



U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Opportunities

Who Are We?

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps is an elite team of more than 6,500 full-time, well-trained, highly qualified public health professionals dedicated to delivering the Nation's public health promotion and disease prevention programs and advancing public health science. Driven by a passion for public service, these men and women serve on the front lines in the Nation's fight against disease and poor health conditions. As one of America's seven uniformed services, the Commissioned Corps fills essential public health leadership and service roles within the Nation's Federal Government agencies and programs.



“It has always been and continues to be an honor to wear the uniform of the U.S. Public Health Service. The opportunities for officers in the Commissioned Corps are varied, interesting, and above all rewarding. Behavioral health officers conduct and apply important research, educate consumers and their health care

providers, and provide critical behavioral health services to those who are most in need. I am proud to serve alongside such a dedicated and able group of professionals. I can't imagine having had as great a career as I've had in this service, anywhere else.”

REAR ADMIRAL EPIFANIO (EPI) ELIZONDO
Chief Health Services Officer
U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

What Do Behavioral Health Officers Do?

Behavioral Health Officers are psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and psychiatric nurses who:

- Provide direct behavioral health care services
- Conduct basic and applied research
- Plan, prepare, respond and train for disaster responses
- Educate health care providers and consumers
- Serve as supervisors and administrators in health care, health research and regulatory agencies.

Providers join the Commissioned Corps at many different levels. Some join as newly licensed practitioners, while others are experienced experts trained in clinical specialties or research. Depending on your training background, psychological health providers are assigned to either the Health Services or the Scientist category and work all over the country, from Anchorage, AK to Beaver, WV. No matter whether you are providing patient care to Armed Services members at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii or heading up clinical trials at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, you will find an exciting and rewarding career awaits you!

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Quality of Practice

When you join the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps you become part of a diverse group of individuals who have a unique sense of purpose. Many career choices tend to lock you in to one career path. USPHS Behavioral Health Officers have many opportunities to work in a variety of agencies and to completely change career paths, if they chose. An early career psychologist or social work officer might choose to work in the Federal Bureau of Prisons or the Indian Health Service. Many officers work in those agencies for the full course of their USPHS career, advancing to higher levels of responsibility, becoming supervisors and managers with regional or national responsibilities. Other Behavioral Health Officers choose to move to other agencies. Behavioral Health Officers have worked in high level management positions in several federal agencies. They have worked in the Office of the Surgeon General, as emergency response coordinators for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, in violence prevention research at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in brain imaging research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and served in many other positions and at various agencies. A psychologist or social work officer has many career paths available.



Why You Should be a Behavioral Health Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

Where Are We Located?

Almost anywhere and everywhere in the country. Whether you prefer rural or urban, east or west, north or south, we have a location for you. Behavioral Health Officers work in a wide variety of federal agencies, including:

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)
- Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Department of Defense (DoD)
- Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Indian Health Service (IHS)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Office of the Secretary (OS)
- U.S. Coast Guard (CG)

Agency:
 State:
 Discipline:

Diverse Opportunities For Growth

In April 2008 the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and the Department of Defense (DoD) signed a historic partnership agreement. To meet the demands for psychological health services in our armed forces, Behavioral Health Officers in the USPHS can now serve on many Army, Navy, and Air Force installations. This partnership added many new career opportunities for our Behavioral Health Officers. Military installations have outpatient clinics and inpatient hospitals serving active duty military members, their immediate families, and military retirees. Behavioral Health Officers detailed to the DoD may work with children, adults, or the elderly and may see a full range of psychological health problems.



Quality of Life

Is your quality of life all that it could be? Is it important to you to have time to spend with your family and friends, doing the things you enjoy? As a Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service, you receive 30 days of annual leave plus 10 Federal holidays. Many duty stations operate Monday–Friday during normal business hours. This organization allows you to pursue life in literally hundreds of locations from the largest cities to the smallest communities near the oceans, the mountains, the Grand Canyon, the Gulf Coast or national parks. Be prepared to enjoy a camaraderie and sense of common purpose unlike anything you have yet experienced.



U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Benefits

Benefits

Commissioned Corps officers working for the U.S. Public Health Service enjoy the same benefits as their counter-parts in the armed services. Here are a few of them:

- No cost, comprehensive medical and dental care for Corps officers; excellent health benefits for families
- Paid sick leave, maternity leave, and Federal holidays
- Clinical practice liability coverage
- Thirty days of paid vacation per year beginning the first year
- Tax-free housing and meal allowances
- Thrift Savings plan (retirement savings and investment plan similar to a 401 (k))
- Retirement plan with benefits eligibility beginning after 20 years of service
- Loan repayment potential—USPHS understands the “financial burden of medical education. Assignments with certain Federal agencies, such as the Indian Health Service, offer loan repayment and/or other educational and family support programs.
- Veterans benefits, including the Post 9/11 GI Bill and the Montgomery GI Bill are available to provide educational benefits for PHS officers and, as appropriate, their family members.

Join America’s Public Health Team!

If you are a psychological health professional or a psychological health student interested in joining the fight for public health, or if you have questions about what we do and how you can make a difference with the Commissioned Corps, we would like to talk to you. For more information, call us at 800-279-1605 or visit our Web site at www.usphs.gov.



