From: Director, Officer Candidate School – Officer Training Command Newport
To: Prospective Navy Officer Candidate School Candidate

Subj: OFFICER CANDIDATE PREPARATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Dear Prospective Officer Candidate,

1. Congratulations on your selection to Officer Candidate School (OCS) and thank you for making the decision to serve your country as a Naval officer. Very few men and women meet the numerous screening requirements and have the dedication and desire to earn a seat in OCS. To successfully complete the program, you will need to exhibit mental toughness, physical strength and conditioning, and a never-quit attitude. The following information is provided to help you properly prepare for the intense training that you will experience at OCS and to ensure you know the expectations for all officer candidates enrolled in the program.

Note: Your recruiter should provide you an OCS Delayed Entry Program (DEP) guide book with detailed information on numerous aspects of OCS, including various requirements, and mandatory knowledge. You should also be provided a Fitness and Nutrition Guide and sign a “Commitment to Success” form. You are also encouraged to visit the OCS website for additional information regarding the entire course. An updated “Faces of OCS” video is under development and will be linked to the OCS website; however, the current video gives a fairly accurate view of what candidates should expect while progressing through the training program.

a. Physical Readiness.

(1) Naval officers are expected to be a model of physical fitness to their sailors and the American public. You must be physically strong and have superior endurance to hold up against the numerous challenges you will face as a Naval officer.

(2) You MUST arrive at OCS physically prepared to meet the rigorous standards of our training. You will physically train (PT) five-six days a week, which includes a mix of running, calisthenics, and various upper, lower, and core body exercises. A list of these exercises are located at: https://www.navyfitness.org/fitness/noffs/

(a) Initial Strength Test (IST). In your first week at OCS, you will be tested per the Navy Physical Readiness Test (PRT) to determine if you are physically ready and safe to train. **If you fail this IST, you will be removed from your class and risk separation from OCS.**

(b) A PRT consists of as many repetitions as possible in proper form curl-ups and push-ups for two minutes each, followed by a timed 1.5 mile run.

(c) DO NOT expect to be able to pass this PRT if you have not been physically preparing yourself for each of these events well in advance of your arrival at OCS.
(d) OCS is very strict on proper form, especially on push-ups. You MUST go down until your elbows making a right angle, bringing your body parallel to the deck on the down position. Curl-ups require hands to never leave the shoulders. Ask your recruiter to show you proper form for both curl-ups and push-ups and refer to the OCS DEP guide and website for further information on Navy physical standards.

(e) You MUST arrive at OCS within Body Composition standards. Failing a Body Composition Analysis (BCA) in your first week may result in immediate separation from the program. If you are unsure if you are within standards, ask your recruiter for a courtesy BCA and refer to the before mentioned resources regarding body composition and Navy height/weight standards.

(3) Candidates that arrive in poor physical condition are much more susceptible to injury. Injuries will result in delays in your training and perhaps jeopardize your ability to complete the program. Proper diet, exercise, hydration, and rest, all contribute to a strong and prepared body.

b. Medical Readiness.

(1) Physicals. During your first week at OCS, you will report to medical for initial commissioning physicals and flight physicals (as appropriate). There are times during these physicals when conditions are occasionally discovered that were not required to be checked at your Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) physical. These findings may result in a “Not Physically Qualified” (NPQ) status for you in your designator. If a waiver is not possible for the condition, but you are physically qualified for another designator, you will have the opportunity to apply for a different designator while you continue in training.

(2) Medications. If you are taking prescription medication prior to your arrival at OCS, it is vital that you bring enough with you to last at least one week. **DO NOT** conceal prescription medications from your recruiter, MEPS, or any Navy medical providers.

(3) Eye Glasses. If you have prescription glasses, you need to bring them with you. You will **NOT** be authorized to wear contact lenses until your final stage of training at OCS. You are required to wear your glasses starting at your check-in day. You will be issued glasses from Navy optometry after your physical exam.

(4) Pre-Existing Conditions. Candidates are sometimes discharged from OCS and returned home because they arrived with a pre-existing condition that currently precludes them from completing the program. This is known as Temporary NPQ. Candidates in this status will be separated from OCS, but typically can reapply six months after the identified condition has been addressed and the individual is cleared by qualified Navy medical personnel.

c. Personal Readiness.

(1) Mental Readiness. OCS is charged with preparing future officers to serve in highly stressful and demanding environments. As such, OCS will put you in various stressful
conditions to assess your ability to work under pressure within limited time constraints to accomplish numerous tasks, both individually and as a team.

