

Functions and an importance of charge of quarters

[Government](#), [Army](#)



Charge of quarters is a duty in which soldiers and NCOs are tasked with guarding the entrance of the barracks. They are the soldiers to go to when any assortment of issues or various different situations occur in the barracks. This duty is meant to protect the health and overall well-being of every soldier living in the building and to assure that there is no foul play, regulations being broken, or harm done to soldiers overall. CQ is an extremely important aspect in the life of a single soldier. The duty itself takes the utmost discipline with it being a 24 hour shift in which the soldiers tasked with CQ must stay awake and alert in order to see everything going on whether it be a complex situation like drunk soldiers fighting or harassing other soldiers or something as simple as a soldier locking themselves out of their room in the middle of the night. As soldiers living in the barracks you are allowed to have visitors of the opposite sex but they must first check in with the CQ desk to verify age, ID and rules. The visitor will sign in and CQ will be in charge of making sure there are no issues and that the visitor leaves before the hours that they are no longer allowed to be in the barracks. This is to prevent having outsiders living in the barracks when they don't belong there and it's to protect the well-being of that individual or the soldier. There have been many cases of sexual misconduct in the barracks on military installations and the Army has taken notice of it. CQ is there to prevent that type of misconduct.

Guarding has been one of the most important roles in the military since the beginning of time. If there is no one to keep watch on valuable assets then who's to say someone won't just take those assets away? Examples of this are duties like ammo guard; to ensure that all of the platoon/company's

ammo is not being stolen or tampered with. Radio guard; to ensure that important information is being relayed properly to the right people at all times of the day and night. CQ is the guarding of soldiers in their respective housing and there is no asset more valuable than the soldier. Every military installation has its own memorandums and barracks policies. These are guidelines that have been molded over time to ensure the utmost safety of the soldiers residing in the barracks. Examples of this are rules such as no cooking, no kitchen appliances that have not already been supplied to the soldier, no weapons and noise curfews. These regulations are there for a reason and are not meant to be ignored. CQ ensures that these rules are being followed. If any regulations are not being followed it is their duty to fix the problem or contact staff duty if things get to out of hand. CQ relays everything to staff duty that is worth relaying, for example, when a soldier locks himself out of his room, the runner must take the soldier to staff duty to get a hold of a barracks master key in order to get that soldier back into his room. If a situation gets too out of hand and the reasoning behind it is negligence on the charge of quarters, they can be held accountable for the issue. Acts such as sleeping on duty or leaving the CQ desk unattended are seen as negligence and can be punishable under UCMJ depending on the effect this negligence may have caused.

It is vital that there be at least one soldier at the desk at all times being that in the event of an emergency CQ is in charge of getting all of the soldiers involved in the emergency to safety. Memorandums covering CQ often state the soldiers on duty are to get breakfast, lunch and dinner one at a time and it is highly recommended that they eat at the CQ desk if possible. Others

ways to avoid negligence are rules such as no electronic devices are to be out or used while on duty. This is to prevent the soldiers from getting too distracted with entertainment that they may not see something happening on other ends of the barracks or even a situation starting to get out of hand. The soldiers must be paying close attention to their surroundings at all times so that they can see early signs of an emergency erupting and it can be prevented at the source. CQ must also conduct “ barracks checks”. This includes the runner walking through the barracks to police call, clean, ensure that rooms are locked and to ensure that the noise curfew isn’t being ignored. Barracks checks are very important especially in barracks with multiple floors and only one CQ desk on the first floor. The soldiers on duty have to know what is going on all around the barracks, not just by the desk. During the work hours of the day CQ is tasked with keeping the barracks clean, this is where the runner will sweep mop and police call for the most part so that in the event that visitors, service members or not, come to the barracks, it will look very well kept and like a professional place of residence. CQ will also be logging everything that occurs throughout the day and night of their shift. This log includes things like times that the soldiers on duty left for chow, times that staff duty came to check in, times that the soldiers on duty conducted barracks checks and other assortments of events. This log will be signed by the NCO in charge of CQ and given to the 1SG or staff duty depending on the unit’s SOP. This log is important so that higher ups can look over the order of events the day that the soldiers were on duty. This is important in the event that any emergencies occurred so that proper information and times are written down and signed by an NCO. Another

initial task of CQ at the start of their shift is the NCO in charge of quarters will sign for everything that they are in charge of keeping accountability for. This includes everything in the laundry rooms like washers and dryers, everything in the dayroom like pool tables and other assortments of games and they may also be signed for important keys like the ones for the company workplace. Being signed for these items means that they must have full accountability of them at all times. They must ensure that these items are not broken, stolen or overall misused by the soldiers residing in the barracks that they are in charge of. Ways to prevent CQ for being held responsible for the actions of the soldiers towards things that they are signed for is sub-hand receipting these items down to the soldiers. This will make the soldier that is using said items responsible for the condition of them. When items that the CQ is signed for are misused or damaged it is to be reported in a proper manner. For objects such as washers and dryers there can be work orders put in to replace the damaged ones. At the end of CQ shifts the relief will be briefed on anything that they should be tracking and they should always read over the respective CQ book which states all of the rules and regulations for their duties that lie ahead of them throughout the work day, the night and the following morning.

