



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY FIRES CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AND FORT SILL**  
**FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA 73503-5000**

ATZR-C

15 August 2016

**MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION**

**SUBJECT: Courtesy Checks, Health and Welfare Inspections and Leader In-Home Visits, CG Policy Memo 16-15**

1. Purpose. As stewards of our Fort Sill community, we should continually assess the safety, readiness, and welfare of our Soldiers and Families as well as the property entrusted to us. As military leaders, we have many tools by which we can proactively meet this responsibility. The traditional "Courtesy Check" is an informal and invaluable tool; the "Health and Welfare Inspection," and "Leader In-Home Visit" are also valuable tools. However, like all tools, they must be used properly and appropriately. Besides command interest, other interests may be directly implicated by such inspections and visits: law enforcement and personal privacy concerns are two of these. This policy memorandum explains how these tools can be appropriately used, especially when leaders need to gauge the welfare of their Soldiers and/or Family members where genuine privacy concerns might conflict with leaders' responsibilities. I expect all leaders to familiarize themselves with this policy, its definitions, and the enumerated best practices. Incorporate its lessons into your own programs, policies, and training plans.
2. Policy. Commanders, Leaders and Directors of all Fort Sill tenant and assigned units and organizations will conduct regular Courtesy Checks, Health and Welfare Inspections, and Leader In-Home Visits, as appropriate, in order to assess and ensure the safety, welfare, and discipline of our Soldiers, Families, and property. Brigade-level Commanders will ensure that subordinate leaders conduct Courtesy Checks quarterly, Health and Welfare Inspections at least semi-annually, and Leader In-Home Visits as needed. These missions will be planned and conducted according to the definitions and best practice protocols outlined in the enclosures.
3. This policy will remain in effect until superseded or rescinded.
4. Point of contact is the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Chief of Justice, 580-442-1765.

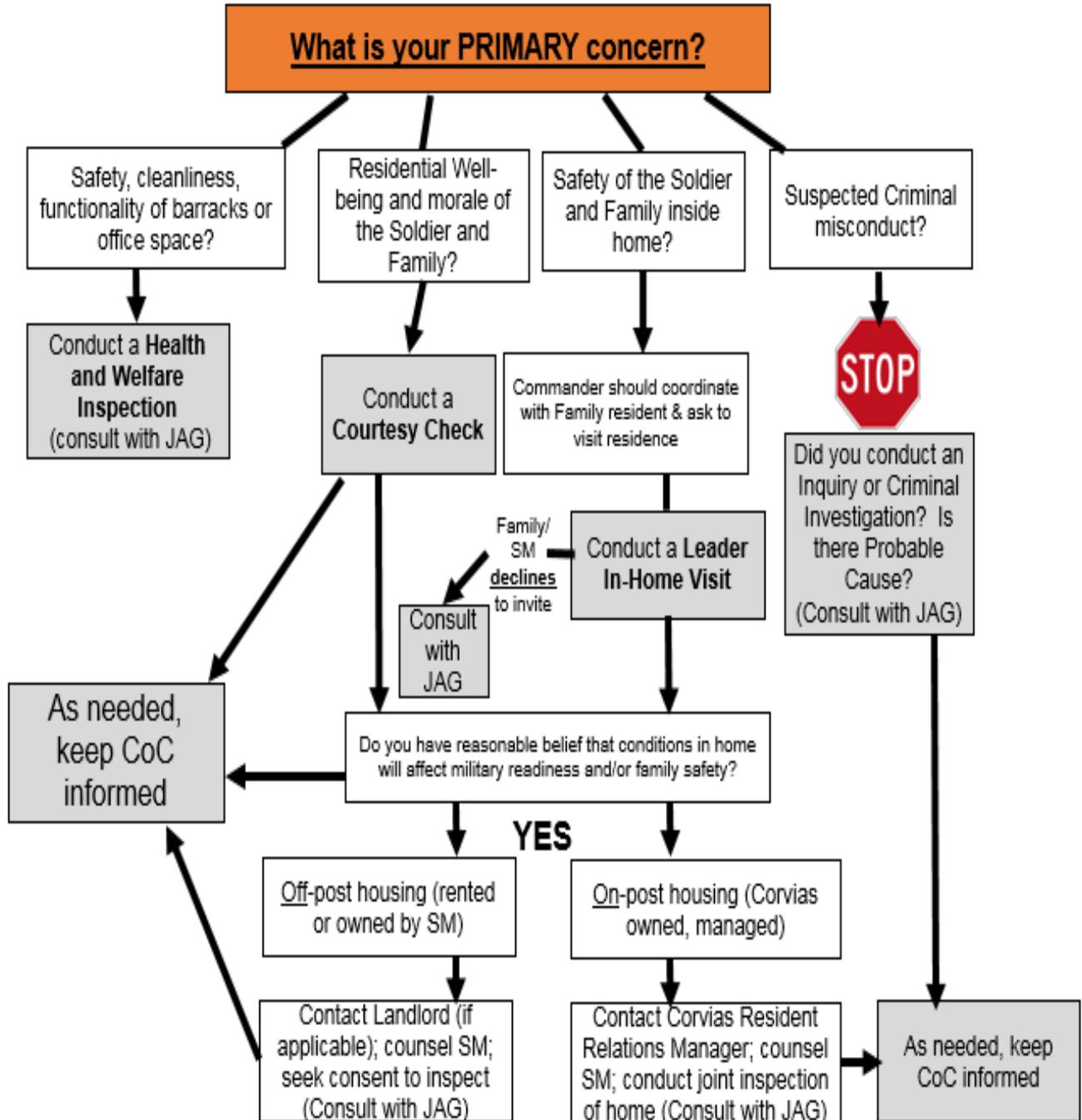
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bjmk", is located below the list of points.

