

PREPARING FOR CAP ENCAMPMENT

A GUIDE FOR STUDENT CADETS (FIRST TIME ATTENDEES)

This guide provides you with information about preparing for cadet encampment. Additionally, the guide explains eligibility requirements, provides guidance about preparing for encampment, and stresses the importance of why you should attend encampment.

WHAT IS CADET ENCAMPMENT?

Encampment is an adventure! Your first encampment is an experience you will never forget. Encampment is a basic introduction to the military way of life and is an opportunity to experience leadership from both a follower's and leader's point of view. Encampment is a unique training opportunity because of the weeklong "total immersion" concept that introduces cadets to a military environment at an active military base. It is an excellent way for you to meet new cadets from throughout the Colorado Wing and other wings and aids in establishing an "esprit de corps" among the "next generation" of cadet leaders. *That's you!*

WHO SHOULD ATTEND AN ENCAMPMENT?

Most cadets who *have not* previously attended an encampment should attend encampment at their first opportunity. This is essential training and is especially important for new cadets. At encampment, all first time encampment attendees are called "student cadets". You will see this terms used often as you continue reading this guide.

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND AN ENCAMPMENT?

- It is a requirement to achieve the Billy Mitchell Award and be promoted to cadet officer.
- It is required prior to participation in many National and Wing-sponsored special activities.
- It provides an outstanding leadership and training forum for you and other cadets. It provides an opportunity to meet cadets from other squadrons and begin lasting friendships.
- It provides an opportunity for you to learn about the military and to live like military personnel for a week.
- Studies show that encampment attendance during the first year of membership increases retention in CAP. If you attend encampment, you are much more likely to renew membership after the first year.
- Encampment completion provides an opportunity for to become a staff member at subsequent encampments and many other activities!

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ENCAMPMENT?

You must have a current membership card, meet grooming standards at the beginning and throughout encampment, be safety current at the beginning of and throughout encampment, and have a complete blues *and* BDU uniform. You must be a Cadet Airman (C/Amn) in order to apply for encampment.

HOW DOES THE APPLICATION PROCESS WORK?

You will need to complete and submit the paper application packet. Check the encampment website for additional information about the application process. As a reminder, you must complete the Curry Achievement *before* applying and must include full payment of encampment fees with your application. Encampment reservations, known as slot assignments, are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis to those submitting *complete* and *accurate* applications packets with *full payment*.

Colorado Wing Encampment only has a limited number of available slots and usually has more applicants than available slots! If you fail to submit the required paperwork and payment soon enough you may not get an encampment slot and will be unable to attend!

WHO SUPERVISES CADETS AT ENCAMPMENT?

Safety is of paramount importance throughout encampment! Adult CAP senior staff members, both male and female, will be supervising you at all times. Approximately twenty-five adult CAP members serve on senior staff. Both male and female senior members are housed in each dormitory building so that you and the rest of the student cadets are supervised twenty-four hours each day.

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT ENCAMPMENTS?

Yes. CAP Regulation 52-16, Chapter 9, governs CAP Encampments. A copy of this regulation is available at the CAP National Headquarters website at: <http://gocivilairpatrol.com> Click on "Members", then "Forms and Publications", then "Index, Regulations and Manuals". Scroll down the page until you find the underlined link to R52-16 - Cadet Program Management. Cadets and seniors who have attended previous encampments are a great source of information as well. Your squadron commander is also an excellent resource for encampment information.

WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING AND DINING FACILITIES ARE USED?

You will be living in military dormitories during encampment. The dormitories are set up for two cadets per room in stacked bunk beds. The upper bunk is accessed by a ladder and one side of the bed is against a wall. There is no safety rail on the other side of the upper bunk. Upper and lower bunks are pre-assigned randomly. Roommates are pre-assigned by similar age. You ***do not*** get to select your roommate ***or*** your bunk. Male and female cadets are housed on separate floors and have separate bath/toilet facilities.

Dining facilities are at a nearby high school cafeteria. Food is prepared by food service professionals and served cafeteria style. You must disclose ***legitimate*** food allergies and ***medical*** dietary restrictions during the application process. Usually, there are enough different foods at each meal, that cadets will be able to select something they can eat.

I HAVE NEVER BEEN AWAY FROM HOME BEFORE. WILL THIS BE A PROBLEM?

Normally, this is not a problem. When you are away from home for the first time you might become homesick; this is quite normal. Discuss this with your parents before encampment. If you get homesick during encampment, you can also discuss it with other cadets in your flight, your flight sergeant, or your flight commander. If you are not comfortable discussing this with other cadets, each flight has an assigned senior member, called a TAC Officer, who will be happy to talk with you. There is also a full time Chaplain available to talk with you about any issue.

