



Senior members play a critical role in the sustainment and health of the Civil Air Patrol program. A senior member in the Civil Air Patrol is anyone who is over twenty-one years old, or who joined CAP for the first time past the age of eighteen. There is no retirement age and no physical requirement for joining as a senior member.

While it is not a requirement for membership, Senior Members are provided with their own professional development program and are encouraged to progress within it. Progression in the Senior Member Program is a requirement for promotion for those Senior Members that are not simply using their current or former military grades within CAP. The Senior Member Program consists of five levels and each has components of leadership training, corporate familiarization, and aerospace education, as well as professional development within chosen 'Specialty Tracks'.

There are many Specialty Tracks, and they are designed to both support the organization and to provide opportunities for Senior Members to take advantage of skills they have from their private lives. Available Specialty Tracks include Logistics, Communications, Cadet Programs, Legal, Administration, Emergency Services and Finance; there are many more. Senior Members provide a vital roll in the Civil Air Patrol. Many tasks within Civil Air Patrol such as mission air crew and ground team leaders require senior member status. These positions provide an important part of the Civil Air Patrols' mission as seen in the immediate aftermath of 911 and today with Homeland Security missions. Senior Members that choose to follow the professional development program are subject to earn Grade/Rank and Ribbons/Awards. Cadet parents may join CAP as Senior Members or may become Cadet Sponsors. As a Sponsor, parents of cadets may support cadet-focused activities by organizing and participating in events, driving the CAP vehicle, and other functions.

For more information, see the Squadron Commander or Deputy Commander for Cadets.