**BRIAN J. MCKIERNAN**  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

4 Encls  
1. Decision-Tree  
(see next page)

Enclosure 1

Decision-Tree



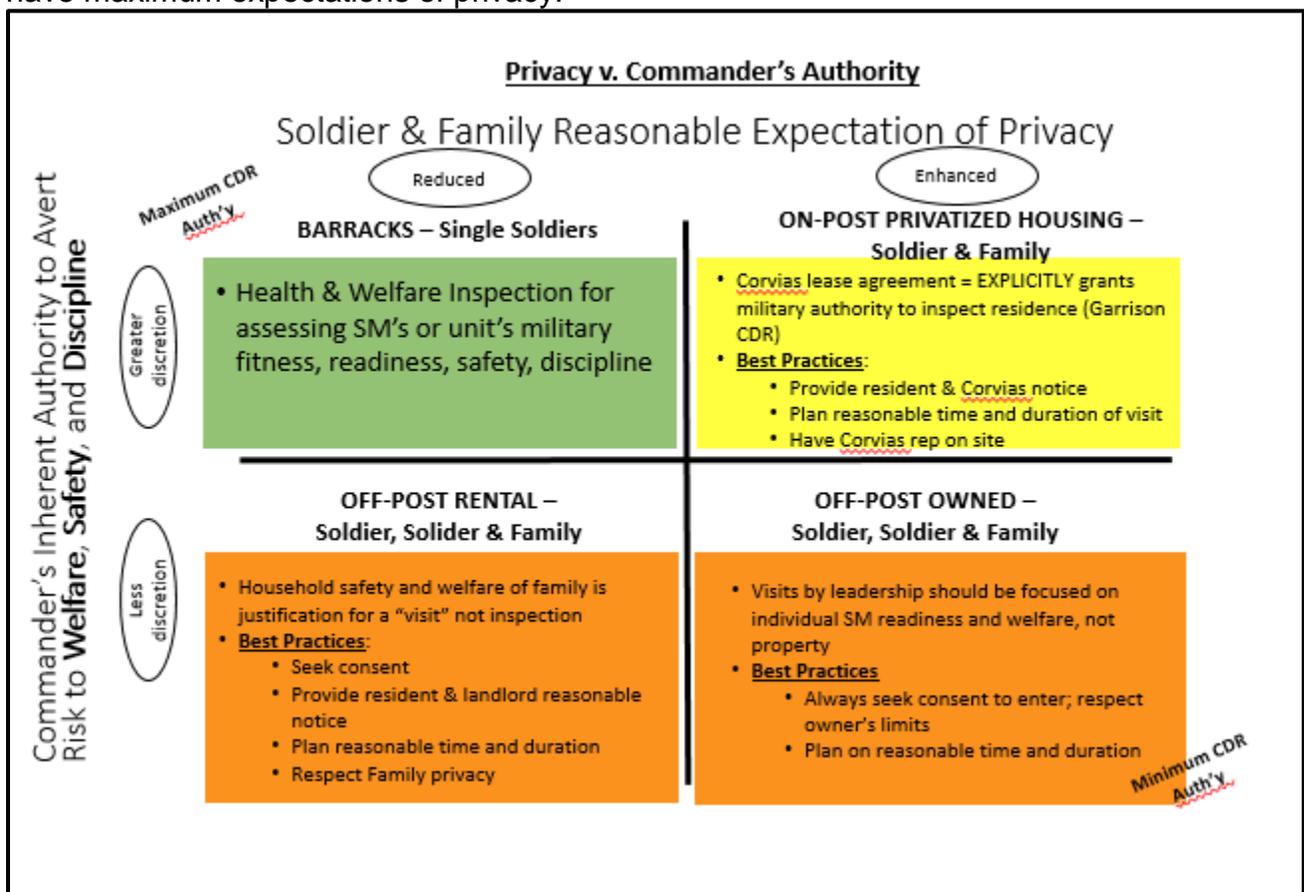
Enclosure 2

This quad chart depicts the four scenarios or environments in which Health and Welfare Inspections and Command Visits apply. The underlying logic in its organization reflects a balance between the Commander's inherent authority to ensure the safety, welfare, and discipline of the installation and its units, against the Soldier's and Family's expectations of privacy.