Encampment is ***not*** a typical summer camp. The staff conducts encampment in a military manner; it is fast-paced with little free time. Encampments operate at a higher level of intensity in respect to the military aspects of cadet life than virtually any other cadet activity, short of some of the premiere National Cadet Special Activities. The strictness, rigor, sense of urgency, and overall expectations of military bearing will be markedly more challenging at encampment, yet still age-appropriate, compared with a weekly squadron meeting or a Saturday field trip. This may be a bit overwhelming for the first few days. Some cadets will respond to this better than others. However, you should adjust to the routine by the third day. During past encampments, less than one percent of cadets have gone home for other than medical reasons. In some years, no cadets have gone home.

Very Important! Please ***do not*** plan for regular phone calls with your parents! You ***will not*** have your cell phone with you (cell phones are on the prohibited items list). Calls to parents can disrupt the schedule for you and the encampment staff. For the same reason, the encampment staff is asking your parents ***not*** to call you at encampment for routine matters or to "see how you are doing". If there are problems at encampment, encampment staff will contact your parents.

If your family *needs* to contact you due to an emergency, encampment staff will cooperate fully. **Please DO NOT promise to call home.** You simply will not have time. If you have a legitimate need to contact your parents, you may do so by contacting the Chaplain or a TAC Officer.

HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR ENCAMPMENT?

Encampment is not a military boot camp; however, the training is intense. Although you will receive plenty of basic cadet training at encampment, some training is required at your home squadron before encampment. You will need to understand the basic concepts of CAP customs and courtesies, the basic concepts of CAP drill, and the basic concepts of proper uniform wear. Encampment should not be your first exposure to these subjects. Your home squadron commander has responsibility for this training.

At Encampment, physical conditioning is important. Each day begins early, with Physical Training (PT). All cadets participate in team volleyball competitions and other athletic activities during the week. Although you do not have to be in peak physical condition to attend encampment, a regular exercise program, to include running, will help you to prepare. You *will* be running almost every day. Sit-ups, pushups, jumping jacks, and leg-lifts are great exercises. You cannot run *too much* when preparing for encampment! Be sure to start out slowly and build up your endurance. If you are not pushing yourself, you are not conditioning! ***Begin a conditioning program now – don't wait until the week before encampment to start working out!***

Ask your parents to give you basic instructions on doing laundry and ironing. If you already know how, that is even better. Although there is washer and dryer availability in the barracks, time for doing laundry is extremely limited. You should plan to wash only *uniform items* when necessary, not undergarments or socks. If you bring all of the required items on the Packing List, there should be no need to do any laundry except for BDUs and possibly blues shirts. Irons and ironing boards ***are not available*** in the barracks and are included on the Packing List. Detergent ***may*** be provided. Check the Packing List to see if you need to bring it.

Uniform shoes and combat boots must fit properly and be broken-in before encampment! Each year, blisters are the most common injury at encampment and ***most are preventable*** by proper fit and break-in of boots and shoes. Start wearing your combat boots and dress shoes around the house. Two or three hours a week from for several weeks prior to encampment will really make a difference. It might be embarrassing to wear them away from home, but you have to break them in somehow. This cannot be stressed enough. You will be walking and/or marching several miles each day. This can be extremely painful with blisters.

You must comply with uniform regulations. The US Air Force decides how we are supposed to wear the cadet service dress (blues) uniforms and Utility Uniforms (BDU). Regulations require ***exact*** placement of all insignia, patches, and accessories. If there are questions about this, contact your home squadron personnel. If you arrive at encampment with patches improperly sewn or in the wrong place, ***you*** are responsible for correcting the error. This is not encampment staff's job. Please ensure that your uniforms are correct ***prior*** to arrival ***or*** you will have to know how to sew. You ***will*** have to fix any problems.

HOW ARE MEDICATIONS AND MEDICAL ISSUES HANDLED AT ENCAMPMENT?

All information about medications and pre-existing medical conditions ***must*** be disclosed during the application process. After applications are submitted, any changes to medical conditions that might restrict your full participation during encampment must be communicated to encampment staff, in advance, to determine if any special accommodations can be made. Some illnesses or medical conditions may be disqualifying. If it is determined that you have an ***unreported or undisclosed*** medical condition during the check-in process, and that condition restricts participation, you may be dismissed from encampment without a refund.

In accordance with CAP regulations, the taking of prescription medication is the responsibility of the individual member for whom the medication was prescribed or, if the member is a minor, the member's parent or guardian. Except in extraordinary circumstances, **you**, regardless of age, will be responsible for transporting, storing, and taking your own medications, including inhalers and epinephrine pens.

