



Joint Base San Antonio

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO



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FAQ: COVID-19 impacts to BMT and Technical Training

By 37th Training Wing Public Affairs | 37th Training Wing Public Affairs | March 24, 2020

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The COVID-19 pandemic is a dynamic and rapidly evolving situation. The Gateway Wing wants to make sure our internal family and external community all have access to factual and up-to-date information. This frequently asked questions acts as a resource for anyone who has questions or concerns about themselves or a loved one that is part of the 37th Training Wing team, this includes Basic Military Training at the 737th Training Group and technical training at the 37th Training Group.

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas —

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These frequently asked questions act as a resource for anyone who has questions or concerns about themselves or a loved one that is part of the 37th Training Wing team, including Basic Military Training at the 737th Training Group and technical training at the 37th Training Group. To help lessen confusion key terms are defined below.

Key Terms

Restriction of Movement (ROM): Healthy individuals with no known exposure or illness, administratively placed on restriction of movement. This is to “prove their health” prior to introducing them into a previously healthy population. Separate living quarters and limiting their exposure to other populations is imposed. There is no medical requirement for temperature checking or other active surveillance. Members are to monitor their own health status and immediately notify their chain of command of any decline in their health.

Quarantine: Quarantine is a medical form of Restriction of Movement. Healthy individuals who were exposed to contagious material (e.g. COVID-19). Quarantined individuals are separated from others until a sufficient incubation time from their potential exposure occurs (for COVID-19 14 days).

Persons-Under-Investigation: Individuals who have become symptomatic and are awaiting test results for COVID-19 (currently 24-48 hours). These members need to be isolated while awaiting test results.

Isolation: Isolation is a medical form of Restriction of Movement. COVID-19 positive individuals are isolated from other healthy individuals to prevent spread.

General

Q1: If Joint Base San Antonio is in Health Protection Measure Charlie why is the military as a whole still sending people TDY for training and meetings in

Small classroom environments ?

A1: Lt. Gen. Brad Webb, commander, Air Education and Training Command, declared Basic Military Training (BMT), Technical Training, and Flight Training as mission essential.

Training in the “non” mission essential category is suspended. In order to meet Air Force requirements around the world, we must continue training. These are unprecedented times, with the situation evolving daily. Leaders at every level are making continuous assessments in order to protect the force’s health and safety.

Q2: Can we get a confirmation that at this point there are no cases of COVID-19 at the 37th Training Wing to include among the BMT trainee and tech school Airmen populations?

A2: At this time there are no positive COVID-19 cases here in BMT or Technical Training.

Q3: What if someone is feeling sick but doesn’t tell anyone for fear of getting held back in training?

A3: Our concern is for the greater good and health of our entire population – student, instructor, and all our support personnel from civil engineering to our food service teams in the dining facilities.

To that end, we highly encourage all our Airmen to be mindful of the risk they could pose if they don’t self-report or seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Hundreds of Airmen have been tested for COVID-19, with no positive cases to date, and all training days were made up.

The 37th Training Wing and leadership at all levels highly encourages all members of the wing to self-report symptoms of COVID-19 to their chain of command as soon as possible. Additionally, a drive-thru screening process has been established at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center by the 59th Medical Wing, with more information at <https://www.37trw.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2119059/whasc-opens-drive-thru-covid-19-screening-testing/>.

Q4: Where can I find more up-to-date Joint Base San Antonio information about COVID-19?

A4: Health updates for JBSA can be found here, <https://www.jbsa.mil/Information/CDC-Novel-Coronavirus-Response-Support/>.

Q5: If there is a positive case, what will be the decontamination process of barracks/dormitories/common spaces/etc. and will others in the same squad be isolated?

A5: If someone tests positive, the medical community will conduct contact tracing and identify all areas which were impacted. These areas will undergo extensive professional deep cleaning.

The positive trainee will receive the required medical care and other trainees who were exposed to that member will be placed in a 14-day quarantine and monitored for symptoms. Once they clear the incubation period without symptoms under quarantine, they can return to training.

Q6: Is there anything we can do for those quarantined on the installation? Donations of games, magazines, books, etc.?

A6: We greatly appreciate the empathy and willingness to help in these demanding times. The Joint Base San Antonio and the 502nd Air Base Wing Commander Facebook pages are the best resource for any type of announcement for this.

Basic Military Training, 737th Training Group

Q1: How can I watch my loved one graduate from Basic Military Training?