The upper left quadrant, in green, represents the conventional Health and Welfare Inspection of barracks. Here, the Commander exercises the greatest authority and freedom to inspect.

The upper right quadrant, in yellow, represents an area in which Commanders should slow down and exercise caution before planning Command Visits.

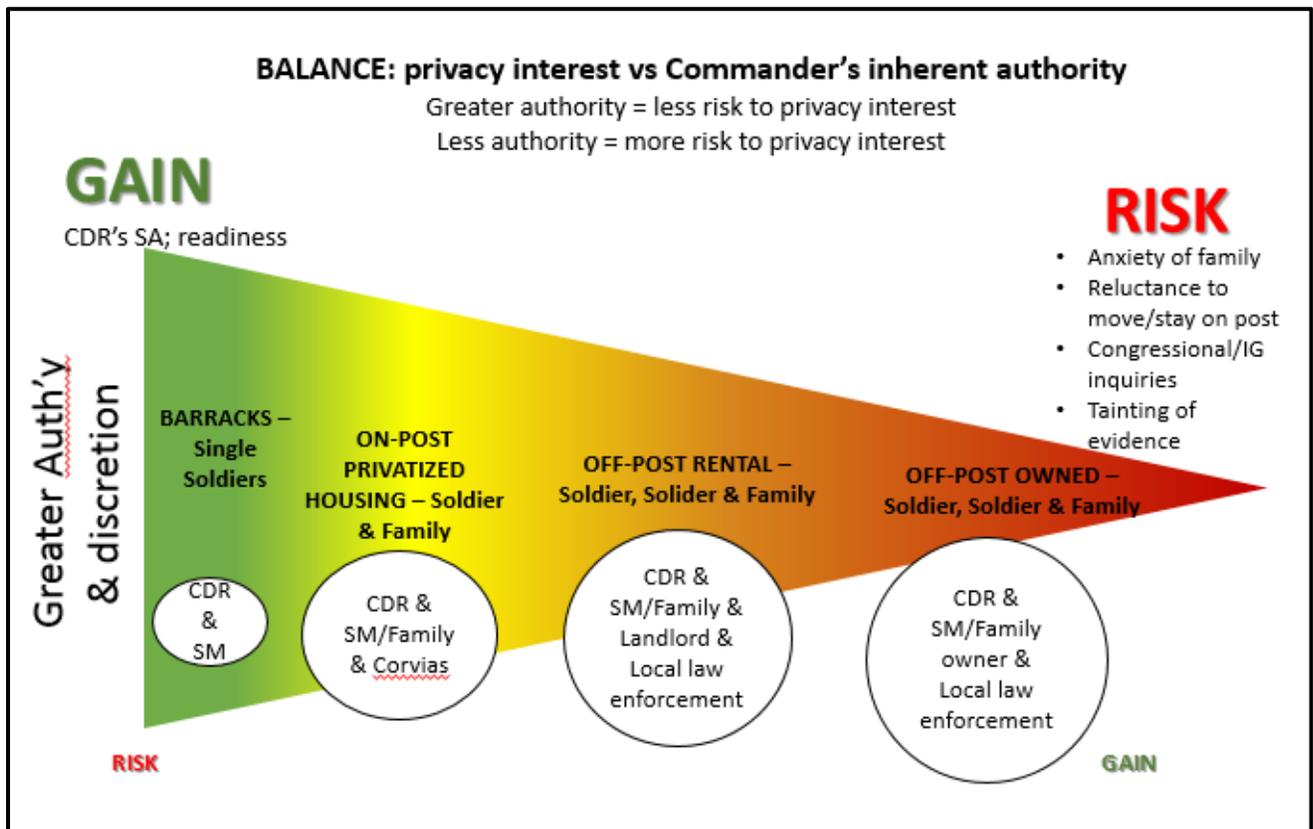
The bottom left and right quadrants, in orange, represent heightened areas of concern: areas where Commanders have reduced need to inspect and the Soldiers and Families have maximum expectations of privacy.



