



Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award

Standard Operating Procedures

April 2026

Background

This award was inspired by Mrs. Sybil Stockdale who set an unflagging example for her support to families of other POWs during her husband, Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale's, seven year internment in Southeast Asia. She was the co-founder and first National Coordinator of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia which was committed to ensuring clear communication between the US government and the families of POWs. Her dedication to improving communication emulates the importance of communication between the command and the Navy Ombudsman. This award recognizes the Ombudsman who exemplifies the qualities of professionalism through volunteerism and dedication to the support of Navy families.

Purpose

This standard operating procedure (SOP) outlines the policies and procedures for executing the Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award.

The objectives of the Award are to recognize Ombudsmen who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to:

- Creating and maintaining effective lines of communication between their command and its families
- Assisting commands and families in identifying the command's needs for support services
- Providing appropriate referral services before family concerns and problems reach crisis proportions

Criteria

All active duty and reserve command ombudsmen who have served for more than one year and are registered in the Ombudsman Registry are eligible for this award. To be recommended by the Commanding Officer the ombudsman must:

- Maintain the highest standards of professionalism and confidentiality while providing a positive example for command members and families
 - Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate between the Navy family and the command by enhancing communications between the command and its families (including, but not limited to, providing direct communication to families through newsletters, e-mails, etc.)
 - Serve as a principal source of assistance and support to Navy families during times of local or national emergency, mobilization, deployment or evacuation
 - Must have demonstrated consistent compliance with training, data collection and required reports submitted on behalf of the command per OPNAVINST 1750.1H
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- Assist in identifying command needs for support services and provide appropriate referral services to address family concerns and problems
- Facilitate and promote a healthy sense of community among Navy members and their family members within the command
- Be a positive role model for command members and their families

Procedures

Each year a NAVADMIN announces the establishment of the annual Mrs. Sybil Stockdale Ombudsman of the Year Award nomination/selection process and presentation requirements for CY 2026. The Ombudsman of the Year Award will be presented to four ombudsmen who have served their command and families with selfless dedication and commitment to family readiness in the following categories:

- Afloat command (Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (COMUSFLTFORCOM))
- Afloat command (Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Command (COMPACFLT))
- Ashore command
- Reserve command

The nomination submission process will emulate the Sailor of the Year Process.

- All deployable forces within Atlantic Fleet will submit nomination packages to USFF POC
- All deployable forces within Pacific Fleet will submit nomination packages to PACFLT POC
- All reserve units will submit nominations to Commander, Navy Reserve Force Command (CNRFC) POC
- All OPNAV direct report naval shore activities will submit nomination packages to CNIC POC.

NOTE: USFF, USPACFLT, OPNAV, and CNRFC will provide POC contact information to CNIC. A list of POCs will be emailed to all commanding officers and command POCs via the Ombudsman Registry

Roles and Responsibilities

Commanding Officers

- Verify the command ombudsman meets the criteria and is eligible to be nominated for the Award
 - Complete the nomination package to include the following documents
 1. Cover letter-Sample provided at www.cnic.navy.mil/OmbudsmanOfTheYear
 2. Summary of action not to exceed two pages written addressing each of the criterions set forth in the NAVADMIN and in this SOP
 3. A short biography of the nominee
 4. A letter from the Fleet and Family Support Center Director or Regional Component Command validating involvement in Ombudsman Assemblies, Advanced Training, registration in the Ombudsman Registry, and has completed and submitted monthly/quarterly worksheets.
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5. Additional supporting information (EX. letter of support for nomination from former Commanding Officers, Command POC or Command Support Team, letters of appreciation presented by Commanding Officers or family members)
 - Submit nomination package to designated POC by dates indicated in the NAVADMIN

TYCOMs

- Select one award winner to receive Ombudsman of the Year
- Provide awardee information to designated POC no later than date provided in the NAVADMIN for inclusion in a NAVADMIN announcing all four winners
- TYCOMs or designated representative will present the awards in September 2026

CNIC Ombudsman Program Coordinator

- Provide subject matter expertise, as requested, throughout the process to all participating in nomination and selection

References

OPNAVINST 1750.1H, THE NAVY FAMILY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

NAVADMIN: MRS SYBIL STOCKDALE OMBUDSMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

www.cnic.navy.mil/OmbudsmanOfTheYear
