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## Commissioned Corps Application Process Change: Focus on Existing Applicant Pool

Throughout 2011, the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) received overwhelming interest in career opportunities with the Commissioned Corps. Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 we instituted an application process change to better serve the nearly 1,200 applications that had been received and were needed to be processed. For comparison, our calls-to-active duty in any given year have generally numbered approximately 500.

Even as applications more than doubled, we were undergoing a reorganization which adversely impacted our overall staffing assignments. Despite these challenges we have maintained a commitment to improving the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the application process to streamline functions, optimize performance and improve customer service.

To manage the current volume of applications amidst organizational and process changes, it was necessary for us to focus our efforts on professions, groups and positions of identified need. As of May 2012- and until further notice - the Commissioned Corps will only accept new application packets for the following professions and groups:

- Physicians and Dentists.
- CDC EIS candidates forwarded to USPHS from the Agency.
- IHS Pharmacy Residency candidates that have been forwarded from the Agency.
- USUHS candidates forwarded to USPHS from the program.
- DOD Wounded Warrior Initiative applicants (psychiatrists, psychologists and psychiatric nurse practitioner). <http://www.usphs.gov/aboutus/dod-hhs.aspx>

Since January 2012 the number of social worker applicants has greatly exceeded the need we currently have for the DOD Wounded Warrior Initiative. As such we will no longer be taking any additional social worker applications at this time. In addition, we are currently processing the selected applicants for the JR/SR COSTEP program and will no longer be accepting additional applications from students until next cycle. More information can be found on the Student Opportunity section of our current website.

In order to improve customer service and satisfaction, we will focus our efforts on new calls-to-active duty from our existing applicant pool of all professions and candidates. The intent is to assign existing applicants (and applicants within the groups listed above) as efficiently as possible to our Agencies and other customers. As we continue to call candidates to active duty, we will refine the application process to one that is more efficient and customer-centric.

In the interim, candidates and other customers are encouraged to continue to visit our website for updates on the application process. Additionally, beginning this July, there will be informational sessions (via webinar, conference call, etc.) for those interested to understand the new process for the future. In the mean time you are encouraged to review our newly renovated website for additional information about the Commissioned Corps.

The increased focus on calls-to-active duty from our existing applicant pool and additional emphasis on specific professions and groups will better meet the identified needs of our customers. **Once again, we will continue with calls-to-active duty throughout 2012.** Thank you for your understanding and patience as we work to improve our processes to better meet your needs.