

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 Soldiers 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. Remember, no news is good news! Your Soldier will be allowed to call home and communicate their status to you. There is no need to call asking for the information.

With our graduation during a holiday week, it will look different from other graduations. Instead of having Family Day then Graduation we are switching it around. This is great news for your family and our Cadre. Graduation ceremony will begin promptly at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, November 24, 2021 at the Fort Sill Polo Field. There is no limit to the number of family members for outdoor graduations. 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 Soldier within the Lawton and surrounding area. At pm, all Soldiers will arrive back to their unit area of operation.

If inclement weather occurs, we will conduct indoor graduation at the Cache Creek Chapel Complex or the Sheridan Theater at 10:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. (times dependent on number of Batteries graduating that day due to space restrictions). If the graduation ceremony moves indoor, only two family members over age 13 are authorized to attend. Children 12 and under are welcome to attend no limit. Please arrive before the start time of the graduation ceremony. If we have additional space, we will allow more guests.

Family Day will occur on Thursday, November 25, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Guests will be able to pick up their Soldier at the Cache Creek Chapel. You will access the Post through Key Gate West. Gates will open for access at 8:00 a.m. Your Soldier's pass will start at 9:00 a.m., and they will need to return to the battery before p.m. While on pass after Graduation and Family Day, please ensure your Soldier 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 Soldier, or allow your Soldier 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 Soldier to drive any vehicles. Do not use a cell phone while driving on the installation. Your Soldier is not allowed to use their cell phones while walking in uniform. Do not take your Soldier to play in any casinos. All Soldier will be held accountable for their actions.

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 7:30 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 Soldiers 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 Soldier will also be able to call with any updated information. We look forward to meeting you and hope you can attend your Soldiers's graduation. Thank you for your continual support!

Very Respectfully,

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Commanding