



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

OPNAVINST 1120.8A
N1/PERS-3
3 OCT 2011

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1120.8A

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: APPOINTMENT OF REGULAR AND RESERVE OFFICERS IN THE
MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OF THE NAVY

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1310.02 of 8 May 2007
(b) Program Authorization 115, Direct Appointment in the
Medical Service Corps (MSC)
(c) OPNAVINST 1210.5
(d) SECNAVINST 1000.7F
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.04 of 27 December 2006
(f) DoD Directive 1205.05 of 22 April 2004
(g) 10 U.S.C.
(h) DoD Instruction 6000.13 of 30 June 97
(i) DoD Instruction 1312.03 of 6 October 2006
(j) SECNAVINST 1420.1B
(k) OPNAVINST 1520.39
(l) Program Authorization 130, Armed Forces Health
Professions Scholarship Program (AFHPSP)
(m) Program Authorization 132, Health Services Collegiate
Program (HSCP)
(n) OPNAVINST 1420.1B
(o) SECNAVINST 5300.28D
(p) NAVMED P-117, Manual of the Medical Department
(q) SECNAVINST 1920.6C
(r) NAVPERS 15839I, Manual of Navy Officer Manpower and
Personnel Classifications, Volume I
(s) OPNAVINST 1427.2
(t) DoD 6025.13-R, Military Health System Clinical
Quality Assurance Program Regulation, 11 June 2004

1. Purpose. To issue regulations governing:

a. Appointment of officers in the Regular and Reserve components of the Medical Service Corps (MSC) under references (a) and (b), officers transferred from the line community or another staff corps into the MSC under reference (c), interservice transfer from another uniformed service under references (d) and (e) and the transfer of members between Regular and Reserve components of the Military Services under reference (f).

b. Award of entry grade credit on appointment in the MSC under reference (g), sections 533 and 12207, and under references (h) and (i).

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 1120.8.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all individuals appointed as Regular and Reserve officers in the MSC, including officers transferred from another uniformed service, Reserve officers transferred into the Regular component, Reserve officers recalled voluntarily to the active duty list (ADL), and officers transferred from the line community or another staff corps into the MSC.

4. Policy. The Department of the Navy will maintain authorized strength and grade levels in the MSC and its approved specialties by recruiting the personnel required to support the annual 5-year promotion plan approved under reference (j), to provide a base for an all Regular career force, and to attain authorized strength in the Reserve component to meet approved requirements for mobilization.

a. Requirements for newly appointed officers on the ADL will be filled from diverse programs, which include direct procurement of qualified civilians under reference (b), Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program (AFHPSP) under references (k) and (l), Health Sciences Collegiate Program (HSCP) under reference (m) and In-service Procurement Program (IPP) under reference (n). Any other request for active duty commission will be handled on a case by case basis.

b. Requirements for Regular officers on the ADL in control grades that cannot be met by promotion may be supplemented by voluntary recall to active duty of officers from the Reserve component qualified in the approved specialties.

c. Requirements for the Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve will be filled primarily through transfer of officers from the ADL. Requirements that cannot be met from this source will be met through direct procurement of former military officers and other civilians qualified in the approved specialties.

5. Accessions Plans

a. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (DCNO (N1)) will establish an annual accession plan for the Active and Reserve components which, together with retention incentives, will attain authorized strength in each of the specialties in the MSC. There must be sufficient accessions to support the annual 5-year promotion plans for the active duty force and inactive duty Reserve component and ensure that the promotion opportunity and flow points necessary to meet authorized strength-in-grade requirements are maintained.

b. In determining the proportions of accession programs used to attain and maintain specialty authorizations, both the current and projected supply and demand for officers in each of the approved specialties shall be considered. Maximum use of the most effective program, relative to cost and time to attain, will be used in preference to more expensive programs. Plans will ensure flexibility in adjusting to changes in the civilian market and in specialty requirements. Reasonable career progression opportunities for the authorized strength of entry-level applicants shall be maintained.

6. Basic Qualifications. To be eligible for appointment as a MSC officer in either the Active or Reserve component, or for voluntary recall from the Reserve component to the Active component, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

a. Citizenship. Must be a citizen of the United States;

b. Entry Age

(1) Entry age eligibility criteria are established to meet three goals:

(a) Attain the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act objective of an all Regular career force;

(b) Maintain an officer corps to meet arduous duty requirements, such as duty at sea and in hostile locations; and

(c) Define a recruiting pool large enough to meet accession requirements.

(2) Active and Reserve MSC applicants must be commissioned before their 42nd birthday. On a limited case by case basis, Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (COMNAVCRUITCOM) is granted waiver authority for applicants between ages 42 and 57. Waivers cannot be sub-delegated below the flag level and COMNAVCRUITCOM shall maintain on file written justification for each waiver granted.

(3) All waiver requests shall be coordinated through the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) and the Officer Community Manager (BUPERS-31). When considering an age waiver request, strong emphasis shall be placed on undermanned specialties and those with a pattern of missed recruitment goals.

(4) Active and Reserve applicants age 58 or older who possess critical skills as designated by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD(HA)) may be considered for an exception to the age waiver policy if they can complete a full 3-year service obligation. DCNO (N1) is the waiver authority for applicants age 58 or older. Reserve MSC applicants requesting an age waiver are governed by reference (g), section 14703, and are restricted to a maximum age of 67. Reserve MSC applicants desiring retention beyond the age of 62 must formally request to be retained via a personal letter and command endorsement. Endorsements from higher authorities other than the reporting senior will be accepted but are not required. Only the command endorsement is required to process the request.

c. Moral Character. Must be of good moral character and of unquestioned loyalty to the United States as determined by interview and investigation. Per reference (o), individuals who are drug or alcohol dependent, who abuse drugs or alcohol, whose pre-service abuse of drugs or alcohol indicates a proclivity to continue abuse in the service, or who have a record of any drug trafficking offenses, shall not be permitted to enter the MSC.

d. Physical Standards. Must meet the physical standards for service on active duty as recommended by the Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) and approved by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). DCNO (N1), upon BUMED recommendation, may waive physical defects that will not interfere with performance of active duty within the guidelines of reference (p).

e. Availability for Mobilization. Appointments in the Reserve component not on the ADL are predicated upon mobilization requirements and the applicants' availability for mobilization. Members of Congress, Federal political appointees, elected State and local government officials, and Federal career Senior Executive Service (SES) employees may not be tendered an original direct appointment without prior approval of DCNO (N1).

f. Indoctrination Requirements. Officers appointed directly to the ADL must complete an officer indoctrination training course prior to reporting to their first duty station. Officers appointed directly into the Reserve component must complete a Reserve officer indoctrination training course during their first year.

g. Failure to Complete Initial Training Requirements. Officers who fail to complete officer indoctrination requirements shall be separated for cause under reference (q).

7. Professional Qualifications. To be eligible for appointment in the MSC or for voluntary recall from the Reserve component to the ADL, the applicant must meet the following educational requirements:

a. Applicants must meet the professional education requirements set forth in the governing instructions and program authorizations.

b. Prior to commissioning, direct accession applicants for the following specialties must be certified, licensed or registered by one of the individual States, District of Columbia, or appropriate national accrediting agency as specified in reference (b):

Clinical Psychologist	Pharmacist
Podiatrist	Dietitian
Physical Therapist	Social Worker
Optometrist	Physician Assistant
Occupational Therapist	Audiologist

c. AFHPSP and HSCP appointees who do not attain required licensure or certification prior to or within 1 year of appointment may be separated under reference (q).

d. Applicants for the MSC IPP are guided by the program requirements and application procedures as stated in reference (m).

8. Examination of Professional Qualifications. The Chief, BUMED, MSC Special Assistant Corps Chief (M00C4) shall review the credentials and examine the professional qualifications of all applicants for appointment in the MSC or for voluntary recall of a Reserve officer to active duty.

a. Direct Appointments. BUMED (M00C4) shall examine and certify the professional qualifications of all applicants and the completeness and authenticity of the individual credentials file or individual professional file, as applicable.

b. Voluntary Recall. Reserve and retired officers to be voluntarily recalled to active duty must be currently licensed, certified, and or engaged in the practice of the MSC specialty for which recalled and provide documentation necessary to recertify professional qualifications required in paragraph 7 above. BUMED (M00C4) shall recertify qualifications specified for appointment in paragraph 7. Recalled officers within the same specialty will retain the rank held in the Reserve component without recomputation of entry grade.

c. Professional Review Procedure

(1) BUMED (M00C4) shall appoint an MSC professional review board (PRB) to examine the professional qualifications of all applicants. The board shall be composed of senior MSC officers assigned to the National Capital Region, with input from MSC specialty leaders or assistant specialty leaders. The senior member of the board shall be in the grade of captain or above.