CAP is not a health care provider, and CAP members are not permitted to act in the role of health care providers during the performance of official CAP duties. Consequently, CAP members are not permitted to function as pharmacists, physicians, nurses, or in any other role that would permit the administration and dispensing of drugs under various federal and state laws and regulations.

If you have not attained the necessary level of maturity or are unable to self-medicate safely, it may be necessary to postpone encampment attendance until you can handle the self-medication task.

By CAP Regulations, medical care within CAP is limited to emergency care, only (i.e., first aid and stabilization) within the training and qualifications of the person rendering such care, until such time that private professional or authorized military care can be obtained.

Encampment medical staff's level of training is often limited to basic First Aid and CPR. Encampment staff will only treat minor cuts, scrapes, blisters, bruises, and mild cases of dehydration to the limits of their training. This is similar to medical care that might be conducted in the home.

Medical emergencies will be handled by 911 calls and, if necessary, by transport to appropriate medical facilities. In these situations, parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible using the emergency contact information that is submitted during the application process.

In cases where an injury or illness is not an emergency but encampment staff decides that you should be seen by a physician, as a precaution, encampment staff will contact parents/guardians as soon as possible and advise them of the situation and discuss options. Options will include transport to an Emergency Room by CAP personnel or pick-up by parents and subsequent treatment. Depending on the nature and severity of an illness or injury, dismissal from encampment is possible.

During encampment, any illness or injury that limits your full participation in encampment activities may result in dismissal from encampment!

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BRING TO AN ENCAMPMENT?

The Packing List on the encampment website contains items that all you must bring as well as ***contraband/prohibited items***. All items on the list are ***required*** unless specifically indicated as optional. Check, double check, and triple check all items before departing for encampment. Each year, some cadets arrive without required items. No spare uniform items are available at encampment. Although not required, an extra blues shirt and an extra set of BDU trousers and shirt are very helpful.

As soon as the Packing List is published, you should copy or download this list from the Cadet Encampment page of the Colorado Wing website. Start acquiring everything on the list ***early***. This allows you more time to obtain some of the items. Squadron commanders or squadron supply officers can make recommendations and may be able to assist in obtaining uniform items. Some uniform items may require ordering so allow adequate time. ***No uniform items or accessories are available at encampment!***

Important! Complete an inventory of all required items immediately prior to departing for encampment.

Do not over-pack. When you arrive at encampment, you will be carrying your own luggage. Depending on your barracks room assignment, you may have to carry everything up as many as three flights of stairs. A rolling suitcase or duffel bag will help.

Pack any medications, prescription and non-prescription in a plastic zip-lock bag and keep these in a location that you can get to easily. These will be checked during the check-in process.

ENCAMPMENT CHECK-IN PROCESS.

Do not be late for check-in! Check-in will start at a specific time. If you arrive too early, you will still have to wait until check-in starts.

Haircuts and hairstyles will be inspected prior to check-in. Haircuts and hairstyles must meet CAP grooming standards throughout encampment. Staff **will not** allow you to in-process if your hair does not meet CAP grooming standards. If your hair/hairstyle does not meet standards you will be given a choice of going to the base barbershop for a haircut at your own expense. **If you decline, you will not in-process and will not get a refund.** The simple solution is to get a haircut that meets standards immediately before encampment and that ***will remain within standards throughout encampment. If in doubt, cut it shorter!***

Encampment senior staff members will thoroughly inspect your luggage after check-in. ***Encampment staff will confiscate prohibited items.***

FINAL THOUGHTS

Encourage your parents to attend the end of encampment graduation ceremony and parade. Encampment will be an intense, but very rewarding experience. Encampment graduates become better cadets. You will be ***ready*** to go home at the end of encampment! However, after a few days you will probably admit that you would not trade the experience for anything. By the end of encampment, you ***will*** know how to say "Sir" or "Ma'am" when addressing or responding to cadet or senior officers. You ***will*** know how to keep living quarters clean and organized. You ***will*** know how to make your bed and you ***will*** know how to hang up your clothes at night. Whether or not you continue to do these things at home is up to you and what your parents require, but at least you ***will*** know how to do these things.

If you want to return next year as a cadet staff member, you should look at your student cadet encampment as a job interview. Someone is always watching to see how you are doing. Someone is observing your performance, your attitude, and your dedication to the cadet program. If you decide to apply for cadet staff at next year's encampment, those making the staff selections will remember how you did when you were a student cadet.

Keep that in mind as you strive for excellence!

Encampment Staff