



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
ARMY PUBLIC AFFAIRS CENTER  
4550 PARADE FIELD LANE  
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MD 20755-5650

SAPA-PAC

31 March 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR Public Affairs & Communication Strategy Qualification Course,  
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-5620

SUBJECT: Army (uniformed) Student Welcome Letter and Class Guidance

1. Congratulations on joining Army Public Affairs and welcome to the Public Affairs & Communication Strategy Qualification Course. Students will conduct all training at the Defense Information School (DINFOS) located at 6500 Mapes Road, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland.
2. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Center Student Company is responsible for all students attending PACS-Q. Students will conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism throughout the course and will be held to the standards expected of an U.S. Army Officer or Non-commissioned Officer.
3. Student Soldier In-processing:
  - a. Upon arrival to Fort Meade, students will report to the U.S. Army Public Affairs Center Student Company CQ desk at building 8606, 6<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Road, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. If there are any issues preventing your timely arrival prior to the class start date, please contact the Student Company Staff Duty at (301)-677-6167.
  - b. On the first day of class, Soldiers will report to the DINFOS main entrance between 0730 and 0745. Instructors will be at the entrance to direct Soldiers to the appropriate classroom. Please have a printed copy of your orders with you on the first day of class. Student detachment personnel will conduct your in-processing during the first part of the period.
  - c. It is critical that Soldiers do not attempt to go to sick call or any other appointment on the first day of class. Failure to report at the beginning of the course may nullify a reserved training status.
  - d. USAR Soldiers: U.S. Army Reserve student Soldiers will provide a copy of their PACS-Q orders NLT 14 days prior to the class report date. Send to the USAR/APAC PACSQ mailbox, [usarpacsqdocumentinboxatapac@army.mil](mailto:usarpacsqdocumentinboxatapac@army.mil).

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4. The PACS-Q Course is a Military Training Specific Allotment (MTSA) funded course. Lodging at the Candlewood Suites is mandatory and available at no cost to the student. All students on TDY receive partial Per Diem to take advantage of the Freedom Inn Dining Facility at 8502 Simonds St. for lunch and dinner. Breakfast is provided at the Candlewood Suites. All service members on TDY orders must adhere to their orders regarding meals and lodging.

a. Soldiers must confirm their room reservations 30 days prior to arrival through IHG Candlewood Suites located at 4690 Cooper Ave, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, 20755, (410) 674-7700.

b. Dining facility hours of operation:

I. Weekdays: 0600-0800 Breakfast, 1115-1245 Lunch, 1700-1830 Dinner

II. Weekends: 0800-0930 Breakfast, 1130-1300 Lunch, 1700-1830 Dinner

c. Rental cars are funded by your unit. They are not entirely needed during the course due to the proximity of lodging to the school location. (Average 14-minute walk, 0.7 miles) Please make arrangements prior to arrival at DINFOS. You are authorized to bring your privately owned vehicles (POV) if CONUS-based.

5. Minimum required packing list items include:

a. Army Combat Uniform (ACU) in Operational Camouflage Pattern (OCP) x 2

b. Army Physical Fitness Uniform (APFU) black with gold lettering.

I. For the months of October through April the following additional cold weather items are required.

- Black Fleece Cap
- Gloves
- APFU Long Sleeve Shirt
- APFU Pants
- APFU Jacket

c. Army Service Uniform (ASU) or Army Green Service Uniform (AGSU)

I. Full Dress uniform will be worn for graduation during winter months.

II. Class B uniform with ribbons will be worn for summer graduations and the last Friday of each month.

d. Appropriate business casual civilian attire

6. Army Combat Fitness Test and Army Body Composition Assessment:

a. For all Professional Military Education courses starting on 1 October 2022 or later, Soldiers must pass a record ACFT to graduate and receive a DA Form 1059. This requirement applies to all components. All students will conduct an ACFT within the first ten training days. Students that fail to achieve a passing score will be provided an opportunity to retest.

- b. Students must wear their seasonally appropriate APFU for the ACFT and weigh-in.
- c. Profiles and Alternate Events. Soldiers will conduct all ACFT events not prohibited by a permanent profile. If a permanent profile prohibits the 2-mile run, an approved ACFT alternate aerobic event must be identified by the Soldier's primary care manager using a DA Form 3349, Physical Profile Record. As a reminder, Soldiers on a temporary profile will not attend PACS-Q until such time as the profile has expired and they are eligible to complete the ACFT, either without profile or on permanent profile.
- d. Soldiers who are pregnant or who are recovering from a pregnancy are exempt from regular unit physical readiness training and testing for the duration of the pregnancy and 180 days post pregnancy. Soldiers will receive a DA 1059 at the completion of the course that will annotate, "Did not take ACFT IAW AD 2022-06".
- e. Soldier that score 540 points or more on the ACFT with minimum of 80 points in each event and, IAW AR 600-9, is exempt from Army body fat assessment.
- f. PACS-Q is an MOS-producing course, and therefore all Army students that do not qualify for the aforementioned exemption outlined in Army Directive 2023-08 will be required to meet height and weight standards. For further information on this requirement, please review Army Regulation 350-1 and AR 600-9.
- g. All students will conduct an Army Body Composition Assessment at the U.S. Army Public Affairs Center Student Company on the first day of class.

7. Healthcare during military training: Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center (KACC) on post is not a full-service hospital. It may not be able to provide the health care you require. However, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and the hospital at Andrews Air Force Base are within driving distance. If you have specific health care issues, it would be best to contact KACC and/or your regional TRI-CARE representative before arrival. It is strongly recommended that students contact their insurance provider prior to arrival in case medical care is needed while away from home. Students may have to change their TRI-CARE region prior to arrival at Fort Meade. Students should ensure they bring an adequate supply of any prescription medications.

8. Leave and pass while in a student status: There are times when your course will cross over federal holidays and non-training days or an emergency situation arises. Leave and pass is possible and will be processed by your home station. Coordination with U.S. Army Public Affairs Center Student Company is required for all absences accountability purposes within the DINFOS management system.

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9. Students must ensure that their DTS orders are properly configured and pay is properly arranged through their home unit/organization before arrival.

10. A three-day Operations Security Course (Level II) certification will be offered after the PACS-Q class ends to meet regulatory requirements for public release of information. Reserve and National Guard students are welcome to attend but must provide separate orders from their home station. Units will have to pay for the extended TDY if Soldiers choose to attend.

11. Point of contact for this memorandum is the Army Public Affairs Center Training Development NCO, SFC Usry, Rashad at (301) 677-4609 or [rashad.k.usry2mil@army.mil](mailto:rashad.k.usry2mil@army.mil).

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LTC, AG  
Director, Army Public Affairs Center