



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (Senior COSTEP)

The U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) offers a competitive program designed to assist students financially during their final year of professional school in return for an agreement to work for the PHS after graduation. The basic aspects of the Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (Senior COSTEP), are described below:

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for Senior COSTEP, a student must:

- be under the age of 44 at the time of CAD;
- meet medical standards;
- be free of any obligation or commitment that would conflict with extended active duty as a commissioned officer in PHS, such as Reserve Officers= Training Corps or any other military reserve program, or other educational financial assistance (stipend or scholarship), public or private whose terms could result in a conflict;
- be a U.S. citizen;
- pass a suitability review;
- be enrolled in an accredited health professional program;
- be flexible and mobile (accept assignment by sponsoring
- have at least 8 months educational commitment remaining in final year
- be a full-time student

The mission of the PHS Commissioned Corps is to provide highly-trained and mobile health professionals who carry out programs to promote the health of the Nation, understand and prevent disease and injury, assure safe and effective drugs and medical devices, deliver health service to Federal beneficiaries, and furnish health expertise in time of war or other national or international emergencies. As one of the seven Uniformed Services* of the United States, the commissioned corps is a specialized career system designed to attract, retain, and develop health professionals who may be assigned to Federal, State, local Agencies or international organizations to accomplish its mission.

To accomplish this mission, PHS programs are designed to: develop knowledge through biomedical, behavioral, and health services research leading to the prevention and treatment of disease; control and prevent disease; improve the health care system, including development of creative techniques in medical methodology; improve the mental health of the Nation; assure safe and effective drugs and healthful foods; expand health resources; and shape manpower, medical knowledge, technology, and other resources toward the goal of better health for all.

BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

As an active-duty PHS officer during the senior year, the student receives pay and allowances as an O-1 Officer (Ensign) of approximately \$2,300 per month plus Uniformed Services benefits.

There is a possibility of payment for tuition and fees depending upon the supporting agency or program. Upon graduation, participants are promoted to the rank of O-2 Officer (Lieutenant Junior Grade) with monthly pay and allowances of over \$2,400 plus Uniformed Services benefits. Senior COSTEP Nurse officers are required to obtain licensure prior to promotion.

Senior COSTEP is available for selected commissionable health professionals based upon PHS needs. Current selection priorities are directed toward students in the following disciplines: nursing, physician assistant, pharmacy, engineering, physical and occupational therapy.

PAYBACK OBLIGATION

Prior to entry into Senior COSTEP, the student agrees to work for PHS after graduation, for twice the time sponsored (i.e., an 18-month employment commitment for 9 months of financial support). Upon graduation, assignments are made to the program or agency that provided the financial support during Senior COSTEP. PHS Operating Divisions and Programs that may support Senior COSTEP include:

- Indian Health Service
- Food and Drug Administration
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- National Institutes of Health
- Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

To request a Senior COSTEP application, write to:

Division of Commissioned Personnel
ATTN: Senior COSTEP
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4A-18
Rockville, MD 20857-0001
301-594-3360 (or toll-free at 1-800-279-1605).
Internet address: ARANDALL@PSC.GOV

Applications must be postmarked no later than December 31.

*Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration