



U.S. NAVAL SEA CADET CORPS

CHART YOUR COURSE

Temporary changes to USNSCC policies and procedures in response to the COVID-19 epidemic

Release Date: **December 15, 2020**

Expires on: **May 31, 2021**

Version: **5.0**

** New edits highlighted in green **

INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets forth the USNSCC's response to the novel coronavirus ("COVID-19") epidemic. With the unfortunate but necessary requirement to exercise social distancing, and the risk of transmission of this highly-contagious virus, NHQ has made the difficult decision to dramatically modify administrative, training, and advancement requirements to accommodate the best interests of our cadets. This Policy seeks to strike a balance between maintaining as many of the rigorous training standards as possible—because these are what set our program apart—while at the same time ensuring the health and well-being of our members and their families.

We want to emphasize that these changes are temporary, and are designed to keep our program moving forward.

Version 2.0 of this document announced the resumption of in-person activities, and included a companion document (COVID-19 Re-Opening & Intake Protocols) which details the operational and administrative requirements for this resumption.

Version 3.0 of this document provided additional flexibility in RT Phase II scheduling (§3.02), additional flexibility in cadet advancements impacted by COVID (§3.04), and mirrors USN policy in suspending group PT and PRT activities until further notice (§3.01(a)(5)).

Version 4.0 of this document mandates a return to regular drilling, whether in-person or virtual (§3.01(b)).

Version 5.0 of this document updates restrictions to travel to/from USNSCC activities, announces one-time modifications to the Annual Inspection Policy for the upcoming 2020 inspection cycle, and changes the process for submitting annual awards. Additionally, this temporary Policy is being extended to May 31, 2021, by which time the USNSCC hopes and expects that the availability of COVID-19 vaccine and/or therapeutic treatments will enable the beginning of a return to normal operations.

Should you have any questions about what a specific item means, please use your chain of command. NHQ will continue to update this Policy as needed in light of feedback from the field and the conditions on the ground across the nation.

PART 1: PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY OF THIS TEMPORARY POLICY

1.01 PURPOSE

(a) The purpose of this temporary Policy is to:

(1) Respond to the unique and mission-disrupting situation presented by the COVID-19 epidemic currently sweeping across the United States;

(2) Provide clear guidance to the USNSCC membership as to all modifications to USNSCC Policies and procedures that have been approved by NHQ; and

(3) Provide methods and encouragement to cadets to continue accomplishing training and advancement objectives through virtual means during the epidemic.

1.02 APPLICABILITY

(a) This temporary Policy will remain in effect until the expiration date printed on Page 1, or until cancellation by the Executive Director. The Executive Director may issue extensions and modifications to this Policy as needed; such notices will be published on the Homeport website.

(b) During the effective period of this temporary Policy, any provisions of USNSCC Policies that are inconsistent with provisions of this Policy are suspended. Any suspended provisions of regular USNSCC Policies will immediately resume being effective upon the termination of this temporary Policy.

(c) The Executive Director retains the authority to modify any advancement requirement in the case of a deserving cadet who, solely due to the COVID-19 emergency, risks being unable to achieve an important milestone prior to graduating from the program.

1.03 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

(a) *Continued force during the suspension of in-person activities.* The USNSCC Standards of Conduct (found in Chapter 7 of USNSCC Regulations) and the Volunteer Code of Conduct remain in full force and effect during the COVID-19 emergency and the duration of this temporary Policy. Of particular note, these standards include, but are not limited to, the prohibition against one-on-one Internet-based communication between volunteers and cadets. See USNSCC Regulations, Section 7.03(l) & Volunteer Code of Conduct § 24.

(b) *Automatic extension of initial probationary status for all Instructors.* For all Instructors who have less than one year of satisfactory service as of the date this temporary Policy is issued, the initial probationary period provided in [USNSCC Regulations](#), Section 6.11, is hereby extended. Said probationary period is extended for a period of six (6) months following the date this temporary Policy expires or is terminated. This is to ensure that unit Commanding Officers and the chain of command have a full opportunity to observe and assess the performance of all new Instructors in person.

PART 2: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

2.01 SERVICE JACKET ADMINISTRATION

(a) *Medical exams.* Notwithstanding Section 0104(d) of the Administrative Manual, cadets are not required to provide an updated Report of Medical Exam (NSCADM 001 Pages 5/6) if obtaining the cadet's medical provider's endorsement is impossible. However, if a Report of Medical Exam has expired, an updated copy must be provided when a cadet returns to in-person drill or prior to attending any in-person training event.

(b) *Medical histories.* The requirement to update the Report of Medical History (NSCADM 001 Pages 3/4) remains in effect, as this form does not require a medical provider's signature.

2.02 UNIT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

(i) The Unit Financial Management Policy remains in full force and effect, and is not modified or suspended in any way by this temporary Policy.

(ii) Any audits to be conducted during the duration of this temporary Policy should be conducted virtually whenever possible, using secure Internet applications to transmit financial information between the unit and the cognizant Regional Director.

2.03 ANNUAL INSPECTION FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020

(a) Except as provided below, all sections of the Annual Inspection form shall be reviewed and/or completed as provided in the Annual Inspection policy.

(1) The Membership (Section 5), Training (Section 6), and Volunteer Leadership (Section 7) sections shall be automatically populated based on actual 2020 data. NHQ understands that the scores in these sections will reflect the severe negative impact to USNSCC operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and will not hold negative results against units. (As discussed below, this is a key reason why national unit awards will not be issued in 2020.)

(i) The Sea Cadet Recruit Training requirement will be satisfied by cadets who complete both phases of Recruit Training. See Section 3.02 below.

(ii) Completed virtual Advanced Trainings will be counted as Advanced Trainings for purposes of calculating the score in Section 6(a) (Annual Training).

(2) Every unit will receive the maximum score for the Personnel Inspection (Section 8) of the Annual Inspection. In-person personnel inspections should not be conducted. Virtual inspections may be conducted at the discretion of the Unit Commanding Officer and/or the Regional Director, but shall be ungraded if conducted.

(3) The inspection of paper service records (required in Section 9 of the Annual Inspection) shall be conducted by arrangement between the Unit CO and Regional Director. This process is essential, in anticipation of resumed summer training in 2021.

(4) Units will receive credit for the 40-drill-period question in Section 10(d) of the inspection report even if the unit did not conduct 40 drill periods in 2020.

(5) *Financial audits.* Units must complete a full financial audit, as provided in Section 2.02 of this temporary Policy.

2.04 ANNUAL AWARDS

(a) *Unit Awards.* Because the annual unit awards rely heavily on the scores of the Annual Inspection, and because most components of the Annual Inspection have been modified or waived for 2020, there will be no unit awards issued for 2020.

(b) *Volunteer Awards.* Notwithstanding Sections 0203, 0204, 0207, and 0208 of the Awards Manual, each nomination package for the Nicholas Brango Award (Officer of the Year), the Robert T.S. Colby Award (Instructor of the Year), the Fred Carl Award (Regional Director of the Year), and the Bruce B. Smith Award (Regional Director Recruiting) shall be submitted via the chain of command as one document (pdf preferred) and will consist of the following documents only:

(1) Nomination letter written by the individual nominating the volunteer for the award. Each letter will include a summary of what the nominee achieved during the year, including how the nominee supported cadets within his/her unit, region, or area; and how the nominee supported national vision and goals. Particular focus should be placed on facts that are not otherwise contained within the Magellan record.

(2) Copy of the nominee's Magellan Record Book.

(3) Full-length photograph of the nominee in uniform (which may include the Alternate Uniform, if applicable), taken within the last six (6) months.

(c) *Sea Cadet/League Cadet of the Year Awards.* Notwithstanding Sections 0205 and 0206 of the Awards Manual, each nomination package for the Willis E. Reed Award (Sea Cadet of the Year) or the Keith T. Weaver Award (League Cadet of the Year) shall be submitted via the chain of command as one document (pdf preferred) and will consist of the following documents only:

(1) Nomination letter written by the nominee's unit Commanding Officer. Each letter will include a summary of what the nominee achieved during the year, including the nominee's specific leadership accomplishments and how the nominee supported his/her unit.

(2) Copy of the nominee's Magellan Record Book.

(3) Full-length photograph of the nominee in uniform, taken within the last six (6) months.

(4) Copy of the nominee's most recent academic transcript.

(5) Nominee's resume or list of extracurriculars completed in addition to USNSCC.

(6) (Optional) Up to 3 letters of recommendation, which may be submitted by a teacher, coach, employer, or anyone else who personally knows the nominee and can attest to the character traits and accomplishments desired.

PART 3: TRAINING POLICIES

3.01 RESUMPTION OF IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES

(a) *Resumption of mandatory drills and training activities.* Beginning on June 16, 2020, units and training contingents may resume in-person operations, but only if doing so is consistent with the following:

(1) The unit or training contingent is located in a state and local jurisdiction which allows gatherings up to the size limit and percentage of capacity needed to drill or train;

(2) The unit CO has sought and obtained the permission of the cognizant NHQ Representative (via the Regional Director) to resume drilling, or the COTC has sought and obtained permission of the cognizant NHQ Representative to stand up a training;

(3) The unit CO or COTC has successfully implemented all of the provisions of the USNSCC COVID-19 Re-Opening & Intake Protocols, issued on June 12, 2020;

(4) The unit CO or COTC has ensured that all recommendations of the CDC and the state and/or municipality regarding mask wearing, social distancing, disinfecting of surfaces, and personal hygiene have been accommodated; and

(5) Mirroring the Navy's policy (see NAVADMIN 193/20), no group physical training, group sports, or group, physical readiness tests may be conducted during the effective period of this Policy (see §3.07).

(b) *Drill requirement.* Starting in September of 2020, each NSCC unit and NLCC training ship will conduct at least one mandatory drill each month. Drill may be conducted in-person, virtually, or a combination thereof. In-person drill is only permissible if all the requirements of §3.01(a) of this policy are met.

(c) *Virtual drills.* While this temporary Policy remains in effect, units may choose to conduct regular or occasional Internet-based virtual drills. At any such virtual drills, units will:

(1) Take and record attendance in Magellan. Cadets who do not enjoy Internet access from their homes will be recorded as "excused" from virtual drills.

(2) Require that uniforms be worn, except that:

(i) Grooming standards may be relaxed in areas where barber shops and hair salons remain closed due to public health guidance; and

(ii) Cadets who were not issued uniforms may wear civilian clothes.

(d) *Overnights.* Members (including all cadets, staff cadets, and volunteers) may stay overnight at drills and trainings if doing so is permitted by the state and local jurisdiction, and if overnight stays can be accomplished while complying with the attached USNSCC COVID-19 Re-Opening & Intake Protocols.

(e) Travel.

(1) Members shall not use commercial transportation (air, train, or bus) to travel to trainings or drills. Members may only participate in training evolutions located within 500 miles of their home address. Unit-sponsored field trips shall be limited to 100 miles of the home unit drill site, unless the unit Commanding Officer requests permission in advance of the proposed activity from the cognizant NHQ Rep, via the chain of command.

(2) Members shall travel only in personally-owned vehicles, or via local public transportation if available. Carpooling (sharing a vehicle with persons who do not reside in one's own household) is prohibited if carpooling is prohibited by the state or local jurisdiction. If carpooling is permitted and members choose to carpool, all persons in the vehicle must:

(i) Wear a mask or face covering at all times during the ride;

(ii) Limit occupancy to half of the vehicle's total capacity (e.g., no more than 2 seats in a 5-person sedan);

(iii) Ensure a constant intake of fresh air by keeping the windows open or, if weather does not permit the windows to be open, by using the vehicle's ventilation system in non-recirculating mode; and

(iv) Maintain two-deep adult supervision any time a cadet is in the carpool.

(3) Members will comply with all pre- and post-travel requirements and advisory guidance issued by the jurisdiction they reside in, as well as any other states they travel to or through while traveling to/from USNSCC activities. This shall include compliance with any quarantine or COVID-19 testing requirements.

(4) Commanding Officers of Training Contingents (COTCs) will ensure that any members seeking to attend their training are compliant with all state and local travel requirements or advisory guidance.

