

## USCG Body Composition Standards FAQs

1. What is the Commandant's vision and expectation of the Body Composition Standards?
  - a. The Coast Guard needs to maintain a physically and mentally mission-ready workforce. Updating the body composition program is one step in improving the culture of health and wellness within the Coast Guard.
2. What about the program is NOT changing?
  - a. The objectives of the program and the associated policies are not changing. The CG will be adding two additional opportunities for members to demonstrate compliance.
3. Why is this program changing?
  - a. The Women's Retention Study and Holistic Analysis (WRSHA) and CG research revealed that our current policies disproportionately impacted our Active Duty and Reserve women. In response, a multidisciplinary team studied the issue for the past four months and developed an improved body composition policy that benefits all members.
4. Why is it now called the CG Body Composition Standards?
  - a. The name change to Body Composition Standards is more in line with DoD policy and practices and better reflects the CG's efforts to improve integration between medical and policy.
5. How were the minimum requirements for each required measurement determined?
  - a. All of the requirements for each required measurement were determined by using current medical and scientific conventions, along with parity with DoD standards.
6. When does this new program take effect? How long does it last?
  - a. The Abdominal Circumference (AC) and PT test as compliance measures will be in effect on 01 October 2019 and will remain in effect for one year.
7. How is Abdominal Circumference different from taping?
  - a. The standard taping method is a measure of an individual's overall body fat. It does not indicate where that fat is located on the body. The Abdominal Circumference is a measure of abdominal fat irrespective of gender. This type of fat is indicative of an individual's overall health risk. Additionally, the measurement procedure is done differently from standard taping.
8. What is the max AC for women? Men? Do they get an extra inch like with standard taping?
  - a. The max AC for women is 35.5 inches and the max AC for men is 39 inches. If a member measures at or below their max they are compliant. As with the standard taping all members may elect to be taped on bare skin or over clothing.
9. Is AC measurement done over clothing? If so, what clothing?
  - a. Members can choose to be measured over bare skin or clothes.
10. What if I don't want to get taped? Can I just get measured by AC?
  - a. All members who exceed their MAW must be taped per the CG's adherence to DoD policy. Since the AC is a new measurement, we are requiring all members who exceed their MAW to be assessed by both the standard taping and AC in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the new measurement.
11. Are the height and weight measurements changing too?
  - A. No. MAW remains in line with DoD policy and is not changing.
12. What are the PT Test requirements?
  - a. The PT test is the standard Boat Crew PT test as specified in the Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Manual, Volume 1, COMDTINST M16114.32 (series).
13. Who will administer the PT test for my unit?

- a. Each unit has the ability to administer a PT test. Members should check with their command or Chief Petty Officer mess for local guidance.
14. Are COs required to provide fitness time during duty-hours?
- a. The CG Health Promotion Manual, COMDTINST 6200.1E, states that all active duty members must engage in fitness activity as outlined in their Personal Fitness Plan, a minimum of 180 minutes per week. Operations and workload permitting, allow all military members (active duty and selected reserve) time for exercise and physical activity a minimum of 180 minutes per week during normal working hours. Commands do not have to comply when the unit is on a tropical hours schedule or deployed; however, military members are still required to adhere to the 180 minutes per week exercise standards as outlined in Paragraph B.1. in this Chapter. Commanding officers of training centers may waive fitness enhancing activity and Personal Fitness Plan requirements for military students if they determine course requirements fulfill the fitness enhancing activity requirement, or if fitness enhancing activity cannot be reasonably accommodated in the training schedule. In efforts to follow this policy, commanding officers and officers-in-charge may limit the working hours during which fitness activity may be performed to prevent or mitigate disruptions to unit or work-group efficiency and effectiveness and/or exclude participation by incumbents of civilian employee positions assigned activities that cannot be paused during assigned working hours without adversely affecting work being performed by other members, employees or work-groups, due to activity interdependency.
15. Does my CO have authority to deny my ability to take the PT test?
- a. No. If a member is cleared by a Coast Guard Medical Officer and the member chooses to take the PT test, they cannot be denied that opportunity to demonstrate compliance.
16. What is the process I go through in Medical to be approved for the PT test?
- a. Member will have to be seen by their medical provider. The Coast Guard Office of Health, Safety, and Work-Life (CG-11) will provide specific guidance to medical officers prior to 01 October 2019. In general, medical officers will ensure members are healthy enough to perform the PT test.
17. What happens when the trial program is over?
- a. The Assistant Commandant for Human Resources (CG-1) will evaluate the results of program and make policy change recommendations.
18. What if I think I'm healthy enough for the PT test but medical says I'm not?
- a. If a medical officer determines a member is not healthy enough for the PT test, then the member will not be permitted to take the test for compliance. The member should work with the medical officer to develop a plan to improve their health and enable them to take the test.
19. Why can't we use the body fat scales (i.e., electrical impedance devices) or other ways to measure?
- a. The Coast Guard will explore the use of technology as it continues to evaluate the Body Composition Standards policy.
20. Does the requirement to pass "weigh-ins" prior to or at "C" schools still remain? Will those units that validate my weight/tape during those courses administer the PT test for me?
- a. Yes. All required "weigh-in" periods per policy still apply. Per the policy, members should be assessed upon receipt of orders for training such as CPOA, PCO/PXO, "A" schools, etc. In the event that a member is assessed for compliance upon arrival, all standards and procedures will apply.
21. I'm a Yeoman. How do I record this?

- a. COMDT (CG-1331) will provide guidance on how to log and record compliance by 15 September 2019.
- 22. What about underweight members? Are there any changes to that program?
  - a. There are no changes policy concerning underweight members.
- 23. What are the new parameters for medical waiver/abeyance?
  - a. COMDT (CG-11) will provide guidance to medical officers on authorized waivers and abeyances prior to 01 October 2019.
- 24. If I already take the boat crew test for my job, do I still need to weigh in and/or get measured?
  - a. Yes, all military personnel will who are required to weigh-in will follow the process and procedures in **ACN XX/19** (Coming Soon).
- 25. Is this comparable to other DoD services?
  - a. The USAF and USN have incorporated AC measurements into their Body Composition programs.
- 26. Is this correcting a standards imbalance that women have dealt with for years?
  - a. The WRSMA highlighted, and CG researched confirmed, that women are separated for weight policy failures at twice the rate of their population and are three times as likely to fail taping compared to males. Additionally, feedback indicated that both male and female members experience elevated stress during weigh-in periods. This information led the CG to pilot policy changes that will benefit all members.
- 27. Who maintains the sole responsibility to meet and maintain the Coast Guard's Body Composition Standards?
  - a. All Coast Guard members are responsible for maintaining their personal readiness posture including compliance with Body Composition Standards.
- 28. What if I have a waiver/abeyance that prevents me from doing one or more components of the PT test?
  - a. The PT test must be completed in its entirety. A member with a medical abeyance or waiver would be considered compliant during the waiver or abeyance period.