



USCG Body Composition Standards Program FAQs

Email questions to: HQS-SMB-BodyCompPolicy@uscg.mil

1. Is the PFT still a method of compliance?
 - a. Yes, it is an additional method of compliance.
 - b. If a member chooses to take the PFT, this desire must be communicated and approved by medical during counseling.
2. Can I take the PFT first or use a recent PFT score for compliance?
 - a. No, members desiring to use the PFT as a method of compliance must go through Body Composition Screening process (MAW, Taping) each time and get medical clearance to take PFT.
3. Can the PFT be used to end probation?
 - a. Yes, but member must go through the MAW/Taping process and Commands can require new medical clearance if deemed necessary.
4. Are COs required to provide fitness time during duty-hours?
 - a. COMDTINST 6200.1E CG Health Promotion Manual states that all AD members must engage in fitness activity as outlined in their PFP, a minimum of 180 minutes per week. Operations and workload permitting, allow all military members (AD and SELRES) 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 PFP 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.
5. Will members be required to have height redone as part of the semi-annual Body



Composition Screening?

- a. Yes, if they have not already had height rechecked on current tour. Personnel conducting screening can also require it regardless of last time it was performed.
6. What if I am a Reservist or Active Duty member teleworking?
 - a. All CG members are required to comply with the Body Composition Standards Program regardless of telework status.
5. What is the difference between “weigh-in” and Body Composition Screening?
 - a. Body Composition Screening is defined as the process of measuring height, weight, and if needed, both taping procedures (standard or 2/3 site taping and Abdominal Circumference). Weigh-in as understood by most is the same as Body Composition Screening, it is just an outdated term.
6. What changed in the Body Composition Standards Program?
 - a. The CG has formally adopted the Abdominal Circumference (AC) measurement alongside Body Fat Assessment (Standard Taping) as a valid Body Composition measurement. AC is now an official measurement in the Body Composition Program.
 - b. When a member exceeds their maximum allowable weight (MAW), they now have the option to tape AC measurement OR Body Fat Assessment (standard taping) OR both.
 - c. If the member exceeds their chosen taping standard, they may elect to be taped using the other method.
 - d. The AC measurement is now a factor to help determine probation.
 - e. If unable to meet body composition standards through MAW, 2/3 taping or AC, the member will be provided medical guidance and, if medically cleared, will be able to use the PFT to demonstrate a suitable fitness level as a means to achieve compliance.
 - f. Also, those with an abeyance can but are not required to participate in BCS.
7. If I choose to take the AC measurement and I exceed my maximum value how long do I have to elect to use Standard Taping?
 - a. A member who exceeds their chosen measurement must elect to take the second measurement during that taping session. The member cannot come back at a later date.
8. How will the AC measurement be used to calculate weight probation duration?
 - a. The AC measurement safe loss rate is 0.5 inches per month. Probation is not to exceed 8 months per policy.
9. How soon can I weigh-in after being placed on weight probation?
 - a. Members must wait 30 days from their initial weight probation determination



to perform their first non-compliance weight screening.

10. What is the Commandant's vision and expectation of the Body Composition Program?
 - 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.
11. Why did this program change?
 - a. The initiative to modernize the CG's Weight and Body Fat Standards policy was initiated based on feedback from the RAND Women's Retention Study and Holistic Analysis (WRSHA), inputs from the field, and benchmarks from other DoD services. In response, a multidisciplinary team studied the issue for several months and developed an improved body composition policy that benefits all members.
12. Why is it now called the Body Composition Standards Program?
 - a. The name change to Body Composition Program is more in line with DoD policy and practices, and better reflects the CG's efforts to improve integration between medical and policy.
13. 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.
14. 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. Abdominal Circumference is a health risk indicator, not necessarily an indicator of a member's overall fitness level. Additionally, the measurement procedure is done differently from standard taping.
15. What is the max AC for women? Men?
 - 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.
16. Why was 39 inches for men and 35.5 inches as the max AC chosen for men and women?
 - a. This criteria is based on medical health risk criteria for both genders.
17. Is Body Fat Assessment and AC measurement done over clothing? If so, what clothing?
 - a. All taping measurements will be made over the skin with the exception of hip



measurements. Members requiring hip measurements will have the option to have their hips taped over USCG PT Gear. If that option is selected, one inch will be subtracted from the hip measurement only.

18. What if the member is taller than 79 inches?

a. Use these formulas:

- Men: $\%BF = 86.010 \times \log_{10}(\text{abdomen} - \text{neck}) - 70.041 \times \log_{10}(\text{height}) + 36.76$
- Women: $\%BF = 163.205 \times \log_{10}(\text{waist} + \text{hip} - \text{neck}) - 97.684 \times \log_{10}(\text{height}) - 78.387$

19. Did the height and weight measurements change too?

a. No. MAW remains in line with DoD policy and is not changing.

20. I'm a YN. How do I record this?

a. DA has entry fields to allow for complete recording of body screening data thus eliminating the need for the complex data string in the comments section.

21. Why can't we use the body fat scales (i.e. electrical impedance devices) or other ways to measure?

a. The Coast Guard continues to explore this use of technology as it continues to evaluate the Body Composition standards policy.

22. Who maintains the sole responsibility to meet the Body Composition Standards Program?

a. It is up to the individual member to maintain a personnel readiness posture including compliance with the Body Composition Program.

23. I am a Reservist, if I fail maximum allowable weight, standard taping, and abdominal circumference, who does my medical screening?

a. If the reserve member exceeds MAW and one or both taping measurements, the member will complete a medical screening form prior to the conclusion of the drill period in which their screening was conducted. Reservists will submit their forms to their Health Records Custodian (HRC). The list of HRCs can be found at https://www.reserve.uscg.mil/Portals/2/Documents/PDF/HSWL_HRC_list_SELRES%232.pdf?ver=2018-08-17-135417-933. Please see ACN 113/19 for more information.

24. Can IDHS's clear personnel for PFT?

a. That process is up to the medical officer/staff assigned to provide medical oversight/care to the member. While it remains the Medical Officer's responsibility, delegation of that authority is guided by COMDT (CG-11) guidance.



25. If a Cutter is underway and the IDHS cannot clear a member for whatever reason and they cannot see a medical doctor what should they do?
 - a. The command and IDHS should contact CG-11 at HQS-SMB-BodyCompMedical@uscg.mil for guidance.
26. Does the calculation for weight probation now include AC measurement?
 - a. Yes, weight probation calculations will now include AC measurement.
27. Who is not eligible for probation?
 - a. Members who exceed their maximum allowable body fat by more than eight percent, maximum allowable weight is over 35 pounds, and their abdominal circumference measurement is more than 4 inches over maximum AC and do not successfully complete a PFT are ineligible for probation and will be processed for separation.
 - b. If a member declines to take one of the two measurements, their separation will be based on screening weight and their chosen tape measurement.
 - c. Members who are non-compliant for a third consecutive time within a 14-month period are ineligible for probation and will be processed for separation.
 - d. Members receiving a third strike as explained in the Body Composition Standards Program, COMDTINST 1020.8I.
28. What if a member is in the Med Board process and fails to successfully complete probation or is ineligible for probation?
 - a. The command will initiate & send the administrative discharge package to appropriate division (EPM/RPM-1) & upon receipt they would hold in abeyance pending the final outcome of the med board. If the member is found FFFD or for some reason retained on active duty, they would then complete the processing of the administrative discharge package for weight. If the member gets a medical separation or retirement that will take precedence over the weight package. The only thing that will override a med board is misconduct. For submission purposes, it is recommended the command note that the member is in the med board process when they submit the weight package.