

Your Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program team is ready to serve YOU!

Kimberly Bottema, Personal Financial Specialist

Army Community Service's Financial Readiness Program is ready to assist you during this national emergency. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 we are currently teleworking and providing services remotely. Angela Crosland, Financial Readiness Program Manager states, "the Pandemic hasn't stopped our mission of educating and assisting Fort Jackson's Soldiers, Families and Civilians with their finances."

In addition to counseling and educational services, we provide financial assistance through the Army Emergency Relief (AER) program. AER is a non-profit organization that provides emergency financial assistance to active and retired Soldiers and their ID Card Family members. Categories of assistance include rent or mortgage, utilities, vehicle repairs or payment and more.

Our AER Specialists, Wanda Redd and Robin Meredith, are only a phone call away. Requests for assistance are processed through virtual means. During this time, funds are provided to Soldiers and Families through electronic fund transfers. Funds are typically received within 24 to 48 hours of the request. To meet additional needs during the pandemic, AER HQ implemented a program to provide up to \$500 for eligible Soldiers with dependents in grades K thru 12th grade. Funds are to assist with home schooling costs for specific supplies and equipment.

Financial counselors, Shawn Smith, Esperanza Romero and I are here to help with your personal finance needs. We conduct financial classes, provide one-on-one counseling, credit report analysis, security clearance assistance, budget development and more. We can also help you navigate and understand the Thrift Savings Plan. Recently, we conducted a class for Department of Behavioral Health through virtual means. "This was the best in-service training we've had in a very long time" said Dr. Rachael Nelson, Department Chief.

To schedule an appointment or request a class, call 803-751-5256. To get additional information on the Financial Readiness Program or for all Army Community Service programs follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/fortjacksonacs/>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/fjfinancialread>).