A1: BMT graduation will be live-streamed on the USAF Basic Military Training Facebook page @USAFBMT and will be archived for later viewing on the 37th Training Wing YouTube Channel.

Q2: My Airmen graduated Basic Military Training March 19, how do I view his/her graduation?

A2: Our BMT graduations are posted to the 37th Training Wing YouTube Channel. Links to live streams from the March 19 graduation are broken down by Squadron/Flight and can be found at link.

Q3: BMT continuing because it is considered mission essential, what is being done to keep them and those around them safe?

A3: New trainees coming into the BMT pipeline are restricted from movement for 14 days and do not interact with technical training students.

Commanders at every level are charged with maximizing health and safety during

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these unprecedented times. You can read more at the the following article: Latest Air Force trainees continue BMT with enhanced mitigation efforts

Q4: How will BMT graduates get to their tech training? How do you mitigate those travel risks?

A4. BMT works with each Technical Training location to ship Airmen in a variety of transportation means. All departing Airmen receive a pre-departure health, morale, welfare and safety briefing from leadership to ensure the latest DoD travel protocols are being met. These briefings are modified as needed to mitigate risk as the situation changes.

Q5: What quarantine/isolation measures will you take for the BMT flights?

Q5: BMT has begun screening all recruits upon arrival and will monitor every member during their time at BMT for symptoms. Schedules have been adjusted to reduce interaction with other flights and have increased cleaning measures across all components. We are working with our medical and support experts to ensure our Airmen are protected to the maximum extent possible.

Q6. Why is BMT graduation now on Thursday?

A6. During the COVID-19 pandemic, BMT graduation will take place on Thursday to allow Airmen to start transiting to Technical Training on Friday and freeing up space on the BMT campus. This allows BMT to have additional cleaning time of the dormitories.

Q7. Since BMT trainees are in a 14-day restriction of movement upon arrival does this mean that their time at BMT is now 10.5 weeks as opposed to the typical 8.5-week BMT schedule?

A7: BMT is not extended for these trainees, they will continue to graduate at the 8.5-week mark. BMT leadership is looking at creative ways of accomplishing the required curriculum to allow trainees to graduate on time.

Q8: Will trainees still participate in BEAST (Basic Expeditionary Airmen Skills Training) week?

A8: Yes, Trainee will still participate in BEAST (Basic Expeditionary Airmen Skills Training) this week. Our training objectives were modified to ensure we mitigate any health and safety risk to our trainees

Q9: Is leadership going to allow BMT trainees to call home to update their families? If so, how frequently?

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A9: Yes, effective March 23, 2020, all trainees, regardless of week of training will be allowed to call home weekly to update family members on their status.

Q10: Is it possible to make arrangements for military training instructors to stay with trainees during this time so they are not going home and exposing family members?

A10: Yes, we have canvassed our Military Training Instructor Corps and all members with concerns of family members exposure are offered on-base accommodations at no cost.

Q11: Will those who are to return home after graduating Basic Military Training be able to do so (e.g. Air National Guard and Reserve recruits)?

A11: Yes, we will adhere to the established policies by the Air National Guard and Reserve for trainees to return home.

Q12: Can you provide detailed description for which flights and squadrons graduate for upcoming graduations?

A12: The graduating training squadrons (TRS) and flights by date are:

March 26: 320th TRS (Flight 227, 228, 229 and 330); 321st TRS (Flight 239 and 240); 326th TRS (Flight 231, 232, 235 and 236); 331st TRS (Flight 233, 234 and 238);

April 2: 321st TRS (Flight 253, 254, B255 and B256); 322nd TRS (Flight 249, 250, 251 and 252); 323rd TRS (Flight 241, 242, 243 and 244);

April 9 – 321st TRS (Flight 263, 264, 267, 268, B269 and B270); 322nd TRS (Flight 261 and 262); 323rd TRS (Flight 257, 258, 259 and 260); 326th TRS (Flight 265 and 266).

Graduations can be Live Streamed at the @USAFBMT Facebook page and later archived to the 37th Training Wing YouTube Channel.

Q13: When can the public expect to attend BMT Graduation again?

A13: As soon as it's deemed safe according to DoD guidance and as determined by the Joint Base San Antonio Installation Commander.

Q14: Will you continue to ship new recruits for BMT?