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This chart portrays the same information in the quad chart as a spectrum, with greatest latitude and widest discretion for the Commander on the far left (green), tapering to minimal discretion at the far right (red). The circles increasing in size from left to right depict the growing number of parties with an interest in the safety, welfare, and discipline as you move away from barracks and toward off-post residences.



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Enclosure 3

### Definitions

**Courtesy Check**: An informal call or visit to a Soldier or Family member, usually at their residence, intended to build trust and assess morale or to inquire about a specific concern (like the health of a sick or injured Family member). *All leaders are encouraged to liberally use this tool as the first and easiest method by which to learn about their Soldiers' off-duty concerns or challenges.* The primary intent of the visit is not to enter the home, but rather to check on the Soldier and/or Family. This does not preclude entrance into the home if they are invited.

**Health and Welfare Inspection**: An examination, under the direction and control of a commander, of the whole or part of a unit, organization, or installation conducted as an incident of command. The primary purpose of such an inspection is to determine whether the health and welfare of Soldiers is affected by the security, military fitness, and good order and discipline of that unit, organization, or installation. An inspection may include an assessment of the command's state of readiness, functionality, sanitation, and cleanliness. Generally, an inspection applies only to persons and property under military control.

**Leader In-Home Visit**: An engagement between a leader and a military Family, at the family residence, that is more formal than a Courtesy Check. The intent of the leader is to enter the home with the express purpose of increasing command visibility of current, past, or potential health, safety, and welfare concerns inside the residence. While such visits are an incident of command, and a part of sustaining stewardship of our community, such engagements are wholly voluntary on the part of the military Family in order to assure respect for their privacy.

**Consent**: An agreement (usually verbal) by a person to submit to a search, review, inspection, or inventory of part or all of their person or property. Consent is given voluntarily and based on an informed understanding of the intent and scope of the search, review, inspection, or inventory. Consent can be limited in its scope (time, place, property), and can be withdrawn at any time. Voluntary consent is not necessary for examining military property or areas under military control, such as barracks, motor pools, on-post parking lots, or offices, for Health and Welfare Inspections or administrative inventories. Voluntary consent is required for examining persons or property when there is a reasonable expectation of privacy under the circumstances.

**Reasonable Expectation of Privacy**: Whether a person has a "reasonable expectation of privacy" in certain physical areas (like inside a home, or inside a barracks room) or while doing certain things (like standing outside talking on a cell phone, or sitting inside a car) is a case-by-case issue. Because the Courtesy Check, Health and Welfare Inspection, nor Leader In-Home Visit are intended to investigate potential crime or search for evidence, leaders should assume that a generic expectation of privacy exists inside a home, and inside certain areas of barracks rooms and personally-owned vehicles whose purpose is to store personal private property.

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Enclosure 4

## Protocols

1. **Courtesy Checks**: Leaders should be proactively engaged with Soldiers and their Families. Courtesy Checks at the residence to assess morale and welfare are a good way to build trust, if conducted appropriately. Leaders are reminded to remain courteous, use common sense, good judgement, and discretion.

