

Department of the Army
Battery, 1st Battalion, Field Artillery
434th Field Artillery Brigade

Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503-6204

Dear Family and Friends:

Greetings from the Fires Center of Excellence, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, home of the Field Artillery. The Trainees of Battery are proving their toughness every day. They have become more knowledgeable, motivated, and fit to be an American Soldier. We are coming to the end of the training, and now it is time to look forward to graduation. The last graduation requirement is called the FORGE and happens in week nine. Remember, no news is good news! Your Trainee will be allowed to call home and communicate their status to you. There is no need to call asking for the information.

Family Day will occur on Thursday, at 9:00 a.m. Guests will be able to pick up their Trainee at the Cache Creek Chapel. You will access the Post through Key Gate East. Gates will open for access at 8:00 a.m. Your Trainee's pass will start at 9:00 a.m., and they will need to return to the battery before 8:00 p.m. While on the pass, please ensure your Trainee maintains their military bearing during their time with you. They are no longer only representing themselves, but this unit, Fort Sill, the United States Army, and this nation. Do not purchase contraband items for your Trainee, or allow your Trainee to purchase, or consume, these items while on the pass. These items include but are not limited to tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, electronics, body spray, perfume, body piercing, tattoos, and pornographic material. Do not allow your Trainee to drive any vehicles. Do not use a cell phone while driving on the installation. Your Trainee is not allowed to use their cell phones while walking in uniform. Do not take your Trainee to play in any casinos. All Trainees will be held accountable for their actions.

Graduation ceremonies will begin promptly at 9:30 a.m. on at the Fort Sill Polo Field. You will access the Post through Key Gate West. We highly recommend that guests carpool to mitigate limited parking. Following each outdoor graduation ceremony, guests will be allowed to spend time with their Trainee on the Polo Field until noon. We encourage families to bring chairs, coolers (no alcohol), and umbrellas for shade for post-graduation activities. At 12:15 pm, all Trainees will depart back to their unit area of operation to prepare to ship to their Advance Individual Training location. Split-Ops Trainees will out-process the unit and prepare for departure home via commercial means purchased by the government or with family if arranged. Split-Ops Trainees have the opportunity at week 2 and week 8 to decide and arrange for family pick-up.

If inclement weather occurs, we will conduct in-door graduation at the Cache Creek Chapel Complex at 9:00 am, 11:00 am, or 1:00 pm (times dependent on number of Batteries graduating that day due to space restrictions). If the graduation ceremony moves indoors, only two family members over age 12 are authorized to attend. Children 11 and under are welcome to attend. Please arrive before the start time of the graduation ceremony. If we have additional space, we will allow more guests. Immediately following indoor graduation, families have 15 minutes to congratulate their new Soldier. FAMILY TRAVEL TO AIT IS NOT AUTHORIZED.

During Family Day and Graduation, the Department of Emergency Services will conduct in-lane vetting. Vetting can ONLY happen through Key Gate East and Key Gate West. Attendees 18 and older (16 and older if driving) will need to show a valid state ID or U.S. passport at the entrance to gain access to the installation. If you have military identification, you can use this card for post access. In-lane vetting will last from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. You do not need to go to the visitor center for a pass on base. If you have a felony or warrant, please reach out to the Visitor Center for post access approval. Their number is 580-442-9604.

The purpose of Family and Graduation day is to openly recognize the accomplishments of your Trainees by conducting safe graduation ceremonies while maintaining COVID-19 protocol safeguards. We want to remind you that there are COVID mitigations in place at Fort Sill. Visitors will be required to wear a mask in all indoor facilities and where social distancing is impossible.

If any information gets updated, you can find it on the Battery Facebook page. Your Trainee will also be able to call with any updated information. We look forward to meeting you and hope you can attend your Trainee's graduation. Thank you for your continual support!

Very Respectfully,

CPT, FA
Commanding