

2 June 2015

RE: Revised Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT)

Dear Officers,

We are happy to officially announce the revised **Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) which takes effect 1 January 2016**. We are very pleased that the revised APFT includes more options and recognition, improved science, and more appropriate age bands.

Per policy, beginning 1 July 2015, the President's Challenge will no longer be an option for Commissioned Corps officers to satisfy the physical readiness component. However, President's Challenge Awards received prior to 1 July, 2015 will remain valid for one year from the date of the award. As of 1 July 2015, all officers will be required to either:

1. Complete and pass the Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) (Note: Medical waivers may be obtained for the individual exercises that cannot be completed due to medical limitations. If the officer completes a medical waiver for a specific component of the APFT, the officer will still be required to perform the other components), or
2. Possess an approved medical waiver for all exercise categories of the APFT.

In February 2014, a panel of Commissioned Corps subject matter experts was charged by Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) to review, evaluate, and recommend a revised evidence-based physical readiness standard. The APFT Working Group consisting of RADM Sarah Linde, CAPT Bart Drinkard, CAPT Scott Gaustad, CAPT Bernard Parker, CAPT Rick Troiano, CDR Dan Brum, CDR Juliette Touré, LCDR Elizabeth DeGrange, and LT Katrina Piercy was convened to explore multiple facets of exercise science, human physiology, and related areas of public health. This included a thorough review of existing policy and practices as well as other uniformed service standards.

The panel:

- addressed current physical readiness components: the APFT and President's Challenge
- accounted for the best science available to measure fitness levels needed to support USPHS missions
- recommended fitness standards that:
 - provide additional exercise options for the APFT
 - provide opportunities for officers to complete the APFT when a USPHS officer is not physically present to serve as the testing official
 - incorporate an updated medical waiver system, and standards to assure accountability

The revised APFT includes:

- New exercise options (in addition to the current exercises)
- Recognition for high achievement
- Additional options for documentation
- More age bands, i.e., different criteria for age ranges 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, etc.
- Evidence-based standards
- Similarity with other services for scoring

Although the revised APFT will not officially take effect until 1 January 2016, several resources are available on the CCMIS website (under the Readiness tab) to inform officers of the changes, including:

- [APFT Information](#)
- [Revised APFT Overview](#)
- [APFT Procedures & Instructions](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- Video demonstration of APFT exercises (coming soon)

Details on the revised APFT will also be communicated to officers through multiple channels (email, website, social media, PAC presentations, Agency Liaisons, etc.).

As leaders in public health and visible members of a uniformed service, every Commissioned Corps officer should be a role model of the attributes of health described in key policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including *Healthy People 2020*, the *National Prevention Strategy*, and the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*. Additionally, officers are required to be prepared (and accountable) to rapidly and effectively respond to public health emergencies. As you are aware, all officers are required to maintain basic readiness as a Condition of Service as codified in US Code – Title 42 (42USC§204a).

Over 95% of the Corps already complies with this Condition of Service! Hooah! We are very proud of you! Now, our Corps will improve its accountability and continue to emulate leadership in all facets of health.

Questions regarding the APFT should be emailed to RedDOG@hhs.gov. Questions regarding medical waivers should be sent to the Medical Affairs points of contact, Dr. Alvin Abrams at Alvin.Abrams@hhs.gov or Dr. Melvin Williams at Melvin.Williams@hhs.gov.

Thank you for your continued dedication and service. And a very special thank you to LT Katrina Piercy and the APFT Working Group for all their hard work.

With PHS Pride,



RADM Scott Giberson
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Personnel and Readiness

CAPT Dan Beck
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Operations Group