

17 Jan 2019

Subj: RESPONSE TO DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON MILITARY SERVICES PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTS

1. Purpose. Provide responses to requests for information (RFI) from the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

2. Key Points

- **RFI 8i - Current policies for iron or other supplements provided to female recruits.** Female recruits and female officer candidates only receive iron supplements if seen by a medical provider and prescribed it as a supplement to address a specific deficiency.
- **RFI 8ii - The percentage of Servicewomen who failed their official fitness test after the expiration of their postpartum exemption, over the last five years.** Table 1 shows the failure rates for Marines following their post-partum exemption for calendar years 2017 and 2018. Historical data prior to 2017 is not readily available. In November 2018, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA) enhanced coding procedures which will enable more accurate reporting of the postpartum population.

Table 1. Physical Fitness Test (PFT) and Combat Fitness Test (CFT) Failure Rates for Marines following a postpartum exemption.

Year	PFT	CFT
2017	2.8%	1.4%
2018	2.5%	1.8%

Note 1 - This data reflects the failure rate of Marines returning from a six month postpartum exemption. In October 2018, policy changed to allow Marines a nine month post-partum exemption.

- **RFI iv - Information on fitness programs for reintegrating medically waived Service members, to include post-partum Servicewomen.** The Marine Corps has several fitness programs available for reintegrating medically waived service members. Marines have access to force fitness Instructors (FFI), athletic trainers, Navy Sports Medicine and Reconditioning Team (SMART) clinics, and Semper Fit strength and conditioning coaches that offer personalize training.
 1. The Marine Corps is expanding the Sports Medicine Injury Prevention (SMIP) program to the operating force. Historically, athletic trainers have proven effective in reducing the number of musculoskeletal injuries throughout entry level training. This expansion enables Marines to have access to a unit controlled certified athletic trainer. In cooperation with the unit's FFI, this program allows local unit support for a Marine's rehabilitation and physical performance.
 2. Navy Sports Medicine and Reconditioning Team (SMART) clinics allow Marines to rehabilitate injuries by physical therapy techniques. When recovering from injuries, Marines are assigned to a SMART clinic to rehabilitate and recover prior to returning to full duty.
 3. Once a Marine is cleared by medical and returns to duty, they have access to their unit's FFI, athletic trainers, and Semper

INFORMATION PAPER

Subj: RESPONSE TO DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON MILITARY SERVICES PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTS

Fit Strength and Conditioning coaches. All personnel can assist Marines in the design and development of workout programs to bring them back to their physical fitness performance prior to the limited duty status.

4. As long as Marines who are postpartum are cleared by their health care provides, they have access to the same services. Additionally, each installation has unique services and fitness classes available tailored for Marines who are postpartum.
5. Recently, the Marine Corps identified a gap in the inconsistencies in physical fitness resources available for Marines who are pregnant or postpartum. A working group convened in January 2019 to address the inconsistencies and determine a way forward for enhancing physical fitness resources specific to this population.