



GASTONIA COMPOSITE SQUADRON  
CIVIL AIR PATROL  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY  
PO Box 254, Cramerton NC 28032

Welcome to the Gastonia Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol. We are excited that you are considering joining our group of dedicated volunteers. As a Senior Member in the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), you can participate in search and rescue missions, counterdrug reconnaissance and disaster relief missions. You can also nurture the leaderships skills of our cadets, or broaden the horizons of local students and teachers through the aerospace education programs.

Our squadron is a “composite” squadron, which means it is composed of youth and adults. While much of what we do is cadet-oriented, many of the activities and events we participate in are of interest or relevant to, and enjoyed by the adults.

In the next few pages you will find information that should help to answer some questions you might have, and information on how to apply for membership. If you need more information or have any questions at all, please feel to ask me or any of the senior members at any time.

*1st Lt. Derk Beutler, Squadron Commander*

## **1. What are the membership options?**

Active Members regularly attend meetings, perform official CAP duties, meet training requirements, and participate in the activities of the unit. An active member may wear the CAP uniform and compete for grade advancement/earn rank.

Cadet Sponsor Members participate in CAP activities with their cadet. A cadet sponsor member can chaperone, provide transportation, or supervise cadets during squadron activities, and can wear a CAP uniform if desired. Sponsor members have no official duties and don't earn rank. Some online training is required before a sponsor member can participate in activities with cadets.

Patron Members support CAP by paying annual dues, but don't wear a CAP uniform or participate in CAP activities. They can attend meetings, CAP conferences, and squadron social functions.

## 2. What is the time commitment?

The squadron meets weekly and we try to have at least one weekend activity per month. The weekly meetings provide the opportunity for senior members to come together as a team and discuss issues. A weekly meeting or weekend activity sometimes includes an aspect of training that is required for a promotion or a specialty qualification. For example, a Saturday activity could be some type of emergency services training that counts towards becoming a qualified ground team member. We expect cadets and senior members to attend as often as possible, but we also understand that sometimes there are other priorities.

**Training:** It will take a few hours to complete the initial training required to participate as an active member. We like all senior members to attend an offsite, 1-day Training Leaders of Cadets class within their first year. Beyond that, senior members are encouraged to train and develop along the specialty track corresponding to their squadron job (see below), which includes an online Officer Basic Course (about 20 hours of lessons) and a 2-day off-site Squadron Leadership School class. Beyond that are optional education and training opportunities in technical, managerial, and leadership topics, and operational mission specialties.

## 3. What “jobs” are available in the Civil Air Patrol?

There are two types of CAP jobs—one is your duty assignment in the squadron, and the other is any of the operational specialties you want to get involved with or perform.

**Duty Assignment:** This is your job in the squadron. After completing orientation training, members select one of the specialty tracks listed below to be trained in, serve in, and earn rank. As members advance in training and rank, they become eligible to serve in these positions at higher levels in the organization (group, wing, HQ). For more information go to <https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/members/cap-university/>. We recommend speaking with us to discuss what might be the right specialty track for you.

Personnel Officer	Aerospace Education Officer
Public Affairs Officer	Cadet Programs Officer
Finance Officer	Safety Officer
Inspector General	Legal Officer
Professional Development Officer	Health Services Officer
Administration Officer	Chaplain
Logistics Officer	Command Specialty Training Track
Operations Officer	Historian
Standardization-Evaluation Officer	Character Development Officer
Emergency Services Officer	Recruiting and Retention Officer
Communications Officer	Information Technology Officer

**Operational Specialties:** Operational specialties are for members who want to be deployed and participate in official missions in jobs such as radio operator, aerial photographer, search and rescue ground team member. etc. To engage in these types of activities, members complete specialized training and become qualified to perform the tasks. A member can get qualified in is

as many or few operational areas as they like. These specialties are in addition to the squadron job. For example, a Safety Officer could also be qualified to serve as a search and rescue ground team member or leader. For more information go to <https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/emergency-services/operations-support/sqtrs/>.

#### **4. How to Join**

At your third or later meeting, bring a completed membership application to the squadron commander for signing. Get your fingerprints taken and fingerprint card completed at the Gaston County Sheriff's Office (\$10) or any police department, and then mail the application, fingerprint card, and dues to CAP HQ. A few days after they receive your application, HQ will email you your CAP ID number and you can begin your Level 1 training.

#### **5. Where do I get uniforms?**

Vanguard is the official supplier ([www.vanguardmil.com](http://www.vanguardmil.com)), but you can find some items (boots, BDUs, aviator shirt, gray slacks) elsewhere. Vanguard is the sole source for the polo shirt with CAP logo, the baseball cap, and items like nameplates, patches, and insignia. Lenoir Military & Government Surplus in Hudson NC (phone 828-728-7728) has Air Force-style ABUs in stock and maybe other pieces. Before buying items from other than Vanguard, read CAPR M39-1 and the ABU Wear Instructions available at <https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/members/publications/indexes-regulations-and-manuals-1700/>, and make sure the item you are buying meets regulations. Vanguard posts a 10% discount code on their Facebook page each month, offers free shipping over \$35, and no sales tax.

#### **6. What are the different uniforms?**

- Suitable for Most Occasions: Blue polo shirt with gray slacks
- Suitable for All Occasions including Dress Occasions: White aviator shirt with gray slacks
- Working Outdoors in the Field: Blue BDU-style uniform
- Air Force-style Uniforms: AF-style dress and field uniforms (not pictured) can be worn by members who meet Air Force grooming, appearance, and weight standards