2. **Health and Welfare Inspection (Barracks and Work Space)**: Usually covers 100% of a particular unit (such as a platoon, company/battery, or battalion/squadron). This inspection is intended to assess barracks and government working conditions of Soldiers in areas under direct military authority and control. It may be used to account for personnel, military property and assigned equipment, and their functionality and readiness, within the barracks or work spaces. It may also be used to inspect personally-owned vehicles for functionality and safety. Commanders should not use these inspections to mask a real purpose of discovering evidence of crime. *When in doubt, contact your serving Judge Advocate for legal advice.*

a. **Privacy concerns**: The Commander's intended scope of an inspection may drive the extent of that Soldier's expectation of privacy. Soldiers are issued various containers and spaces, like wall and foot lockers, dressers, and medicine cabinets for the express purpose of storing personal clothing and other personal items. Under certain conditions, Soldiers may have a **reasonable expectation of privacy** in certain areas and property and shall not be inspected without first getting the **voluntary consent** of the Soldier. *When in doubt, seek advice from your Judge Advocate.*

b. **Scope of Inspection**: Generally, barracks rooms and common spaces may be inspected. Personally-owned vehicles may be inspected under this definition only if they are parked in that unit's parking lot normally under the control of the commander. To use military working dogs in the inspection, Commanders should consult with the servicing Judge Advocate.

c. **Best Practice**: Commanders should thoroughly pre-plan prior to conducting Health and Welfare inspections. Commanders do not have to publish or announce the inspection beforehand; *however, these inspections should not be impromptu reactions to the suspicion of misconduct or the suspected presence of contraband.*

1. MFR. Prior to the inspection's execution, Commanders should draft a Memorandum for Record. The purpose of the MFR is to capture relevant facts and the commander's intent. It should: (1) state the purpose, scope, date/time of the Inspection, (2) identify who (name and rank) will conduct the inspection, (3) list specific property or

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equipment subject to the Inspection, and, (4) describe actions to take immediately if contraband or illegal conduct is uncovered during the inspection.

2. Close out MFR. Upon concluding the inspection, the Commander may choose to draft an MFR identifying specific areas of concern or issues that arose.

3. **Leader In-Home Visit to an On or Off Post Residence**: These visits are meant to encourage open communication between Families and Command teams; to assess and address concerns raised by the Soldier or Family regarding living conditions at their residence, or neighborhood, that may affect military readiness or fitness for duty of the Soldier; to independently and objectively gauge the well-being of Families when their Soldier sponsor is assigned to a restricted tour overseas and the Family remains at Fort Sill.

a. Privacy concerns: Families have a reasonable expectation of privacy inside their homes. They neither anticipate, nor expect, military leaders to inspect, review, or evaluate their personal property and living conditions. Even when located on a military installation, the residences are owned and managed by a private firm, Corvias Military Living. As a result, leaders must provide notice of the visit and receive consent of the Soldier and/or family before entering the home.

b. Scope of Leader In-Home Visit: The areas and property to be visited should have a reasonable connection to the Soldier's readiness and fitness for duty, Family's safety and welfare, and the adherence to their Resident Occupancy Agreement with Corvias or owner/management firm.

c. Best Practices: Leaders are advised to remain sensitive to the family's privacy and be mindful that this is not a **Health and Welfare Inspection**. If after receiving consent to enter a residence, a leader believes that conditions of the home are unsanitary or unsafe, that leader should immediately coordinate their concerns with the Chain-of-Command, Corvias (see paragraph 5 below), or the owner/property management firm.

1. Leaders should ensure that the Soldier/Family to be visited is contacted with a reasonable time to consider the request and its purpose, before receiving consent. The Soldier and/or Family will be present during the visit.

2. If the Soldier is not present (e.g., deployed, on a restricted overseas tour, attending field training), leaders need not notify the Soldier but the spouse or adult dependent with authority, must provide **consent** and be present during the visit.

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3. Leaders shall not consider refusal to **consent** to such an in-home visit as violation of a lawful order or regulation, and shall not impose or suggest adverse administrative or punitive measures on the Soldier if consent is not provided.

4. If illegal contraband or other evidence of criminal activity is identified in plain view during the Leader In-Home Visit, the leader shall immediately notify the Department of Emergency Services/Military Police, and Local Law Enforcement (as applicable). The leader shall not conduct a search of the home for further evidence without a proper search authorization based on probable cause. The leader should contact the servicing Judge Advocate at the earliest available opportunity.

5. If, during the visit, the leader has good cause to believe that a Family residence is in violation of the safety and sanitary conditions required under the Resident Occupancy or Lease Agreement, Commanders should consult with the servicing Judge Advocate, and counsel the Soldier. For Covias Fort Sill **on-post housing** contact the Resident Relations Manager (580-581-2115; 5445 Greble Road, Fort Sill). The leader and Corvias should coordinate a joint visit of the residence at the earliest available opportunity, after coordination with the Garrison Commander.