



U.S. NAVAL SEA CADET CORPS

Alamo Battalion/TS Alamo

Welcome Aboard!

Dear New Cadet and Parents,

By now, you have turned in all of your paperwork, paid your dues, had your medical provider sign off on your cadet's medical, are about to be issued uniforms (if you do not have them already), and have reviewed and understand the "Costs and Equipment" memo.

The rest of this memo is designed to eliminate some of the confusion that parents have experienced when new cadets join us. Please read it carefully and do not hesitate to ask questions.

More Reading

As you might expect, the Sea Cadets have regulations. After you review the [Parent's Handbook](#), parents and cadets should take a look at the regulations manuals on [Homeport](#). Pay close attention to the Uniform Regulations, which show how all of the flashes and nametapes go onto the uniform and serve as a useful checklist to make certain that your cadet has all required uniform parts. The Uniform Regulations also include the grooming standards (haircuts, shave, etc.), which we enforce. Cadets are able to earn awards while in Sea Cadets, and we ask that inform the unit when they make Honor Roll and/or commit community service hours – the reward requirements are outlined in the Awards Manual. The cadet may review both the Awards Manual for all program awards and the Administration Manual to learn the detailed requirements for promotion.

Cadet Promotion

Your cadet is now a Seaman Recruit (E-1) in the Sea Cadet Corps or a Recruit Cadet in the League Cadet Corps. During their time in our program, cadets can earn promotions. Each promotion requires a cadet to complete certain trainings and to serve a sufficient time in their current grade and in the Corps. Some training is only open to cadets who have advanced to a certain rate; for example, participation in the International Exchange Program is only open to petty officers, and participation in Petty Officer Leadership Academy is only open to Seaman (E-3) or above.

Polaris Advancement Courses

Your cadet's first goal should be to get ready for his or her first training – and first promotion – by completing the required advancement course. The Sea Cadets have a new system called Polaris, which is how cadets build up a knowledge base about the Sea Cadet Corps and their role within it. The courses are required for advancement in rate, and as prerequisites to many trainings, including RT.

All Polaris Advancement Courses (PACs) are on-line, and cadets move through them at their own pace. Each PAC includes evaluations of what the cadet has learned, and passing scores are required. Cadets will receive their login credentials and instructions on which PAC to begin once they have been fully registered in the program.

What now? Drill Weekends!

The Sea Cadet Corps help kids grow as leaders and team members, but it is also supposed to be fun. That is why we schedule drills around activities like firefighting, marksmanship, and camping. Aside from the fun, your cadet will march, work on uniforms, practice military orders and formation, and eat at the galley. The requirement to maintain an active status in the program is 80% attendance rating. If your cadet cannot attend, then please notify the Sea Cadet leadership and provide the reason. Drill weekends typically run from 0800 on Saturday until 1200 on Sunday (unless otherwise notified).

The Battalion's Key Players:

Our officers and instructors are all volunteers. Please be responsive if they reach out to you; they are working on providing your cadet the best experience possible. Some of the key roles are:

- 1) Commanding Officer (CO) – The CO is overall responsible for the Unit and to ensure all activities are within the regulations and guidelines of the United States Sea Cadet Corp.
- 2) Training Officer (TO) – The TO handles summer training registration and advancement administration.
- 3) Supply Officer (SUPPO) – SUPPO manages our inventory of uniforms, donated boots and shoes, flashes, ribbons and more. Before any training away from home, pay attention to the SUPPO's notices for getting what you need. Our inventory is kept in a storage facility, and
- 4) Administration Officer – ADMIN keeps track of the paperwork and prepares service jackets for your cadet's training. ADMIN will let you know if something required is missing.
- 5) The Alamo Battalion Public Affairs Officer (PAO) – The PAO is your general-purpose parental ombudsman.
- 6) Your Cadet – Sea Cadets is about the cadets. They need to learn how to make a plan and execute.
- 7) You – The forms require your signatures, and you will be paying the dues, fees and transportation costs associated with training.

