

The FOCUS



NOVEMBER 2025

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS THEMES AND MESSAGES

November Observances

National Hispanic Heritage Month
Veterans and Military Families Month
Warrior Care Month

- 2 - Daylight Savings Fall Back
- 10 - Marine Corps birthday (250 Years)
- 11 - Veterans Day
- 27- Thanksgiving

November - People

Army introduces new fitness test for 2025

By U.S. Army Sgt. Woodlyne Escarne,
Defense Media Activity

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. — The U.S. Army officially adopts the Army Fitness Test as the new test of record for Soldiers starting June 1. The change will replace the Army Combat Fitness Test and introduce updated scoring standards that emphasize readiness and combat effectiveness.

Soldiers will have until Jan. 1, 2026, to meet the new AFT requirements without facing adverse actions. Active-duty Soldiers in 21 designated combat specialties must additionally meet the more rigorous combat standard of a minimum score of 350 points total, with a minimum of 60 points in each event. National Guard and Reserve Soldiers in those same specialties will have until June 1, 2026, to meet these requirements. The passing score for all other specialties is 300 points, with a minimum of 60 points in each event. Active Guard Reserve Soldiers and those mobilized on orders exceeding 60 days must meet the Jan. 1, 2026, suspense.

“The AFT is designed to improve Soldier readiness and ensure physical standards [and] prepare Soldiers for the demands of modern warfare,” said Sgt. Maj. Christopher Mullinax, senior enlisted leader, deputy chief of staff for Operations, Army Headquarters. “It emphasizes holistic fitness over event-specific training and is grounded in performance.”

The decision to replace the ACFT with the AFT follows 18 months of analysis

and feedback from thousands of test iterations. The Army describes the change as a data-driven reform focused on combat-effective fitness.

The AFT is a five-event assessment, including the three-repetition maximum deadlift, hand-release push-up, sprint-drag-carry, plank and two-mile run. While similar in structure to the previous test, the standing power throw event is no longer a requirement.

“We eliminated the standing power throw because it wasn’t effectively promoting fitness and readiness as well as we would like,” Mullinax said. “Furthermore, it presented an elevated risk of overuse injury and encouraged Soldiers to focus on technique rather than demonstrating true power.”

The new test raises expectations, particularly for Soldiers in combat roles. The updated scoring tables are standardized, and combat standards are sex-neutral for the 21 direct combat roles, a change designed to ensure fairness and operational readiness.

“We’re a ‘Be All You Can Be’ Army, and that means if you’ve got the heart, the grit, and the drive to meet our toughest standards, you belong in the fight,” Mullinax said. “It doesn’t matter who you are, what matters is that you want it and you’re willing to earn it. The battlefield doesn’t care about anything but performance, and that’s what we’re built to deliver.”


[Click here for AFT score chart PDF](#)
NIPR users copy and paste: <https://tinyurl.com/4jmyhbx4>

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Leadership News and Notes

Army Public Affairs Association recognizes Guard content creators

Army Public Affairs Association's Post

Army Public Affairs Association

October 9 at 11:00 AM · 🌐

📸 Spotlight on SPC Baumberger 📸

Spc. Michael Baumberger has consistently displayed his commitment to the [196th MPAD](#) as a Soldier, storyteller and valued team member.

He earned two prestigious Army public affairs awards:


🌟 Keith L. Ware "Rising Star" Award – Outstanding New Military Videographer

🌟 James P. Hunter Award – Outstanding New Military Writer

These awards, along with Spc. Baumberger's exceptional body of work, showcase his superior technical skills, authenticity and pride.


The APAA congratulates Spc. Baumberger on his achievements and extends best wishes for continued success on his future endeavors!! 🥳🥳🥳

[#APAA](#) [#196MPAD](#) [#OhioNationalGuard](#) [#USArmyNationalGuard](#) [#USArmy](#) [#TellingtheArmyStory](#) [#ArmyPA](#)



U.S. Army Spc. Michael Baumberger, a public affairs specialist with the 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Ohio Army National Guard captures imagery during a military training exercise. (Courtesty photo)

Army Public Affairs Association's Post

Army Public Affairs Association

October 10 at 11:01 AM · 🌐

📸 September's Winning Shot! 🏆


Congratulations to Sgt. Seth Cohen of the 3rd Recruiting and Retention Battalion, [The New Jersey National Guard](#), the winner of this month's APAA Photo Competition!

His winning photo captures U.S. Army Officer Candidate Joseph Brown ruck marching along a trail in Manasquan, New Jersey, Sept. 12, 2025. The image reflects the perseverance and dedication of Soldiers training to become the next generation of leaders in the U.S. Army.

The 254th Regional Training Institute hosts the New Jersey Army National Guard's Officer Candidate School — a program committed to shaping Soldiers into commissioned officers ready to lead with purpose and integrity.

👏 Join us in congratulating Sgt. Cohen for his outstanding visual storytelling and continued contribution to sharing the Army's story through powerful imagery.

[#APAA](#) [#ArmyPA](#) [#ArmyPhotography](#) [#PhotoCompetition](#) [#TellingTheArmyStory](#) [#NationalGuard](#) [#LeadershipInFocus](#)



U.S. Army Officer Candidate Joseph Brown, with the New Jersey Army National Guard, ruck marches on a trail in Manasquan, New Jersey, Sept. 12. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Seth Cohen)

On the Cover:

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Nathaniel Hiller, a member of the 153rd Airlift Wing's Logistics Readiness Squadron, Wyoming National Guard, assists with the final push of a UH-1 Iroquois helicopter onto a C-130J Hercules cargo aircraft from the 317th Airlift Wing, Texas, at the Cheyenne Air National Guard Base, Wyoming, Sept. 17. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jonathon Alderman)