(f) *NSCC activities outside of drill/training.* Any NSCC activities outside of approved drills or training evolutions, including but not limited to field trips, volunteering efforts, or color guards, are subject to the same restrictions and scrutiny as any drill or training. When participating in these outside activities, unit COs and COTCs must follow all state and local health guidelines as well as the rules set forth in this temporary policy document and the COVID-19 Re-Opening & Intake Protocols. Per §3.01(a)(2), NHQ Representative approval is required prior to participation in these events.

3.02 SEA CADET RECRUIT TRAINING

(a) *Modifications to NSCC Recruit Training curriculum.* Through 31 January 2021, the structure of NSCC Recruit Training may be modified and divided into two phases. A cadet must complete both Phase I and Phase II are required for a recruit to have graduated from RT.

(1) During Phase I, each Sea Cadet recruit will complete a series of computer-based training modules and videoconference/webinars that substantially pattern the academic instruction NSCC recruits receive at Recruit Training.

(2) During Phase II, and as conditions on the ground permit, regions will arrange for recruits to report to local training sites during which the remainder of the Recruit Training experience will be delivered. Ideally, this would take place over 40 hours across five consecutive training days. However, a shorter Phase II evolution may be approved by the cognizant NHQ Representative if a practicable training plan is submitted that incorporates all the requirements defined in the Phase II documents posted in the Magellan Library under "2020 Recruit Training."

(b) *Goals of Recruit Training for the Summer 2020.* It is NHQ's intention to return to the standard, in-person, overnight Recruit Training format as soon as it is safe to do so. Delivering any aspect of Recruit Training via a virtual method is not the ideal and does not reflect the direction of the program beyond the immediate COVID-19 emergency period. By implementing the temporary rules in this section, NHQ hopes that every cadet who wishes to put in the work required to advance in rate will be able to achieve that objective.

(c) *Rules governing Recruit Training Phase I.*

(1) *Online curriculum.* Phase I will be delivered through Polaris and other online tools, and will feature a blended learning format to include: interactive live webinars, at home independent assignments, small group virtual meetings, pre-recorded training videos, and maintaining a physical fitness log. There will be approximately 40 hours of online training and 40 hours of independent assignments in Phase I. Further details on Phase I have been posted in the Magellan Library under "2020 Recruit Training."

(d) *Rules governing Recruit Training Phase II.*

(1) The purpose of Recruit Training Phase II is to provide Sea Cadet recruits who have completed Phase I of a Recruit Training a military experience, generally in a daycamp (no overnight) setting. Further details on the requirements of Phase II have been posted in the Magellan Library under "2020 Recruit Training."

(2) NHQ Representatives and Regional Directors should exercise maximum effort to schedule at least one opportunity for their local recruits to participate in Recruit Training Phase II, as conditions on the ground permit. This opportunity (if the state/jurisdiction permits it and if sufficient volunteer and logistics support is available).

(3) All Phase II evolutions must comply with current state and local restrictions, the directives and recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the attached USNSCC COVID-19 Re-Opening & Intake Protocols.

(4) Mirroring the Navy's policy (NAVADMIN 193/20), group physical training, group sports, or group physical readiness tests may not be conducted.

(e) *Staff cadet service.* Sea Cadets in the rate of E-5 or E-6 who seek to perform staff duty in a leadership position, seeking to earn credit for later promotion to Chief Petty Officer, must provide service at both Recruit Training Phase I and II. See [Administrative Manual](#), Section 0107(5)(d).

(f) *Alternative scheduling of Phase II.* Regions or areas in which no facilities or COTC/volunteer support is available for a Phase II evolution may request permission from the cognizant NHQ Representative to provide the required in-person components of Recruit Training non-consecutively (i.e., over several weekends).

3.03 VIRTUAL TRAINING EVOLUTIONS

(a) *Virtual Advanced Trainings.* For the duration of this temporary Policy, cadets may complete Advanced Trainings that are solely conducted online. NHQ will publish appropriate guidance on registration for these courses.

(b) Any cadet who registers for a virtual training must first complete an online course about digital wellness and safety, details of which have been published on the COVID-19 tab of Homeport, under “Ignition Digital Wellness & Safety.”