A14: Yes, we are continuing to bring in new recruits from locations which are

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cleared for travel. These trainees have been screened at their Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) prior to shipment to San Antonio and are screened again upon arrival to BMT and placed in restriction of movement (ROM) as an additional layer of protection.

Technical Training, 37th Training Group

Q1: How can I watch my loved one graduate from technical training?

A1: At this time technical training graduations are not streamed to the public. Regardless of family members being allowed to attend graduation, we are very proud of your Airman and what they have accomplished. We can assure you they will be celebrated within their units.

Q2: There is online chatter about the security forces dorms having sick Airmen, is this true?

A2: All Airmen tested from COVID-19 at the 343rd Training Squadron have had negative results. The safety of our Airmen is extremely important to us.

Airmen who are tested for COVID-19 are immediately isolated in their room for the 24 to 48 hour period while awaiting test results. Airmen are routinely checked on and have access to their personal items, including cell phones, so they can make contact with their family.

Q3: Why is tech training continuing during this COVID-19 pandemic?

A3: We understand the concerns being expressed for the safety of all those attending technical training at JBSA. At this time, Air Education and Training Command has deemed technical training to be mission essential and will continue on as planned.

We take the safety and well-being of our personnel and trainees very seriously and will continue to re-evaluate as needed. Please visit the following link for more information on AETC mission-essential training the following article: AETC issues official COVID-19 mission essential training determination, authorizes travel.

Q4: Is it possible to make arrangements for instructors to stay with trainees during this time so they are not going home and exposing family members?

A4: Yes. We are in the process of identifying Instructor Cadre, Military Training Leaders, and Animal Caretakers who can temporarily relocate to on-base quarters. This would be a temporary relocation that is at no cost to the member.

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Q5: Can Airmen who do not have orders and are stuck in between BMT graduation and tech school go home to be with their families?

A5: Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and to limit unnecessary exposure risks, the DOD has implemented a domestic travel suspension until May 11, this includes leave for Airmen at BMT awaiting technical training. Please know your son's, daughter's, and every Airman's, health and safety is our top priority.

Q6: After BMT graduation will Airmen still transiting to tech schools that are outside of JBSA?

A6: Currently, yes, BMT graduates are transitioning to Technical Training schools both inside and outside of JBSA.

Q7: Tech training is continuing because it is considered mission essential, what is being done to keep them and those around them safe?

A7: All standard COVID-19 protective measures are taking place and being enforced, to include handwashing, cleaning routines, and enforcing social distancing. Commanders at every level are charged with maximizing health & safety during these unprecedented times.

Q8: Once at Technical Training, what's the plan once Airmen graduate? How will they get to their first duty station?

A8. Upon graduation for both technical training and flying training students, losing units will coordinate with the gaining units to work specific mitigation and travel issues as needed. Overseas travel will be coordinated in accordance with DoD guidelines.

Q9. What about students in Technical Training right now? Are they being allowed to PCS to their first duty station?

A9. All technical training and specialized undergraduate pilot training graduates will continue to out-process and travel to their first duty station upon completion of training.

Q10: Can you tell me about phases in Technical Training and whether or not students will be allowed off base during tech training?

A10: That depends on the location of the Technical Training school. The owning installation commander will determine when it is safe for Technical Training Airmen to travel off base, based on the current health protection conditions and DoD

to travel off base, based on the current health protection conditions and DOD guidance.

Q11: Will tech schools make exceptions to families to visit their new Airmen in the next few weeks since they were not able to see them graduate?

A11: Once Airmen arrive at technical training, their new squadrons will provide them an update on the ability to travel off base or have visitors come to visit based on the direction of the installation commander and DOD guidance. This determination is based on the priority of keeping them safe and the completion of their technical training requirements.

Q12. Where is the best place for Airmen in technical training to seek out answers about his/her next assignment and how they'll get there?

A12: The best answer is to continue to discuss your individual situation with your instructor, supervisor and chain of command.

Q13: What measures are being taken if trainees or tech school Airmen is sick? Are they being tested for the coronavirus, placed into quarantine, etc.?

A13: As determined by medical professionals, Technical Training Airmen are being tested for COVID-19 if they are symptomatic.

Once tested, the Airmen are placed in isolation for 24 to 48 hours until their test results are returned. During that time food and essentials are provided to our Airmen.

Airmen are routinely checked on and have access to their personal items, including cell phones, so they can make contact with their family.

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