboarding serves three interrelated purposes:

1. Ensures that the employees feel welcome, comfortable, prepared, and supported.
2. Increase the new employees' ability to make an impact and be productive within their role, both immediately and over time, which
3. Fosters early engagement with new employees to strengthen their satisfaction and enhance the Army's ability to achieve its goals and continue to meet its mission.

While O&A is a yearlong process, the first 30 days are critical. During those days, your role as sponsor is very important.

Orientation is transactional in nature.

- Typically, a one-time event
- Focuses on organizational structure, mission, and policies
- Completion of payroll and benefits paperwork
- Other administrative issues



O&A is strategic in nature.

- Lasts for months
- Promotes better understanding of Army culture, mission, and goals
- Fosters a feeling of belonging and affirmation of making a right choice
- Maximizes engagement and retention

Effective Onboarding helps:

- Attract/retain top talent
- Build trust
- Promote commitment to the organization
- Encourage manager/employee communication
- Foster an environment of employee engagement



What is a Sponsor?

A sponsor is someone who partners with a new employee to offer advice and guidance that help foster and promote the skill and professional development of a new employee.

As a sponsor, you have been identified by your supervisor or organization as a superior performer with strong people skills. You know the ropes and, more importantly, you know what actions to take to be successful in achieving the mission. You're a source of advice and encouragement who can succeed in steering new employees in the right direction and help create and maintain a positive and productive culture of excellence.

You are someone the new employee can trust. Part of your role is to create a comfortable, less formal environment in which the employee can ask and receive information about the Army's values, culture, and norms, including those everyday procedures and policies, written and unwritten, that help to explain how things really work.

Finally, a major goal for you as a sponsor is to establish a sense of belonging. With an effective sponsor, each new employee will quickly become a contributing member of their new organization.

Role of the Sponsor

The sponsor should help establish a sense of belonging for the new employee.

As mentioned above, your role is to help new employees understand how they fit in the organization, what is expected of them and the best practices to ensure that they will succeed.

An important point to remember is that your role is not meant to be a substitute for the employee's supervisor. While you may be able to help the employee work through discussions they would like to have with their supervisor, it is not your job to have those discussions with their supervisor yourself. Topics such as conditions of employment, work assignments, performance, time, and attendance, leave, career opportunities, training, conduct, etc., must be discussed between the employee and their supervisor. If you get specific questions about these areas, please direct the employee to their supervisor.

Listed below are sponsor responsibilities and tips, as well as some possible new employee expectations. Discuss your plans to accomplish these responsibilities with the new employee's supervisor to ensure the two of you are not duplicating any actions and to get ideas on what will work best in your local environment.





Sponsor Responsibilities

1. Meet and greet: When possible, meet the new employee on their first day and go to lunch together. If this is not possible, ensure that you are able to meet for lunch in their first few days.

2. Provide information: Be an informational resource for the new employee on policies, procedures, work rules, norms, etc.

- Provide your contact information so they can reach out to you with any questions.
- Set up regular meetings or lunches to continue the discussions.

3. Offer insight and feedback: Provide insight, feedback, and information that support the new employee's social involvement in the organization.

4. Be a "tour guide:" Give a tour of the facility where the employee will be working and make introductions.

- Show them where equipment is and how to use it—copiers, printers, etc.
- Show them the location of the restrooms, places to eat, credit unions, mail room, and other service areas.
- Introduce them to administrative support staff and explain their roles and procedures, such as filling out time sheets, ordering or requesting supplies, requesting repair services, arranging travel, etc., as appropriate.

5. Training support: If appropriate (and agreed to by the supervisor), assist in training the new employee.

6. Resource support: Identify resources to help the new employee.



What a New Employee Expects from a Sponsor

1. Advice, guidance, encouragement, and a positive attitude.

2. Confidentiality—information shared with you stays between you and the new employee.

3. Open and honest communication, especially if feedback is requested.

4. Help in understanding the culture of the organization and the Army.

5. Help in understanding how to get things done.

6. Assistance in building networks and relationships within the work group and team, and with internal and external clients.

7. Insight into how to make relationships with people effective and productive.

8. Insight into how to balance office communications—email, telephone, in- person, etc.



Tips for Sponsors



- Don't worry about being perceived as the "expert." Your experience is important to the new employee. At the same time, you don't have to have all their answers.
- Be patient and positive. It takes time to develop a relationship. Don't try to cover everything right away. Sponsors need to allow enough time for the new employee to learn and grow.
- Don't try to force a relationship.
- Look for a preferred style of communication.
- Realize and respect that the new employee may have a different style from your own. Let them develop in their own way.
- Remember that listening may be more important than giving advice in some instances.
- Don't be judgmental and be careful not to draw conclusions without exploring why someone feels or acts the way they do. Keep in mind that there is another side to the story. When the new employee comes to you with a problem or complaint, this is the time to listen and ask questions.

