



## Commander's Talking Points: Time-Based Prevention (Suicide Prevention)

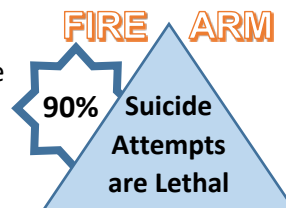
### Time-Based Prevention: The BIG Picture

Time-Based Prevention, which puts a strong emphasis on the “means” of suicide rather than the “why”, focuses on proper storage of personal firearms by assisting in creating life-saving time between a suicidal Airman and lethal means. These efforts are intended to eliminate the hazard of firearms being readily available when an Airman is in distress. Safely stored firearms require deliberate access actions to operate, creating a barrier and assisting in the prevention of suicide attempts by firearm.

**NOTE:** This effort is not intended to limit or prohibit the legal ownership or use of firearms for individuals. Commanders are generally prohibited by law from collecting or recording any information about the lawful acquisition, ownership, or carry of a privately-owned firearm by their military or civilian personnel. The exception is if they have reasonable grounds to believe a member is at risk for suicide or causing harm to others. In these cases, they may ask the military member of plans to acquire or if they currently own firearms or ammunition.

### Background:

Seventy percent of Air Force suicide attempts involve the use of personally-owned firearms. One in four suicides occur within the first five minutes of an individual making the decision to harm themselves. When using firearms, 90% of these attempts are lethal. Any barriers in place to prevent the intended suicide method can be successful in stopping the attempt, with most individuals never seeking access to another suicide method.



### Intent:

Time-Based Prevention is intended to positively shape Air Force culture and our Airmen's behavior through recurring emphasis by local Commanders, supervisors, peers, and dependents on the proper storage of firearms. By design, this information is intended to be messaged across all personnel, without specifically identifying personal firearm owners or users. This effort is intended to reduce deaths by suicide, which have increased among Air Force personnel in 2019 relative to previous years. In this way, the behavior and actions from Time-Based Prevention will be incorporated into Air Force culture, similar to on-going efforts related to alcohol use and driving.

### Additional Information:

Safe firearm use and storage education is being developed, but the need for implementing the **SLO** messaging to start positively shaping the Air Force culture and behavior towards proper storage of personal firearms is NOW! Ask your Violence Prevention Integrators about the free cable gun locks today!

Time-Based Prevention is being launched during September (Suicide Awareness month). It complements the DoD Suicide Prevention theme of “Small Steps Saves Lives”, by narrowing the focus into a specific, action-oriented approach.

### Recommended Communications:

- Commander's Call
- Town Hall
- Spouse Meetings
- Small Group Discussions

### Proper Firearm Storage Options (SLO):

- **SAFES** (store firearms in proper storage safes)
- **LOCKS** (use cable locks when firearms are not in use)
- **OUTSIDE THE HOME** (use local armories or ranges with storage options)

### Display/Message

#### Material from VPIs:

- Marketing Materials
- SLO Poster
- Public Service Announcements

Safe firearm storage is good practice for preventing suicide, accidental injuries or death (including children), and theft.

Leaders play a critical role in delivering the SLO message and shaping safe storage behavior...