



# NEWS RELEASE

## United States Air Force

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Air Force BMT adjusts schedules, locations to sustain mission readiness**

**JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-Lackland, Texas** – As part of an ongoing contingency response to COVID-19, and with restriction of movement protocols for new recruits already in place at U.S. Air Force basic military training, the service has implemented a revised approach to how recruits enter the training pipeline here.

In order to ensure the health and safety of trainees and instructors and to preserve dorm capacity, new recruits will be brought in based on a four-week repeating cycle that includes stringent restricted movement guidelines, dedicated time for deep cleaning between rotations, resetting the instructor cadre and the testing of an alternate BMT location at Keesler AFB, Miss.

Under the phased plan, normal student loads of 650 to 800 students will report for basic military training during the first two weeks and immediately enter into the 14-day restriction of movement protocol. Trainees will prepare for full-scale training and complete administrative tasks and limited training objectives, while practicing social distancing and small group contact during the 14 days.

The first week of the initial iteration of the plan began March 17 when 653 recruits reported to basic military training. The next of arrival of trainees, planned for March 31, will be rescheduled. From that point onward, approximately 460 trainees will arrive at BMT each week, while implementing COVID-19 mitigation measures. Precautions include deep-cleaning dormitories, dining facilities and other BMT infrastructure, in line with CDC guidance, as well as help reset the military training instructor cadre. Plans are underway to send 60 trainees to Keesler AFB to demonstrate proof of concept to generate the force at multiple training locations during contingencies.

“We are deliberately developing options to disperse the delivery of BMT during contingencies to provide surge capacity and introduce agility into the training pipeline construct,” said Maj. Gen. Andrea Tullos, Second Air Force commander. “This will also help provide relief to the military training instructor staff and ease the strain on our BMT infrastructure.”

The contingency option is designed to be implemented along a 180-day surge timeline and is and is sustainable for longer periods, but is not intended to be an enduring construct with force structure implications, Tullos said.

Additionally, all BMT graduation events remain private and closed to the public, with Thursday graduation ceremonies being livestreamed on the USAF Basic Military Training Facebook page.

“These changes are part of our operational mindset to fight through COVID-19 and mitigate force health risks,” Tullos said “We continue to carefully balance the need to deliver mission ready forces to our operational commanders with the force health protection measures we must responsibly take to preserve the welfare of our families and the extensive network of communities across our nation we call home.”