



The Knox County Joint Veterans Council are looking for **volunteers!!!**

The Knox County Joint Veterans Council is located at the Knox County Veterans Service Office located at 105 E Chestnut St. Mount Vernon, Ohio. The post conducts regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting time is 7:00 P.M. **Contact Carol Riley @**

740-504-3264 if you are interested in volunteering. Thank you!



They stand guard silently, vigilantly through whatever Mother Nature dares throw at them. They do so with great pride to honor one of their own. And they do this without thought of payment. For them, honoring a fallen brother-in-arms is compensation enough.

For the families of the deceased soldier, they are the ever-watchful sentinels, and their selfless act is a much-appreciated tribute.

December is Ham Time!!

December 1st-December 31st

Come in any day during the month of December, only, for your annual ham voucher! No waiting! Head to Smithisler Meats, with your voucher, anytime during the month to pick up your ham!

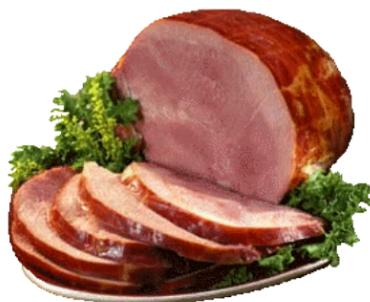
Smithisler Meats

8835 Columbus Rd

Tuesday-Friday 9AM-5:30 PM

Saturday 9AM-2PM

Closed Sunday and Monday



Commander Bans Army-Issued Warm, Comfy Fleece Jacket as Winter Approaches

A battalion commander is forbidding soldiers under his command from wearing their Army-issued fleece jackets while on a rotation in South Korea, where local average temperatures during the winter frequently dip below freezing.

"The fleece cold weather jacket is not authorized for wear as an outer garment," Lt. Col. Geoffrey Lynch, commander of 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, said in an August memo reviewed by Military.com.

A spokesperson for Fort Bliss, where the unit is based, did not return a request for comment ahead of this story's publication. Maj. David Matoi, Lynch's executive officer who is listed as the memo's point of contact, did not respond to a request for comment.

It is unclear why Lynch outlawed the fleece as an outergarment, given that Army clothing regulations specifically say that the jacket is meant to be worn on "mild cold days," with the memo referencing those same rules.

The other regulation referenced in the memo was a paragraph out of the Army's regulatory guidelines on uniforms which gives commanders broad authority on dictating what troops can wear, "Soldiers may wear the [cold weather] jackets and trousers as outer garments, to include the fleece jacket, when authorized by the commander."

It's not the first time a debate over the fleece has popped up, as questions sporadically surface about whether the jacket is primarily intended to be an undergarment worn under other cold weather gear. Though Army rules make it clear the jacket can be worn as an outer garment and are otherwise generally loose on when and where troops can wear it.

A top Army official overseeing uniform rules squashed any of that confusion back in January. "It's an outer garment," Sgt. Maj. Ashleigh Sykes, the top enlisted leader for uniform policy said on Twitter in January.

"There is hook and loop for name tapes, rank, and US Army to make that obvious." Sgt. Major of the Army Michael Grinston, the service's top enlisted leader, endorsed the message. "That settles that," he tweeted.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/10/25/commander-bans-army-issued-warm-comfy-fleece-jacket-winter-approaches.html>

Nearly 113K claims already filed for PACT Act benefits

Veterans Affairs officials have already received nearly 113,000 new disability claims related to the sweeping toxic exposure legislation signed into law less than three months ago, an indication of the potential impact of the measure and the work ahead for the department. Benefits officials began accepting claims for all presumptive illnesses included in the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act (better known as the PACT Act) after it was signed into law by President Joe Biden on Aug. 10. They include 12 types of cancer and 12 other respiratory illnesses linked to burn pit exposure in the Gulf War and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; hypertension and monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) for veterans who served in Vietnam; and radiation-related illnesses for veterans who served in several new locations in the 1960s and early 1970s. Coverage for those issues had been a point of contention for years. In particular, veterans advocates lamented that too many serious problems believed linked to burn pit exposure were being ignored by VA leaders because of incomplete science linking the health problems with the toxic smoke from the waste fires.

In the 75 days since the signing, the department has received 112,949 new applications for disability claims related to the new presumptive illnesses, an increase in the benefits workload of more than 21% from the same period last year. "For too long, toxic-exposed veterans and their families have had to fight their government for the benefits and health care they've earned," Acting Under Secretary for Benefits Josh Jacobs said in a statement. "Thanks to the PACT Act, generations of veterans will be able to get the care and benefits they deserve." Depending on the severity of a veteran's injuries, he or she may be eligible for up to \$4,000 in disability compensation. Presumptive status for service-connected illnesses cuts down on the paperwork veterans are required to file to receive the monthly checks. VA officials have been urging veterans who believe they may be eligible to apply now, even though claims will not be processed until January 2023. Payouts should begin by early spring.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/burn-pits/2022/10/25/nearly-113k-claims-already-filed-for-pact-act-benefits/>

Earning an expert badge will be harder with this proposed fitness test

WASHINGTON — The Army's expert skills badges are no walk in the park.

Currently, soldiers trying to earn them must successfully complete dozens of tasks, ranging from hand grenade courses to a timed 12-mile foot march.

And if the Army's top NCO — Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston — has his way, the physical assessment that soldiers must pass as part of the badge testing process will soon become more difficult.

Grinston unveiled the plan Oct. 11 at the annual Association of the U.S. Army conference, a place where the SMA traditionally announces upcoming initiatives.

The old version of the fitness test for the expert infantry badge required candidates to complete 49 push-ups and 59 sit-ups, each in two minutes, and a four-mile run in 32 minutes or less.

But the new test, once approved, will have several events that troops complete in full uniform under a single running clock, Grinston said.

He cautioned that the test hasn't yet been formally approved — but that's because “[what] we're trying to figure out is what's gonna be the total time” to get through the proposed events.

Soldiers who want their expert badges, which are now worth [more promotion points than before](#), may soon have to knock out the following exercises in their full kit, including helmet, body armor and combat boots.

- One-mile run
- 30 hand-release push-ups
- 100 meter sprint
- Farmer's carry
- Lifting 16 sandbags onto a platform
- High crawl
- Buddy team rush
- One-mile run

It's not clear when the new fitness assessment will be incorporated into Army-wide testing, but Grinston and other senior officials took a pilot version of the test while attending a September conference at Fort Benning, Georgia. According to Military.com, troops there are piloting tests again this month.

It's still possible the events could change, but Grinston indicated that isn't likely.

Army officials are working to determine whether all three expert badges should require the same time standard on the fitness assessment. But the events will likely remain the same across the testing events in order to make it easier for units to conduct simultaneous testing for the three badges.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2022/10/26/earning-an-expert-badge-will-be-harder-with-this-proposed-fitness-test/>
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Marine Corps recruit Aryan Kahn back-crawls during the Crucible at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 17, 2022



A Navy MH-60S Seahawk transports ammunition from the USNS Medgar Evers to the USS Gerald R. Ford in the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 25, 2022.