

The below is with the assumption that you will sign up, pay up, and be on the next year's team. Only once your payment is received by your base/regional team leader, will the invite to register on the RAGBRAI website be extended.

For those of you that are new to the team and RAGBRAI, here are some defining factors that you should consider as well as a motivation for an epic experience you will almost certainly have in July. Use this information as a reference, file it away and skim it once in a while.

Being accepted to the AFCT, doesn't mean you just show up in July expecting to ride - there's a lot of stuff that has to happen between now that July. There are many avenues where you can potentially plug in to help the team; reserving U-Haul, minivans, billeting, bike labels, and very important approaching private orgs you're involved with for donations to support additive costs such as billeting and gas etc. Top 3s, First SGTs, Chiefs groups etc. if we don't get donations, RAGBRAI will be more expensive for each of us.

[[RAGBRAI](#)] AFCT - about 150 AF members from across the Air Force, usually 11 regional areas come together in Des Moines Iowa for first and last day staging at this annual historic event. The route is usually announced in Des Moines mid-January. The routes typically shift North-Mid-Southern routes from East to West. Iowa is **NOT** flat, yes you will see plenty of corn and bank on at least 1 rain day and plenty of opportunities to take on the Iowa headwinds!! :). There typically are not that many major climbs, but there are plenty of repetitive rolling hills that are guaranteed to challenge your patience!!

First order of business - we are **sanctioned by the AF Recruiting Service (AFRS)** and Permissive TDY is offered to the Active Duty folks and others who are on orders, who are able to work the approval through their chain of command. The Team Executive Director submits the requested PTDY names to the AFRS, which is sent back on signed letterhead for your Squadrons. The AFRS sanctioning is not a guarantee each year, so be aware that there's always a chance of not getting the support from the AFRS. If that happens, which it probably won't, then we would be expected to use annual leave or work inner unit approval.

The AFCT mission is as you would expect - first and foremost - we are there representing the AFRS under WEAR authority - "We Are All Recruiters", this is where we portray the AF way of life and represent the best of all Airmen. We are also there as ambassadors and wingmen, the AFCT has a special part in RAGBRAI history and we are always welcomed by RAGBRAI, Iowans and RAGBRAI riders... the reception you receive from all around you will blow your socks off. The reason we are so well received is because of the military, humble, and wingman image we portray. This is why you will hear emphasis leading up to and during RAGBRAI about our conduct, we don't want to spoil that reputation nor remove the welcome mat this team has enjoyed for over 20 years. The WINGMAN responsibility is a big deal and you will quickly figure out that RAGBRAI, for us is **NOT** just a ride across Iowa... it is an adventure. Yeah corny I know!! But it's true. If you see someone pulled over we ask/offer assistance to anyone and everyone - be it help with bike mechanicals, SABC, or just to chat to someone who is hot or working a mechanical themselves. This Wingman image that we work hard to maintain is the most common comment you will hear all week from your fellow RAGBRAI participants and this team is very proud of that image.

With that Sanctioning, **you are considered on duty** from the time you pull out of your home

station/ location to the time we get home. So, we have to follow and abide by all the standard dress and appearance rules, alcohol consumption, and being in certain places at certain times. There are usually updates sent out after each AFCT teleconference that your team leader is on. The Team Executive Director will also send out regular AFCT notes and will cover stuff like this as we move towards July. Also much of it is already covered in your contracts, so **BE SURE** you read what you are signing.

Logistics- Each of the regional/base teams convoy to Iowa. This is accomplished via POV, rental vehicles, and u-hauls, etc. The entire team will stage at a central point then convoy to the official start town of RAGBRAI that year. Those riders participating in the 'at-large' status will meet up with us at the central point or the start town. If that is you, make sure to coordinate with your regional team lead.

Please plan on caravanning with your local team, plan on staying in the dorms at Des Moines, plan on riding the charter buses, plan on returning back to Des Moines at the end and not just taking off, it's easier for accountability and logistics, besides the dorms we sometimes reside in are required to be cleaned before we depart for home. No team or its leader is a fan of being an equipment mule or work horse for folks who make other plans. If you need to deviate, openly discuss with your team leader, understanding it is on a case- by-case basis for alternative travel/billeting plans, bottom line, let your team leader know.

Once we leave Camp Dodge (open bay dorms) we ride 2 charter buses to the start town and we spend the next 7 days/6 nights camping. Be prepared for the possibility of cold (solar showers), however normally we find campsites that are close to or on school campuses and we can pay usually \$5 for a shower. You **WILL** become very intimate with KYBO's... :) ([porta potties](#)).. On the last day, it's usually a higher paced day - 70-80 miles and we have to be at the meet point usually by 1300-1330.. so that will require some effort to make the deadline... But, you will be glad you make this deadline, because that is where we join up as 1 big team and do a 2-3 mile parade in a 2x2 file group... that's a LONG train of AFCT riders, we will ride to the dip point, a RAGBRAI tradition that riders dip their tires, the rear tires get dipped in the Missouri River at the start town and 7 days later dip the front tires in the Mississippi River. After that we regroup, hopefully get a hot shower then return to Des Moines by charter bus.

What to take later??? Here's a basic expectation for gear - we are expected to minimize what we bring, because our support crew loads/unloads 3 - 26 foot U Haul trucks every day and the more junk we bring, more work they have to do. As a general rule we are each **allotted 2 x 25-30 Gallon Tupperware's**, your tent & camp chair. You will be on your bike every day.

Two pole tents is the expectation, because the support crew sets up the tents for us, as time permits, bringing complex/big Taj Mahals may well get left in the bag for you to set up, so plan accordingly. [Instant tents](#) have become a popular option. See example here: [Campsite](#)

You probably noticed on your contract, a prerequisite for RAGBRAI is being able **to ride a century**. Each regional/base team will have a plan to get this prerequisite accomplished prior to July.

Gear - **wear your gear sparingly leading up to RAGBRAI** - if it gets damaged, it will be difficult to get replacement gear. Also you may have asked yourself how you keep your gear clean with wearing it each day. The answer is hand washing or showering in your gear then air-drying. Also you are permitted to wear plain shorts during the middle days of the week. Full AFCT gear is required on the first and last day of RAGBRAI.

The required applications/contracts can be found on the team website. Please complete and send directly to your base/regional team leader after speaking to them directly.

Active duty/ANG/Reserve (current uniform wearers) please send in your current PT RIP.
Retirees/civilians – Your base leader will need a current profile picture of you in riding gear - front and side view, this is how the team vets applicants for fitness and military image.

The PT scores/Pictures can come later, applications and contracts are needed ASAP.

The team rule is that first contact/first payments received assures the first seats and approvals to register on the RAGBRAI site - just because you're on "the list" above doesn't mean you're on the team roster.

REGISTRATION: Do NOT register on the RAGBRAI site until you get the OK from your base/regional team leader.

Important: DO NOT order RAGBRAI merchandise "except" the RAGBRAI Jersey if you want it. The RAGBRAI Jersey is the only jersey the AFCT will accept payment for. Everything else you want/will purchase has to be directly with RAGBRAI. For First timers - you are NOT permitted to wear the RAGBRAI jersey during RAGBRAI.

If you're a rider, you don't need to fill out the support contract.

Once you are approved to do so, register on line, complete the RAGBRAI waiver, save it in pdf and send it to your team leader.

Make sure you double check the application for uniform items/sizes... additional orders for incorrect sizes won't be happening, so what you order is what you get.