



@USNPEOPLE WEEKLY WIRE

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Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

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- Principles of Resilience Infographics Available On Operational Stress Control Website [\[LINK\]](#)
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or find it online at www.navy.mil/cnp

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Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Navy announced the Fiscal Year 2017 academic year Fleet Scholars Education Program quotas in NAVADMIN 108/16, released on May 11.

FSEP is a Navy talent management initiative that provides education opportunities to community-selected unrestricted line and information warfare community officers. Selectees will attend an accredited graduate school of their choice in residence (CONUS, Alaska and Hawaii) for up to 24 months.

Community sponsors may select up to their annual allocated graduate education opportunities shown below:

AIRFOR (1310, 1320) - 7
SURFOR (1110) - 7
SUBFOR (1120) - 4
NSWC (1130) - 3
NECC (1140) - 3
IWC (1810, 1820, 1830) - 6

Community sponsors will make selections no later than 14 Oct. and submit to Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) to meet academic year 2017 start dates.

For more information, read NAVADMIN 108/16 or visit the NPS CIVINS website at <http://www.nps.edu/academics/civins/index.html>.

For more news from Chief of Naval Personnel, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/cnp/>.

For more information, visit <http://www.navy.mil>, <http://www.facebook.com/usnavy>, or <http://www.twitter.com/usnavy>.

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2.) The U.S. Navy's New Tattoo Rules Explained / 8 MAY 16

NAVY TIMES, Mark D. Faram

A month ago, the Navy eased its tattoo rules for the first time in a decade — and hoopla ensued.

Sailors were excited they could finally have ink sleeves covering their forearms down to their wrists, even their hands. And Navy officials were enthused they could appeal more broadly to a generation that favors body art.

“What it boiled down to was being honest with ourselves about the realities of the society we live in today,” said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (AW/NAC) Mike Stevens, who was a driving force for the changes. “And if we’re a reflection of that society, we have to accept that and have policies that reflect those realities.”

Stevens said he'd heard some complaints from sailors over the past three years visiting bases as the Navy's top enlisted. That prompted a discussion with the chief of naval operations and the chief of naval personnel.

“From there, it turned into a conversation about why we have the policy the way we have it. Did it make sense in today’s society?” he recalled in an early May phone interview. “Does a having a tattoo, or a sleeve or other tattoos, are they any less capable of being a sailor?”

They decided that it didn't.

Stevens said the reaction has been overwhelmingly positive to the change, which made the Navy's tattoo policy the most lenient of any military service. Those rules took effect in late April.

Now that the dust is settling on the new rules, here's what you need to know:

New rules

Stevens said there really wasn't a whole lot of discussion into what in the policy needed to change — all that needed to be done was to look around and see.

"We looked around the fleet and saw what sailors had and, by and large, we built the policy around what most sailors seemed to already have and again, it was based in common sense," he said. "There really wasn't any large study and when we laid out how we felt rules should be changed to, it really did seem to make sense and was accepted by both leadership and the fleet."

The new rules allow sailors to "have multiple or large tattoos below the elbow or knee, including the wrists and hands," according to NAVADMIN 082/16 announcing the changes.

The Navy's last major revision was in 2006, when they restricted tattoos visible in any uniform to no larger than the size of the wearer's fist. Anything bigger required command OK and a waiver allowing the sailor to continue on active-duty.

The new policy simplifies this, stating only that "as a result of this change, leg and arm tattoos can be of any size."

This allows sleeve tattoos that can be seen even while wearing short sleeved uniforms, like the tan-and-black service uniform.

But the biggest change may be above your collar.

The new rules allow a tattoo on your neck, even behind your ear.

As far as neck tattoos, only one is authorized and it can't be larger than an inch in any direction. And if you have a neck tattoo, you can't have a behind the ear one, and vice versa.

The 2006 rules were very specific about the neck: "neck area for purposes of this regulation is any portion visible when wearing a crew neck T-shirt or open collar uniform shirt."

But some things didn't change. Still off limits are the head, face and the scalp. And torso tattoos must not be visible through your dress whites, even if they are notoriously see-through.

Can and can'ts

The Navy still has a say on what you ink your body with. Something that violates those rules could get you in hot water, even booted out.

“The only thing that’s really changed is the amount of coverage on their body,” Stevens said. “We’ve opened up the aperture on the amounts and locations, but as far as the rules — what you can and can’t have on your body, content-wise — nothing has changed.”

The rules bar “tattoos that are obscene, sexually explicit, and or advocate discrimination based on sex, race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin,” the message states. “In addition, tattoos that symbolize affiliation with gangs, supremacist or extremist groups, or advocate illegal drug use are prohibited — waivers will not be given for tattoos with prohibited content.”

And neither the Navy — nor Stevens — chooses to be more specific than that.

It’s typically up to COs to determine if a sailor’s tattoos and their subject matter meet the Navy’s standards.

