

# Agnipath Scheme

## [UPSC Notes]

### Agnipath Scheme Eligibility

The Agnipath Scheme is only for personnel below the officer ranks, i.e., those who do not join the forces as commissioned officers.

- Aspirants between the ages of 17.5 years and 23 years will be eligible to apply. The upper age limit has been relaxed from 21 years to 23 years as a one-time measure for the Recruiting Year 2022-23.
- Army, Navy and Air Force will release the detailed eligibility criteria on their respective official websites for candidates to apply accordingly.
- Agniveers should meet the medical eligibility conditions laid down for enrolment in the armed forces as applicable to respective categories/trades.

Position under	Eligibility
Agniveer (Tech)	10+2/Intermediate Exam Pass in Science with Physics, Chemistry, Maths and English with 50% marks in aggregate and 40% in each subject.
Agniveer Tech (Avn & Amn Examiner)	10+2/Intermediate Exam Pass in Science with Physics, Chemistry, Maths and English with 50% marks in aggregate and 40% in each subject.
Agniveer (General Duty) (All Arms)	Class 10th /Matric with 45% marks in aggregate and 33% in each subject.
Agniveer Clerk / Store Keeper	10+2 / Intermediate Exam Pass in any stream (Arts, Commerce, Science) with 60% marks in aggregate and minimum 50% in each subject. Securing 50% in

Technical (All Arms)	English and Maths/Accts/Book Keeping in Cl XII is mandatory.
Agniveer Tradesmen (All Arms) 10th pass	(a) Class 10th simple pass (b) No stipulation in aggregate percentage but should have scored in 33% in each subject.
Agniveer Tradesmen (All Arms) 8th pass	(a) Class 8th simple pass (b) No stipulation in aggregate percentage but should have scored in 33% in each subject.

### How to apply for Agnipath Scheme?

To apply for Agneepath Recruitment 2022, one can visit the government websites of the three armed forces, and enroll themselves respectively. The force-specific forms will be out soon and each force will have a different set of criteria and eligibility for the recruitment of the Agniveers.

The forms will be out tentatively between September-October and recruitment will be completed by December for the first batch of Agniveers.

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### Recruitment and Training under Agnipath Scheme

The recruitment of the Agniveers under the Agnipath Scheme will be done twice a year through rallies and on 'all India, all class' recruitment basis. Currently, the recruitment is based on a 'regiment system' based on region and caste bases.

- The online registration will be opened from July onwards by respective AROs for Agniveer General Duty, Agniveer Technical, Agniveer Technical (Aviation/ Ammunition Examiner), Agniveer

Clerk/ Store Keeper technical, Agniveer Tradesman 10th pass and Agniveer Tradesman 8th pass.

- Once selected, the aspirants will go through training for six months and then will be deployed for three and a half years. During their service, Agniveers will be imparted with various military skills and experience, discipline, physical fitness, leadership qualities, courage and patriotism.

### **Agnipath Scheme Salary**

Agnipath Scheme is a short-service manpower model. The Agnipath recruitment scheme is a transformative initiative that will provide a youthful profile to the armed forces. The salary and perks included are:

- Upon joining, Agniveers will get a starting salary of INR 30,000, along with additional benefits which will go up to INR 40,000 by the end of the four-year service. During their serving period, 30 per cent of their salary will be set aside under a Seva Nidhi programme, and the government will contribute an equal amount every month, and it will also accrue interest. At the end of the four-year period, each soldier will get INR 11.71 lakh as a lump sum amount, which will be tax-free.
- They will also get an INR 48 lakh life insurance cover for the four years.
- In case of death, the payout will be over INR 1 crore, including pay for the unserved tenure. For 25% of soldiers, who are re-selected into service with higher ranks, the initial four-year period will not be considered for retirement benefits.
- There shall be no entitlement to gratuity and pensionary benefits.

### **Significance of the Agnipath Scheme**

The Agnipath Scheme is a game-changing project that will give the Army, Navy, and Air Force a young image. The major significance of the Agnipath Scheme are listed below:

- **All India, All Class Recruitment:** National unity, camaraderie, and bonding are the essence that the government is looking for from young Agniveers. The spirit will help in building national integration and would pave the path for nation-building through empowered youth.
- **Younger and Energetic Force:** The forces look for physically strenuous deployments, which is essential. A leaner and younger force will contribute in deployments, especially in high-altitude areas.
- **Reducing the Defense Bill:** This year's Budget estimate for defense pension is INR 1,33,826 Crore which is 4.4% of total expenditure or 0.6% of the GDP. Pensions made up 28.4% of this year's defense budget. The money saved through the scheme can be utilized to buy state-of-art technology and equipment of modern warfare.
- **Economic Benefits:** The skills and experience gained by the Agniveer will help in various fields of employment. A higher-skilled workforce will eventually help in productivity gain and overall GDP growth.
- **Standby Force:** The Agniveers could act as an Adhoc buffer force in times of war or emergency.

### Challenges of the Agnipath Scheme

No reform can be fool-proof and without troubles. Agnipath Scheme is no different; the scheme concerns national defense and security, so the Government needs to anticipate and address the problems that lie beyond their bold step forward. The challenges in the way of the scheme are:

- 'All India, all class' recruitment may lead to the erosion of the loyalty that a soldier has for his regiment, which was the recruitment method adopted.
- The absence of a pension and health benefits can act as a spoiler.

- The short training period may not be enough to trust the Agniveers with the same kind of tasks the current troops can be trusted with. This could compromise training, morale, and commitment.
- The ‘trained-to-kill’ soldiers being demobilized every year could prove dangerous if they remain jobless and frustrated. Many believe it may lead to the militarization of society.

