



## U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Opportunities

### Who Are We?

The United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS) 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.



**“I invite you to consider the USPHS Nursing Corps as a ‘Cure for the Common Career’ and as a means to fully utilize a prevention- focused, evidence-based, holistic nursing model of care to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our Nation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.”**

**RADM Kerry Paige Nessler**  
Chief Nurse Officer  
U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

### Did you know you can?

Nurse Officers in the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps focus on advancing the health of the nation.

### What Nurse Officers Do

Nurse Officers in the United States Public Health Service:

- Promote the public health of the Nation
- Provide nursing care to underserved and disadvantaged populations
- Expand knowledge through biomedical, behavioral, and health services research leading to the prevention and treatment of disease
- Improve the health care system, including development of innovations in health care and the expansion of a diverse workforce
- Ensure the safe and effective use of drugs and medical devices
- Provide urgently needed public health and clinical expertise in response to large-scale local, regional, national, and global public health emergencies and disasters

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### Federal Public Health Service Nursing Mission & Vision

#### Vision

Health outcomes are optimal and health disparities are eliminated for all people through the promotion of wellness and disease prevention efforts.

#### Mission

To enhance and improve health and safety outcomes through leadership, education, and research by providing exceptional, culturally competent, holistic nursing services to all people.

### Quality of Practice

USPHS nurses have the opportunity to go beyond the traditional settings and serve populations that are underserved, medically isolated, and/or otherwise vulnerable. As a PHS officer, you will be affecting the lives of many through clinical practice, research, regulation, and program management, among other functions. When you join our Corps as a nurse officer, you will make a real difference while enjoying work/life balance and excellent benefits.



# Why You Should be a Nurse Officer in the United States 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. Nurses can be employed as Commissioned Officers across the country, in locations such as:

### HHS Agencies

- Indian Health Service
- Food and Drug Administration
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- National Institutes of Health
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

### Non-HHS Agencies

- Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Immigration Health Services
- U.S. Marshall's Service

## DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Are you ready for a fulfilling career and the experience of a lifetime? When you join the United States Public Health Service, you become part of an intra-professional group of officers who have a unique sense of purpose. Your commitment and willingness to take part in this opportunity will be rewarded with work in a variety of health delivery settings, collegial environments, and the chance to work with vulnerable and diverse populations, all on behalf of an appreciative nation.

Finding the USPHS career that is right for you is made easier because of the diverse agencies and professional settings you can work in. In fact, a variety of opportunities are available right now that will allow you to practice and advance your clinical competencies. Whether you are a new graduate seeking a meaningful way to start your career, or an experienced nurse looking for a new opportunity, you'll be surrounded by dedicated, like-minded colleagues who have chosen to serve others.

Agency:

State:

Discipline:

MULTIPLE	AHRQ	ATSDR	BOP	CDC	CMS
DHS	DOC	DoD	EPA	FDA	HRSA
IHS	NIH	NPS	OS	PSC	SAMHSA
USDA	USMS				





# United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Benefits

## Benefits

Commissioned Corps officers working for the United States Public Health Service enjoy the same benefits as their counterparts in the other uniformed services. Here are 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
- Non-taxed housing, dependent on location
- Optional 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 nursing education. Assignments with certain Federal agencies, such as the Indian Health Service, offer loan repayment and/or other educational programs
- Veterans Affairs benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill and/or Post 9/11 GI Bill to receive a monthly education benefit upon completing a minimum service obligation

The United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps offers all newly commissioned Nurses a \$25,000 accession bonus when they sign a 4-year active-duty agreement. For nurses who sign a 3-year active-duty agreement, the Corps offers an accession bonus of \$20,000.

For a full description of benefits, click here:  
<http://www.usphs.gov/profession/nurse/compensation.aspx>

## Retirement Annuity:

Commissioned Corps Nurses may be eligible to receive a non-contributory retirement annuity. Active duty personnel may be eligible to retire after 20 years of active duty service. These benefits begin immediately when you retire compared to many plans that do not begin to pay until age 62. Retirees may also receive annual cost of living adjustments.

## Insurance:

Medical benefits are available to you and your family members with no premiums, deductibles, or co-pays for covered medical benefits if located within the catchment area of a military treatment facility. Nominal deductibles and co-pays apply to your family (not the officer) if you do not live near a military facility. Dental benefits are available at no cost to the officer and a nominal charge for family members. Life insurance is available at extremely low rates. Out of pocket malpractice insurance is not necessary when practicing in a federal facility.

## Other:

Commissioned officers and their dependents have access to military bases, exchanges, guest housing, and commissaries. They are also eligible to travel at low cost on Air Mobility Command (AMC) flights. Moving expenses to a new duty station are paid for by the government. Commissioned officers may qualify for the G.I. Bill to supplement additional educational pursuits. Officers may also qualify for VA home loans.



## 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 Nurse Officer Qualifications

To be a nurse in the USPHS Commissioned Corps, you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be under the age of 44 at the time of your commission, although age waivers may be given based on consideration of advanced training, certain duty assignments and specialty requirements
- Pass a physical examination and meet relevant suitability requirements

You also will need a:

- 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)

If you just graduated from nursing school and do not yet have a license, you may still apply to the Commissioned Corps. Your call to active duty will occur when you have secured an assignment.

## Nursing Student Opportunities

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps offers two excellent opportunities for students to serve their country while completing their nursing education. If you are interested in a public health career, we encourage you to apply to the Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) and the Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP). Both programs offer excellent benefits and are highly competitive.

If you have questions about COSTEP, please visit our website at <http://www.usphs.gov/student/COSTEP.aspx>.

## Join America's Public Health Team!

If you are a nurse or a nursing 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](http://www.usphs.gov).