“What I’ll tell you is that tattoos are a form of art and art is a form of communication and just like we speak verbally, a tattoo speaks as well,” he said.

“You can’t possibly draw up a list of everything that’s appropriate or not, because it’s just not possible,” he added.

Of course, these deliberately vague rules also mean commanding officers must wade into complicated cultural arguments. Is the Confederate flag a symbol that promotes intolerance? Is a topless mermaid sexist?

One Navy officer recently said the tattoo rules have a lot of gray areas.

"As leaders we should also not underestimate the challenge involved with this and should give plenty of forethought on how to handle the situation," wrote Cmdr. Daniel Kenda in a letter to Navy Times after the rules came out. "Is that hula girl on his forearm sexist? Or just a nod to tradition and service in Hawaii, which my uncle, a deceased World War II Pacific Theater sailor, had? Is that shamrock tattoo because she is Irish? Or is she a white supremacist, since that tattoo has been used to signify both?"

Stevens advises sailors and leaders to have a broad context in following tattoo rules.

“Though you can’t write down everything that is or isn’t appropriate — you always know when you see or hear things that are inappropriate,” he said. “If you have to wonder if the content is appropriate or not, chances are it’s not appropriate, so why take that risk?”

"I'd simply say, 'If in doubt — don't.'"

Consequences

In the setting of tattoo policy, officials also outline the consequences for sailors who get inappropriate tattoos.

“Let’s face it, it’s all about trust but also accountability,” MCPON said. “If a sailor were to get a tattoo that’s inappropriate, they would know exactly what they are doing and therefore they would know they would have to deal with the consequences.”

If caught with body art that doesn’t measure up to the Navy’s standards in location and content, sailors have two options: Get them removed or modified.

Here, too, Stevens says that as far as he’s seen or heard, sailors stay within the rules.

"I've not heard or known of a sailor who has been kicked out of the Navy for an inappropriate tattoo, nor has anyone brought such a case to my attention," he said. "It may have very well happened, it's just that I am not aware of it and this leads me to believe that this isn't a systemic problem."

Special duty

The new rules will make it easier for more sailors to qualify for duty as recruiters and Recruit Division Commanders, tough jobs that can help sailors move up the ranks faster.

Previously, sailors with tattoos that were visible in any uniform were required to have their body art evaluated by Recruit Training Command or Navy Recruiting Command. Though approval was possible, many avoided the scrutiny altogether by simply not applying for the job.

"The changes provide more flexibility to detail our best sailors to assignments such as Recruit Training Command," said Sharon Anderson, spokeswoman for the chief of naval personnel. "Now, outstanding Sailors with neck tattoos meeting guidelines and sleeve tattoos are eligible for Recruit Training Command duty to fill these critical positions."

Another way sailors could still be impacted is if they apply for a commissioning program such as the Naval Academy or Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps, which is also a commissioning pipeline for those hoping to become Marine officers. The Marine Corps has its own, more restrictive tattoo policy.

"There are differences in the requirements for USNA and ROTC programs," Anderson said. "For the tattoo policy, USNA is retaining their existing policy with the exception of those fleet sailors who might be accepted to the Naval Academy or the Naval Academy Preparatory School. ROTC will follow [the new] overall Navy tattoo guidance."

Officer Candidate School will also follow the new Navy skin art rules, but officials say sailors seeking a commission might want to think twice about tattoos until they're an officer.

"Sailors who might be considering the Naval Academy or ROTC should understand that they may be limiting their future options by applying too much ink to exposed parts of their body," Anderson said. "If they are 100 percent staying Navy they are likely OK — if there is any thought to Marine option, possibly transferring to another service upon commission or don't really know yet, then they may want to maintain a more conservative appearance in uniform and limit visible tattoos."

Common Sense

Stevens and other Navy leaders hope the moves will keep the most talented sailors serving.

Changing tattoo rules removes artificial restrictions on prospective sailors in an era when less than a quarter of the age-eligible population meets the Navy's physical, mental and moral standards to even sign up.

"When you are competing for talent, you have to take a look at things like this, and we made the decision that we need to have a policy that's a little more reflective of the society we're in," Stevens said. "It allows us to be competitive in this very difficult recruiting pool we're trying to attract our next generation of sailors from."

Stevens said that he believes as much as 40 percent of the 18 to 25-year-olds the Navy recruits from have tattoos — before they even join.

MCPON's research is based on the Pew Research Center's 2010 report, "Millennials: Confident. Connected. Open to change."

Millennials are those born between 1981 and 1996, who are known for using body art and technology to express themselves.

"Tattoos have become something of a trademark for Millennials — nearly 4 in 10 — 38 percent — have at least one," the report said.

In addition, those in the next largest segment of the recruiting population, the so-called Generation X born between 1965 and 1980, are not far behind, with 32 percent saying they have at least one tattoo, the study said.

The service faces with a shrinking number of eligible recruits and the uncertainty that comes with an improving economy.