Nationally-Scheduled Training

Revised March 20, 2021

The real jewel of the Sea Cadet program – and the *most* fun – is our collection of nationally-scheduled Sea Cadet training contingents. Training is usually in the summer but can also come during breaks in the school year. There are training contingents across the nation for sailing, SCUBA, infantry tactics, medical care, photojournalism, NSWOC, and many more, including about any aspect of the sea services that a young person might want to explore. Your cadet wants to do these trainings, and our volunteers stand ready to help them, but we need to work closely with parents to make it all happen.

Nationally-scheduled training is where cadets meet their biggest challenges and have great experiences. You will hear us refer to RT (Recruit Training) and AT (Advanced Training). There are two separate sets of RTs and ATs for Sea Cadets and League Cadets. When you review the [training calendar](#), you will see that trainings are open to either Sea Cadets or League Cadets (NLCC). Make sure that you are looking at the right ones for your cadet.

Each training session has a Commanding Officer: the COTC. The COTC sets the curriculum, gets volunteer instructor staff, gets budgetary approvals, arranges training facilities, housing and meals, and much more. The COTC sets the rules for eligibility for training and decides what goes into trainees' seabags. It is a very big job, so don't bother the COTC unless instructed otherwise. Please ask the local Battalion questions first, to ensure they can handle all funding, uniform, and general level type questions.

RT is the first training session for all Sea Cadets. Cadets travel to a training location, typically on a military base, and practice all of the basics of being a Sea Cadet. If you can swing it, send your cadet to Great Lakes, where all US Navy enlisted recruits begin their training. If not, there are other trainings that are geographically closer to Texas and might be more economical. League Cadet training begins with "NLCC Orientation, Basic", which works similarly.

Whichever RT you decide upon, your cadet will run, a lot. Make sure that your cadet's athletic shoes and socks are comfortable, and make very sure that their combat boots and boot socks are broken in. Blisters caused by new boots is the number one reason why kids get sent home early. At the end of RT is graduation, which is worth a "proud parent" visit. Graduation from RT is required to become a Seaman Apprentice and is also required before your cadet can attend any other training (or even *register* for almost all other trainings, see below).

When you decide on an RT for your cadet, review the USNSCC training calendar at <http://homeport.seacadets.org/secure/TrainingList.aspx>. Pay close attention to the prerequisites, including minimum rank, minimum age, correspondence courses, and swimming qualifications. Some COTCs add additional requirements. The computerized registration system enforces all of those requirements, and our Training Officer (TO) cannot register your cadet, if a cadet does not have the requirements. The COTC may also require additional gear in your cadet's seabag. Make sure that your cadet is prepared.

Pro Tip: The national training system prevents us from even registering a cadet for most advanced trainings until the cadet has graduated from RT. That can make it difficult for a new cadet to complete both RT and an AT in their first summer. Keep a sharp lookout for the one or two trainings in a summer that allow SRs to register. Taking an AT in the first

summer can help your cadet advance more quickly. Jump on those trainings, if your cadet is interested. For most cadets, however, RT is all that they are able to get in their first summer.

Your cadet is going to be busy getting in shape, doing correspondence courses, and memorizing their general orders. Your cadet will rely on **you** to work through the complexities of travel and registration for RT. Our TO is here to help you, so you will not be alone, but he (like all of the adults) is a volunteer. He will rely upon you for selecting an RT that your cadet actually can attend, making sure that your cadet has everything in the seabag for the training, and being proactive in getting any additional required medical examinations or signatures.

Because training costs money, this may be a good time to have a discussion with your cadet about family finances and how they impact training. Many cadets work to earn money for training. If family finances are the only reason why your cadet cannot go to training, please let us know.

After RT

Usually around RT graduation, your cadet will:

- 1) understand enough about the program to start managing his or her own advancement,
- 2) work on their next PAC,
- 3) maintain their own uniform,
- 4) be responsible to retrieve, review, print, and have in their possession a copy of the POD, and
- 5) be packing their own seabag every month for drill.

Final Words

The Sea Cadet program will help your cadet learn individual responsibility, attention to detail, teamwork, and leadership. At first, there is a lot of complexity in the program, not only for the cadet, but for the parents as well. Alamo Battalion staff is available to help. Feel free to contact our PAO at alamobnpao@gmail.com with any additional questions or concerns. We are happy to welcome you and your cadet aboard, and we are committed to your cadet's success.