Pay Grade	Rank	Total Years Training + Experience
O-1	Ensign	Commissioned Officer Student Extern Program (COSTEP)
O-2	Lieutenant Junior Grade	4–8 Years
O-3	Lieutenant	8–17 Years
O-4	Lieutenant Commander	17 Years–or More

All supporting documents must accompany application for commissioning in order to determine entry pay grade.

Did you know you can:

- Enjoy fantastic medical and dental benefits for you and your family
- Use military bases around the world
- Use the GI Bill to advance your education later on in life
- Contribute pre-tax income to the Thrift Savings Plan

Additional Uniformed Service Benefits

The Commissioned Corps offers you and your family many other exceptional benefits including:

- Paid moving expenses when you join the Corps, relocate with the Corps, and retire from the Corps.
- Access to military base lodging, recreational facilities and space-available flights on military aircraft.
- Shopping privileges at military base grocery and department stores.



U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Next Steps

USPHS Behavioral Health Officer Qualifications

All Commissioned Corps officers must meet several basic qualifications: You must be a U.S. citizen, be less than 44 years of age (higher if prior AD service), and pass a physical examination and meet relevant suitability requirements. To be a Behavioral Health Officer, you also need the following:

Psychologists

- Must have a qualifying doctoral degree in clinical psychology from an American Psychological Association accredited university or professional psychology program.
- Must have a current, unrestricted, and valid license as a clinical psychologist from a U.S. state; the District of Columbia; Commonwealth; Territory; or other jurisdiction.
- An APA accredited pre-doctoral internship may be required for assignments in some agencies, but is not required for all PHS assignments.

Psychiatrists

- A M.D. from a U.S. program that is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Medical Association (AMA), or a foreign medical school that is listed on the International Medical Education Directory of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research and passed the ECFMG requirements.

- Successful completion of 1 year of postgraduate medical education (internship or first year of residency training) in a program which, at the time the training was undertaken, was accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education of the American Medical Association.

Psychiatric Nurses

- Bachelor's degree or a master's degree (with no qualifying baccalaureate degree) from a nursing program that is accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- Current, unrestricted, and valid registered nurse license from one of the 50 States; Washington, DC; the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; the U.S. Virgin Islands; or Guam
- Passing score on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)

Social Workers

- Must have a qualifying Master's degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).
- Must have a current, unrestricted, and valid license that allows for independent clinical social work practice in any of the 50 States; Washington, DC; the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; the U.S. Virgin Islands; or Guam.



Psychiatrist, CAPT Andreason





U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Next Steps (Continued)

USPHS Behavioral Health Officer Qualifications (Continued)

Social Workers

- Must have a qualifying Master’s degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social work Education (CSWE).
- Must have a current, unrestricted, and valid license that allows for independent clinical social work practice in any of the 50 States; Washington, DC; the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; the U.S. Virgin Islands; or Guam.

Student Loan Opportunities

By the time many graduate students complete a doctoral degree and look for a first job, they have a six figure student loan debt going back to undergrad studies. Student loan repayment and forgiveness programs are available to many USPHS Behavioral Health Officers and can make a tremendous difference in standard of living in those early career years when many young professionals are saddled with large student loan debt and relatively small starting salaries. Student loan programs available to many of our Behavioral Health Officers include, the Indian Health Service loan repayment program, <http://www.loanrepayment.ihs.gov/>, the National Health Service Corps

program, the Income-Based Repayment plan and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness programs. Many, but not necessarily all, psychologist and social workers qualify for one or more of these programs. These student loan programs are generally not available to professionals in private practice.



Who Do I Contact?

Specialty and Contact Person

ALL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	AGENCY	EMAIL	PHONE
LCDR Christopher Dunbar	DoD	christopher.dunbar@hhs.go	240-453-6045
Mr. Meredith Hauptmann	AHRQ	Meredith.Hauptmann@ahrq.hhs.gov	301-427-1740
CAPT Doris Ravenell-Brown	CDC	DRavenellBrown@cdc.gov	404-498-1800
CAPT Russell Green	FDA	Russell.Green@fda.hhs.gov	301-827-4127
Ms. Penny Coppola	HRSA	pcoppola@hrsa.gov	301-594-4888
CAPT Carol Lincoln	IHS	Carol.Lincoln@ihs.gov	301-443-4872
CDR Tiffany Edmonds	NIH	Tiffany.Edmonds@nih.hhs.gov	301-402-0261
Ms. Robin Moore	OS	Robin.Moore@hhs.gov	202-260-2306
CAPT Marjorie Wallace	SAMHSA	Marjorie.Wallace@samhsa.hhs.gov	240-276-1335
CAPT Ben Brown	BOP	bxbrown@bop.gov	202-353-4129
CAPT Wade McConnell	DHS	Wade.b.mcconnell@uscg.mil	202-475-5186
LCDR Ermias Zerislassie	St. Elizabeths	Ermias.zerislassie@dc.gov	202-645-9938
SOCIAL WORK	AGENCY	EMAIL	PHONE
CDR Rafael Duenas	BOP	coa2998@bop.gov	352-689-5155
LCDR Deloris Caldwell	HRSA	DCaldwell@hrsa.gov	504-941-6041
LCDR Jamie Seligman	SAMHSA	Jamie.Seligman@samhsa.hhs.gov	240-276-1855