With the duty of CQ comes other sub-duties as well. One of which being suicide watch. Sometimes when soldiers reach their breaking point in life, are going through hard times, or attempt to harm or even in extreme cases attempt to commit suicide, they are placed on what is known as suicide watch. Suicide watch is where the soldier is under the careful eye of CQ and must be escorted around post to ensure the safety of them. The soldier at

risk is not only under the watch of CQ but also the watch of their fellow soldiers and their leadership. Leadership must keep a careful eye, not only to protect the soldier but to also prevent other soldiers from doing the same thing. Army suicide surveillance is crucial to understanding the magnitude of various suicidal behaviors and in identifying trends, factors, and reasons for such behaviors that can be applied to preventive measures. This is a very important task and should never be taken lightly. As soldiers we have a responsibility to each other to make sure that our comrades are in a good mental and physical state and there is no better way to ensure that than suicide watch. The way suicide watch may be conducted is at the commander's discretion, memorandums may be written to best fit the situation of the soldier at risk. For example one of these interventions may be that there are now 3 soldiers on CQ instead of 2. This will require the utmost attention of the soldiers on duty. CQ will be in charge of both the barracks and everything that may occur in or outside of it as well as ensuring that the soldier at risk is safe and not harming themselves or others around them. Soldiers on suicide watch must be tracked at all times, this may include things such as escorts, required hourly text messages or phone calls to their leadership so that they have frequent updates on the soldier at risk's location, or even the moving of the soldier's living space to best fit the needs of CQ's performance of watching the soldier at risk.

Often, certain items are removed from the soldiers' room that may give the soldier the ability to perform self-harm or attempt to take their own life. Things like knives, aspirins, shoelaces and 550 cord. These items may be taken away in order to make sure that the soldier at risk will not have further

capability of self-harm. The guidelines that CQ is given to prevent negligence go hand in hand with the requirements of suicide watch. CQ needs to be awake at all times of the night so that they can see early signs of any issues with the soldier at risk. The soldiers on duty must pay very close attention to the soldier at risk in order to prevent a bad situation from erupting at the earliest possible level. Negligence in a situation such as this one could result in the end of another soldier's life and that is not to ever be taken lightly. As soldiers we need to care for our comrades and be there for them when they need it the most, not sleeping at the desk when a soldier at risk is going through difficult times. The soldiers on duty should also be sure to be kind towards the soldier on suicide watch and be there for them whenever they are in need. High risk soldiers can be on an emotional rollercoaster and even the slightest bit of wrongdoing towards them can trigger a reaction that can cause them to perform an act of self-harm. It is vital that the CQ puts a stop to any other soldiers that reside in the barracks that may be antagonizing or outcasting the soldier at risk. It is their duty to ensure that the mental state of the soldier at risk isn't in a bad place.

Suicide watch is a good way to instill postvention. Postvention consists of a sequence of planned support and interventions carried out with survivors in the aftermath of a completed suicide or suicide attempt. Postvention is prevention for survivors. The goal of suicide postvention is to support those affected by a suicide or attempt, promote healthy recovery, reduce the possibility of suicide contagion, strengthen unit cohesion, and promote continued mission readiness. Other soldiers watching the care given to the soldier at risk can prevent others, who may have the same dark thoughts,

from attempting to commit suicide as well and potentially give them a way to look towards their fellow soldiers for help. This will further instill unit cohesion therefore classifying it as postvention. The military thrives off of the guarding of important assets and guarding the life of a soldier at risk is a very important form of guard. CQ's ultimate duty is to keep the soldiers that reside in the barracks safe and suicide watch is just another way of doing so. Ultimately charge of quarters is a very important task that has been entrusted with soldiers in order to keep an eye on the well-being of their fellow comrades. Negligence during CQ should not and will not be tolerated on any level especially considering the repercussions that may occur. CQ is the face of the barracks and should at all times act in a clean and professional manner and continuously be prepared and ready for any situations or emergencies in their respective barracks building. It is in the best interest of the soldiers, the unit and the Army as a whole.