(c) The facilitator of a virtual training will meet the COTC requirements of the Training & Operations Manual, Section 0605.

(d) Volunteers who play instrumental roles in creating and leading virtual training opportunities for our cadets should be recognized by the award of an appropriate merit ribbon (e.g., Citation Ribbon, Commendation Ribbon). The Escort Officer Ribbon will not be awarded for this category of training, nor will such virtual training count towards the Training requirement for promotion under the Administrative Manual, Section 0205.

(e) Sea Cadets in the rate of E-3 or above who render important service to a virtual Advanced Training by performing needed logistics, assisting with recording lectures, etc., may be awarded the Staff Cadet Ribbon in the discretion of the training facilitator.

3.04 ADVANCEMENT REQUIREMENTS

(a) *Sea Cadet promotions to E-3.* Notwithstanding the advancement requirements of the [Administrative Manual](#), Section 0107, a Sea Cadet in the rate of E-2(T) may:

(1) Participate in any virtual Advanced Training offered in the Magellan training list, and may do so at the same time he or she is also participating in Recruit Training Phase I—that is, before the cadet has graduated Recruit Training;

(2) Advance to E-3 immediately upon completion of Recruit Training Phase II, if the cadet has completed all requirements for advancement to E-3. Completion of virtual advanced trainings taken during the effective period of this Policy will satisfy the Advanced Training requirement for advancement, even if those Virtual ATs were completed prior to completion of Recruit Training Phase II.

(b) *Banking of Virtual Advanced Trainings.* Section 0107(5)(d) of the Administrative Manual permits a Sea Cadet to bank up to three in-person Advanced Trainings for

promotion credit in a single year. This rule shall not apply to virtual Advanced Trainings. Two virtual Advanced Trainings taken during 2020 may be used for promotion credit.

3.05 IN-PERSON ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

(a) NHQ expects that any in-person AT opportunities are likely to be limited during the summer of 2020. Any in-person ATs which are offered must be approved by NHQ, should take place as late as possible in the summer, and must comply with the standards set forth in the attached USNSCC COVID-19 Re-Opening & Intake Protocols.

3.06 NAVY LEAGUE ORIENTATION

(a) *Structure.* For the duration of this temporary Policy, NLCC Orientation may be conducted through a combination of interactive computer-based learning and remote participation, with a 2-day in-person requirement that may be satisfied at any time prior to January 31, 2020. Details on the requirements of NLO have been posted in the Magellan Library under “2020 Navy League Orientation.”

(b) Participation in virtual advanced trainings. League Cadets may participate in any virtual Advanced Trainings offered in the Magellan training list if the trainings are suitable for their age group, even if they have not completed Navy League Orientation. However, the rule requiring League Cadets to have completed Navy League Orientation before attending any in-person Advanced Training remains in full force and effect.

3.07 PHYSICAL READINESS TEST

(a) During the effective period of this temporary Policy, no group physical training, group sports, or group Physical Readiness Tests may be conducted. Parents or guardians may administer the PRT in the cadet’s home, subject to the following:

(1) A PRT administered at home outside of a USNSCC drill or training satisfies the PRT requirement for continued membership and advancement in rate. See Section 1.02(a), (c), and (d) of the [Physical Readiness Test Policy](#).

(2) A PRT administered at home outside of a USNSCC drill or training will satisfy the PRT requirement for eligibility to attend in-person trainings during the effective period of this temporary Policy. See Section 1.02(b) of the [Physical Readiness Test Policy](#).

(b) Unit COs may withhold or revoke permission to conduct the PRT at home if there is a specific reason to believe that a particular cadet has cheated on a PRT, deliberately submitted false results, or committed other similar misconduct.

3.08 PETTY OFFICER ADVANCEMENT EXAMINATIONS

(a) Notwithstanding Section 0107(4)(b) of the Administrative Manual, parents or guardians are authorized to administer Petty Officer Examinations in the home. All testing conditions must be observed to the maximum extent possible.

(b) Unit Commanding Officers may withhold or revoke this permission if there is a specific reason to believe that a particular cadet has cheated on an examination, compromised test materials or committed other similar misconduct.