(2) **Motivation.** It is important that you have a high level of intrinsic motivation. We expect candidates to be committed and motivated to serve first and foremost as United States Naval officers. You will be challenged in many ways during your training at OCS; those without the motivation to succeed typically do not complete the program. Be ready to challenge yourself!

(3) **Communication.** After your arrival at OCS, you will not have communication, other than hand-written letters, with the outside world for approximately four weeks. You will be authorized a phone call upon arrival to let a designated family know that you’ve arrived safely. Later in training, you will be authorized to make phone calls on Sundays, have email access, and also receive visitors. Candidates in their final phase of training and in good standing will have their cellular phones returned to them. Your designated family members will also receive a letter from myself following your arrival that provides them with additional information about the program.

(4) **Visitors.** Visitors are authorized after completion of the third week of training but are required to be screened if they do not already have base access. This process takes a minimum of 14 days. In order to expedite the process, ensure you have the full name, date of birth and full social security numbers for any visitors you wish to receive.

(5) **Accurate Information.** As stated above, we highly recommend that you review our website [http://www.netc.navy.mil/nstc/otcn/index.html](http://www.netc.navy.mil/nstc/otcn/index.html), watch the “Faces of OCS” video, and check out our Facebook page (search “Officer Training Command Newport”). **DO NOT** trust what you read on blog sites such as Air Warriors; there is a lot of inaccurate and dated information on many of those sites.

(6) **What to bring.** Ensure you bring all of the required items we list on our website; especially all of the documents needed to enroll you and your dependents into the military system. If you bring items that OCS designates as contraband, you will be required to either dispose of or store it until you’ve completed the course. A full list of recommended and authorized items is located at the OCS website under the “OCS Required and Recommended Items” tab. In addition to being issued numerous uniform items, candidates will also be fitted for and required to purchase a new pair of running shoes, which will be issued on check-in day. Candidates are encouraged to bring a current pair of athletic shoes to use in the case of a size or backorder issue for the issues running shoes.

(7) **Knowledge Preparation.** You will be required to memorize numerous military information verbatim during your first week of training. You can best prepare for this challenge by working on memorizing this knowledge prior to reporting. The following are some memorization items that you will be responsible for:
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(a) General Orders of the Sentry, Articles of the Code of Conduct, Navy & Marine Corps Officer and Enlisted rank structure, and rank insignia. This, along with other mandatory knowledge is found in the DEP Guide and will also be linked on the OCS website.

d. Travel & Reporting.

   (1) Flights. For those of you flying to Rhode Island, you will most likely fly into TF-Green airport in Providence on Saturday. It is your responsibility to arrange transportation from the airport to Naval Station Newport and to secure accommodations for yourself for the night prior to check-in Sunday. You cannot stay in our barracks prior to your check-in time. We recommend all candidates report to OCS between 0700 and 0800 on check-in Sunday. You may be able to reserve lodging on base at the Navy Gateway Inns and Suites ahead of time: http://www.dodlodging.net/. The USO at the airport does NOT provide transportation or housing, but Orange Cab does provide transportation, and is authorized to enter the base. Ensure you have your travel orders with you and keep all travel and hotel receipts as you can claim these expenses for reimbursement when you do your travel claim. Detailed directions to Naval Station Newport and information on accommodations is listed on the OCS website under the “Travel/Check-In” tab. If you experience travel delay’s, inform the OTCN Command Duty Officer (CDO) at (401) 862-4321. The CDO will then inform your respective class team leaders.

   (2) Personal Vehicles (POV). If you drive your POV to Newport, you will be able to park it in the student long-term lot on base. Ensure you have all required registration, insurance, and license information, as that may be checked at any time by base security.

   (3) Reporting to OCS. Arriving through Gate 1 at Naval Station Newport; follow the blue “OCS Arrivals” signs once on base. They will direct you to Training Country. Report to Callaghan Hall between 0700 and 0800 on check-in Sunday. It is IMPORTANT that you report by this time. The first day is extremely busy with numerous checking in requirements that must be accomplished. Report in business casual clothing. You will be issued Navy Physical Training (PT) gear that morning to wear until you receive additional uniforms.

2. With proper preparation, motivation, and a never-quit attitude, you can successfully complete OCS and earn your commission as a Naval officer. My instructors will challenge you in ways many of you have never experienced and push you to levels of excellence you may never have thought possible. My team and I look forward to your arrival and again, Congratulations on achieving this first milestone on your path to earning your commission!

CDR James Paffenroth, USN
Director, Officer Candidate School