Stevens says there really was no choice.

"When you start putting additional limiting factors on these people, that really have no bearing on their ability to perform in the job or to get a security clearance, that really doesn't make much sense," he said. "We just decided that it was in the best interests of our Navy and the nation to revisit the policy and make it a little bit more reflective of society."

3.) DoD: Help Is On the Way for Critical New Retirement Choices / 11 MAY 16 [\[LINK\]](#)

MILITARY TIMES, Karen Jowers

Defense officials are developing four courses to educate the military community about new retirement plan options for the 1.6 million service members who will make big decisions starting in 2018 — about whether to opt in to the new retirement system or stay with the current system.

There will be a course for leaders; a course for the service members who will have to make a choice about their retirement system; a course for personal financial managers working with the military community; and a course for new troops coming in as of Jan. 1, 2018.

"We are working hard to get out the right information to the right places in plenty of time to make an informed decision," said Daniel Feehan, principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for readiness. Feehan is an Army veteran and former middle school math teacher.

"Everyone should feel calm that they will receive educational materials that will make them an empowered consumer and empowered decision-maker" for their financial future, Feehan said.

No one has to make decisions about this in 2016 or 2017.

But in 2018, service members in the active and reserve components who entered the military after Jan. 1, 2006 — about 1.6 million people — will have to decide whether to stay with the current retirement system, or move to the new retirement benefit system signed into law in November. Troops can make the choice beginning Jan 1, 2018; the deadline for making the decision is Dec. 31, 2018.

Those with more than 12 years of service will be automatically grandfathered in to the current retirement plan. Those entering the military Jan. 1, 2018, or later will have no choice; they will be under the new retirement plan.

The new retirement system, which takes effect Jan. 1, 2018, will mean smaller pension checks but will include cash contributions to service members' retirement accounts (Thrift Savings Plan). This means that for the first time, troops who leave the military before 20 years of service will have some limited retirement benefits to take with them.

Troops will have to consider a number of variables, but the choice made could have a huge impact on a service member's financial future.

By early 2017, officials will roll out the critical course geared for those service members who are most affected by the change, educating them on their options, including a tool that lets troops plug in their own data to help them make their decisions about whether to stay with the current system or opt in to the new one. Troops will plug in different numbers, such as varying retirement dates and Thrift Savings Plan contributions to determine which choice would be better for them in the long run.

The tool will provide guidance on some of the variables — for example, steering troops away unrealistic expectations such as assuming a 30-percent annual rate of return on their retirement funds when plugging in their numbers. That will be beta-tested later this summer.

Troops will gain access to the course using their CAC (Common Access Card), but there also will be a version on Military OneSource that spouses will be able to use, because of the key role spouses often play in the household's financial decisions.

Two courses will be fielded earlier. The first course, geared for military leadership, is expected to be in the field this summer, educating leaders about general aspects of the new retirement system and their responsibilities to make sure the force is ready to make the decisions.

Another course is designed to educate command financial specialists and personal financial management specialists, enabling them to help troops with questions about their individual circumstances and choices.

Advocates have called for a robust, viable education program about the extensive new retirement system, and the choices people will make, so that the burden is not on commanders, said Mike Barron, a retired Army colonel who is deputy director of government relations for the Military Officers Association of America. "We want professional financial managers to be providing expert advice to service members and their spouses," he said, emphasizing that spouses need to be included in this process.

"I'm cautiously optimistic. It sounds like they've thought this through," he said. It's also important that the course for new troops entering in 2018 include information about how important it is for them to contribute as much as possible to their retirement plan, and they need to do so starting immediately, Barron said.

DoD's Joint Knowledge Online is developing the courses, with input from DoD's military personnel policy and compensation offices and a number of other experts in DoD. Joint Knowledge Online, experienced in developing other curriculum, is DoD's unique source for online joint training. The services' military personnel leaders and senior enlisted leaders also have been involved.

DoD is going to great lengths to get this information right, as a solid foundation, officials said. The first course is DoD's official information to leaders about what the new system is and what it isn't, he said, and how officials expect leaders to get the message out to the troops.

“This is strict guidance with which [leaders] can turn and amplify, and calm the background noise that has surfaced thus far,” he said.

4.) Navy SEAL Killed In Iraq to Be Promoted Posthumously / 11 MAY 16 [\[LINK\]](#)

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The announcement of the posthumous promotion for special warfare operator Charles Keating IV comes two days before his funeral in Coronado, California.

Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen, a Navy spokesman, says Keating had been eligible to go before a promotion board this year. Christensen said that based on his evaluations and assignments there was good reason to believe he would have been promoted.

While the promotion will not affect pay or benefits, Keating will be able to be buried wearing his new rank.

Keating is the third U.S. service member to be killed in Iraq since U.S. forces returned there in 2014. For more news from Commander, Navy Installations Command, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/cni>.

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