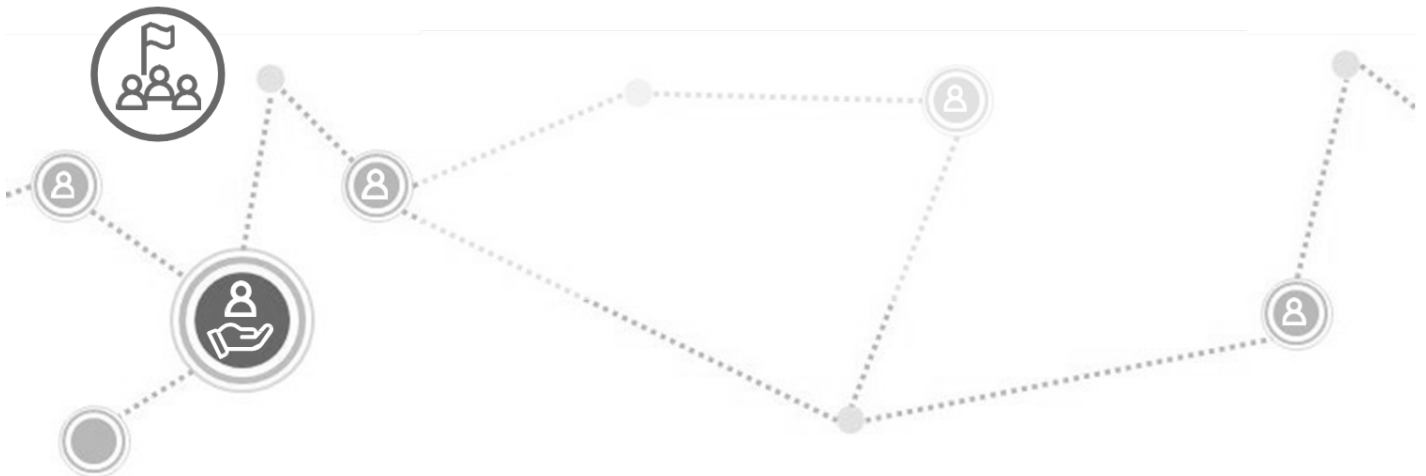
Sponsor Checklist

To assist you in your sponsor duties, use the checklist on the following pages as your guide for a productive and rewarding experience.

Onboarding and Acculturation Web Portal

Army Career Tracker: <https://actnow.army.mil/>, (clicking on Communities, Civilian, and Army Civilian Onboarding and Acculturation), is a great resource to assist you in your role as a sponsor.

As you will see, the portal contains a wealth of information, including guides, checklists, welcome letter templates, and other helpful materials. This portal will serve as a great resource for you, the new employee, and your supervisor during the first few months of employment.





Eighth Army Sponsor Checklist



Employee Name:		Start Date:	
PP/Series/Grade:		Assigned Sponsor:	
Contact Email:		Supervisor:	
Contact Phone Number:		Dependents (Y/N):	

SPONSOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Serve from the time of job offer acceptance until at least 30 days after new employee's arrival.
- Provide the new employee important information about the organization and local area to include temporary lodging, local transportation, etc. if applicable.)
- Create a welcoming environment for the new employee and help them integrate into the Command.
- Be available and maintain daily contact with new employee for first week and then on an as-needed basis.
- Work with supervisor and new employee to assist with the onboarding and acculturation process.
- Be a positive role model and promote a positive image of the organization.

UPON ASSIGNMENT AS SPONSOR (WITHIN 3 DAYS OF FORMAL JOB ACCEPTANCE)

- Meet with supervisor to discuss your role as a sponsor for the new employee.
- Complete eSponsorship Application & Training (eSAT) on Military One Source site: <https://millifelearning.militaryonesource.mil/>
- Email new employee introducing yourself, welcoming him/her to the organization/Army and provide the 8A Area 3 Civilian Employee Welcome Guide and Navigating Hospitals in Korea Handbook:
<https://8tharmy.korea.army.mil/site/assets/doc/newcomers/Navigating-Korean-Hospitals-Handbook.pdf>
- Provide contact information and offer any assistance to new employee.
- Talk with new employee to find out his/her needs to help transition into the new job and area (including family's needs).
- Provide details on organizational structure and key administrative requirements.
- Ensure Employee received the 8th Army welcome letter and website: <https://8tharmy.korea.army.mil/site/newcomers/>
- Obtain P.O. Box for employee's change of address and for the employee to mail packages in advance.
- Assist with coordinating lodging reservation and transportation from the airport.

AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR TO NEW EMPLOYEE'S START DATE

- Contact new employee by phone or email to confirm/ arrange basic information for their arrival & first day to include but not limited to: itinerary, transportation arrangements, lodging, directions, etc.
- Arrange your schedule to be available on employee's first day for escort before and after CPAC new hire orientation.

FIRST DAY

- Arrange to meet supervisor for supervisor's orientation and staff introductions.

WITHIN FIRST WEEK

- Assist employee with 8A New Employee Checklist.
- Ensure employee attends virtual CPAC in processing brief via MS Teams and escort employee to CPAC office (if applicable).
- Escort employee to Maude Hall, BLDG 6400 for in-processing of all applicable services (refer to 8A New Employee Checklist).
- Ensure positive hand off to supervisor for further organizational incorporation.

WITHIN FIRST 30 DAYS

- Continue to make yourself available by phone, email, or in-person meetings. Offer guidance to help him/her integrate smoothly and share helpful hints.

Sponsor Signature:	Date of Completion:

Please return completed checklist to: 8aacculturationprogram@army.mil NLT than 45 days from employee's start date.