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By Senior Airman Shannon Chace
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168th Wing recruiters complete virtual enlistments despite COVID-19

Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska — The social distancing requirements caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has not stopped Alaska Air National Guard recruiters from enlisting applicants.

Staff Sgt. Elysia Wilson, a production recruiter with the 168th Wing, assisted with her second virtual enlistment April 16 at the 168th Wing headquarters building at Eielson Air Force Base.

Virtual enlistments allow new Air National Guard recruits to complete their oath of enlistment while complying with current safety regulations. Applicants who have completed their initial paperwork and processing are able to use video communicating software on their phone or laptop to connect with an enlisting officer.

"Virtual enlistments are a great way of using the technology we have at our disposal to get applicants enlisted while we are socially distancing because of COVID-19," Wilson said.

Wilson said that what she misses most about recruiting before social distancing is the opportunity to bring applicants on base and let them meet Airmen.

"The hardest part is not being able to do job tours," Wilson said. "My favorite part is getting to take people out and show them what we have."

Although recruiters are currently unable to physically provide tours, they are being creative and coming up with new ideas to help show people the opportunities available.

From scheduling applicant's one-on-one conversations with Airmen in their desired career fields to holding live video chats to answer questions, they are making sure resources are available to those who are interested.

"We're trying to reach people in different ways and show them that we are still processing, they can still join and we're still here to answer questions," Wilson said.

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Alaska Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Elysia Wilson, 168th Wing production recruiter, hosts a Facebook Live question and answer event April 16, 2020, at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. Video communication apps and services help recruiters continue to serve the local community while social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Shannon Chace)



Alaska Air National Guard 2nd Lt. Elizabeth Carter, 168th Logistics Readiness Squadron officer, enlists a new recruit through a video conference call April 16, 2020, at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. This virtual enlistment allowed a new Alaska Air National Guard recruit to complete their oath of enlistment while complying with COVID-19 safety regulations. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Shannon Chace)



Alaska Air National Guard 2nd Lt. Elizabeth Carter, 168th Logistics Readiness Squadron officer, and Staff Sgt. Elysia Wilson, 168th Wing production recruiter, enlist a new recruit using a video conference call April 16, 2020, at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. The state of Alaska mandates social distancing requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Shannon Chace)



Alaska Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Elysia Wilson, 168th Wing production recruiter, helps enlist a new recruit using a video conference call April 16, 2020, at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. This virtual enlistment allowed a new Alaska Air National Guard recruit to complete their oath of enlistment while complying with COVID-19 safety regulations. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Shannon Chace)