



# 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: May 21, 2021**

**Expires on: August 31, 2021**

**Version: 7.0**

*\* 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 all in-person activities.

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 PRT activities until further notice (§3.01(a)(5)).

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

**Version 5.0 of this document updated restrictions to travel to/from USNSCC activities, announced one-time modifications to the Annual Inspection Policy for the 2020 inspection cycle, and changed the process for submitting annual awards. Additionally, this temporary Policy was extended through May 31, 2021, by which time the USNSCC hopes and expects that the availability of COVID-19 vaccine and/or therapeutic treatments will enable a return to more normal operations.**

**Version 5.1 of this document updates the policy of banking virtual trainings for advancement purposes (§3.04(b)), as well as units' and training contingents' authority to conduct group-based physical fitness training (§3.01(a)(5)).**

**Version 6.0 of this document maintains requirements for masks, distancing, and other safety measures for in-person trainings throughout the 2021 summer training season. Version 6.0 also reinstates a unit's authority to conduct an in-person Physical Readiness Test (PRT), with applicable restrictions (§3.01(a)(5) & §3.07). Please note that at-home PRTs remain an option for areas where gatherings are still limited. Additionally, v6.0 sets June 1, 2021 as the sunset date for limitations on travel (§3.01(e)), and the blanket authorization for virtual training (§3.02(g), §3.03(a), §3.04(b), & §3.06(a)).**

**Version 7.0 of this document rescinds several previously authorized modifications that are no longer justified or necessary in light of improved conditions across the country. In addition, this version sets forth important guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccines.**

**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) All temporary guidance regarding service jacket administration is cancelled, effective immediately. Service jacket requirements are governed by Sections 0104, 0107, 0202, and 0207 of the Administration Manual, posted at *Homeport > Policy*.

### 2.02 UNIT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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

### 2.03 ANNUAL INSPECTION FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020

(a) All temporary guidance regarding Annual Inspections is cancelled, effective immediately. Annual inspections for calendar year 2021 will be governed by the Annual Inspection policy, posted at *Homeport > Policy*.

### 2.04 ANNUAL AWARDS

(a) All temporary guidance regarding Annual Awards is cancelled. Annual awards for units and individuals for calendar year 2021 will be governed by the Awards Manual posted at *Homeport > Policy*.

### 2.05 COVID-19 VACCINATION PROTOCOLS

(a) The USNSCC Administration Manual addresses the importance of being vaccinated in accordance with the current standards promulgated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The purpose of this policy is “to minimize the risk of transmitting communicable diseases within the tight, shared living conditions at most USNSCC training evolutions.” Administration Manual, Section 0104(1)(i).

(b) It is beyond any serious dispute that the coronavirus which causes the COVID-19 disease has proven to be particularly transmissible, and deadly to certain populations. We are fortunate to be in a situation where, after over a year of sacrifice, we can bring the COVID-19 pandemic to an end if a sufficient number of Americans get vaccinated. USNSCC cadets and volunteers should ***lead by example*** in this effort!

(c) At present, the CDC has issued Emergency Use Authorizations for several COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines have proven extremely safe and effective at reducing the number of infections and transmissions of COVID-19. Therefore, the USNSCC strongly encourages every eligible member—cadet, volunteer, and family member—to get vaccinated as soon as possible. You can find an authorized vaccine location by visiting <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>.

(d) Because the COVID-19 vaccines are currently only authorized under emergency conditions, the USNSCC is not, at this time, requiring that eligible members be vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to participate in USNSCC activities. However, members should be advised that NHQ will actively monitor this issue, and intends to issue revised guidance

as soon as COVID-19 vaccines receive full regulatory approval or when COVID-19 vaccination are added to the CDC's official Schedule of Immunizations.

## PART 3: TRAINING POLICIES

### 3.01 RESUMPTION OF IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES

(a) *Resumption of mandatory drills and training activities.* Units and training contingents may conduct in-person operations, 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 and as modified since that date;

(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) Any group physical training or PRTs are to be conducted outdoors, following the restrictions defined in Section 5(e) of the COVID Re-Opening and Intake Protocols.

(b) *Drill requirement.* During the reopening period, 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 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) 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.* The following restrictions are placed on NSCC-related travel:

(1) **Members may use commercial transportation** (air, train, or bus) to travel to trainings or drills, **so long as they remain masked while on board.**

(2) Any time persons of different households share a vehicle—including, but not limited to, carpooling to/from activities, transporting to/from field trips or during training—persons in the vehicle must:

(i) Wear a mask or face covering at all times during the ride unless the individual has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19;

(ii) 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

(iii) Maintain two-deep adult supervision any time a cadet is in the carpool (as required *anytime* unrelated cadets and volunteers ride in a car together).

(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) Unit Commanding Officers and 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) *Return to in-person RT.* Beginning on June 1, 2021, authority to conduct the modified form of Recruit Training is cancelled. All RTs conducted on or after that date shall be conducted as defined in the USNSCC Training & Operations Manual, unless specifically authorized by the cognizant NHQ Rep.

### **3.03 VIRTUAL TRAINING EVOLUTIONS**

(a) *Virtual Advanced Trainings.* All ATs conducted on or after June 1, 2021 shall be conducted in person, unless specifically authorized by the cognizant NHQ Rep.

### **3.04 ADVANCEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

(a) All temporary guidance regarding cadet advancements is cancelled effective immediately. Advancements may continue to be made based milestones met under temporary guidance through 20 May 2021. Cadet advancements are governed by Sections 0108 and 0108 of the Administration Manual, posted at *Homepage > Policy*.

(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 also apply to virtual Advanced Trainings completed on or before May 31, 2021.

### **3.05 IN-PERSON ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

(a) Any in-person ATs which are offered must be approved by the cognizant NHQ Rep, 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.* All NLOs conducted on or after June 1, 2021 shall be conducted as defined in the USNSCC Training and Operations Manual, unless specifically authorized by the cognizant NHQ Rep.

(b) *Participation in NLCC advanced trainings.* All NLCC ATs conducted on or after June 1, 2021 shall be conducted in person, unless specifically authorized by the cognizant NHQ Rep.

(c) *Waiver of Navy League Orientation Requirement.* Because there were very few Navy League Orientations offered in 2020, the typical requirement that League Cadets must complete Navy League Orientation before attending any NLCC Advanced Training is waived through August 31, 2021.

### **3.07 PHYSICAL READINESS TEST**

(a) Effective April 1, 2021, units and training contingents may conduct a PRT in person, provided that the PRT is conducted in accordance with Section 5(e) of the COVID Intake Protocols.

(b) Per Section 2.01 of the Physical Readiness Test Policy, Unit COs are to provide at least two weeks' written notice to cadets and parents of a PRT. During the effective period of this temporary Policy, parents or guardians may choose to administer the PRT in the cadet's home, via written request back to the Unit CO.

(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.

(c) 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)(c) 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.