(2) The board will review the applicant's credentials, including academic performance, post-graduate education, professional and managerial experience, professional recognition such as membership in professional societies and authorship of professional publications, professional reputation, current experience in a primary specialty, and level of certification or licensure. This review must be completed, based on the

documentation requirements specified in this instruction, before recommending qualifications for appointment or recall and entry grade credit to be awarded an appointment.

(3) The board shall recommend to BUMED (M00C4) which specific qualifications of the table in paragraph 9 are met; recommend entry grade credit for those qualifications; and provide an evaluation of the quality and desirability of the candidate based on their professional qualifications and experience in the MSC specialty for which being considered. The board shall make its report directly to BUMED (00C4) without intervening endorsements or clearances.

(4) BUMED (M00C4) shall make their approval directly to DCNO (N1), or designee, without intervening endorsements or clearances.

(5) Once BUMED (M00C4) has approved the applicant's professional qualifications, DCNO (N1) shall determine whether the applicant is otherwise qualified for a commission as a MSC officer in the specialty for which designated. DCNO (N1) may delegate this authority to COMNAVCRUITCOM with appropriate guidelines.

9. Entry Grade Credit. A prospective MSC officer's entry grade and rank within grade shall be determined by the number of years of entry grade credit awarded on original appointment, designation, or assignment as an MSC officer. The entry grade credit to be awarded shall equal the sum of constructive service credit and prior commissioned service credit (other than as a commissioned warrant officer), except in cases where the total exceeds the maximum credit allowed, and as stated in the below table. A period of time shall be counted only once when computing entry grade credit. Prior commissioned service credit includes commissioned service on active duty or in an active status as a commissioned officer as required by references (h) and (i). Constructive service credit includes credit for advanced education and training and may also include credit for professional experience. Entry grade credit will be subject to the computation and maximum credit criteria in paragraphs 10 and 11 and as specified in the following table.

ENTRY GRADE CREDIT TABLE

	PRIOR COMMISSIONED SERVICE CREDIT	CREDIT
1.	Commissioned service on active duty in an active status as an MSC officer in any of the uniformed services in the specialty being appointed.	1 year for each year.
2.	Commissioned service on active duty or in an active status as a commissioned officer in any of the uniformed services but not in the corps or professional specialty being appointed.	1/2 year for each year.
	CONSTRUCTIVE SERVICE CREDIT	CREDIT
3.	Within the specialty being appointed, successful completion of qualifying degree for each MSC specialty authorized by the CNO and identified by a specialty classification code in reference (r), part E. The qualifying degrees and level required are specified in the program authorization.	1 year for each year (2 years maximum for masters, 4 years maximum for Doctor of Philosophy or doctoral degrees).
4.	Within the specialty being appointed, successful completion of post-baccalaureate professional education in the health care and science areas such as residencies in optometry, pharmacy, and podiatry which are approved by an accrediting agency.	1 year for each year (maximum 2 years).

	CONSTRUCTIVE SERVICE CREDIT	CREDIT
5.	Experience in a related health profession or specialty may be credited. Such experience must be comparable to experience in, and will be directly used in, the MSC specialty in which being appointed.	1/2 year for each year of experience up to a maximum of 3 years credit. (If 6 months experience or less, no credit will be granted).
6.	In unusual cases, additional credit may be granted for special professional experience in the specialty in which appointed when that experience is accrued after obtaining the qualifying degree. This additional credit applies only to individuals who have an experience level that uniquely distinguishes that from the normal qualifications required for appointment as a commissioned officer. Maximum credit for experience must be earned under section 5 of this table before earning any experience credit under this paragraph. Credit under this provision will not be given to health professionals solely on the basis of special experience that is unassociated with advanced education or an advanced degree.	1 year for each year of special professional experience (if 6 months experience or less no credit will be granted).

10. Limits and Computation of Entry Grade Credit. Entry grade credit shall be computed as follows:

a. A period of time or special qualification shall be counted only once;

b. Qualifying period of less than 1 full year shall be credited proportionately to the nearest day except where noted otherwise;

- c. Credit will not be awarded for service as an enlisted member, warrant officer, or commissioned warrant officer;
- d. In general, credit will not be granted for work experience prior to the qualifying degree;
- e. Credit will not be awarded for qualifying degrees earned while on active duty in a commissioned status;
- f. Graduates of the service academies will not be awarded credit for service performed or education, training or experience obtained before graduation from the academy; and
- g. The recall of an MSC officer in the Reserve component not on the ADL is not an original appointment; therefore, such officers are not entitled to additional entry grade credit.

11. Maximum Entry Grade Credit. Total entry grade credit granted shall normally be limited to 6 years. After considering the recommendations of DCNO (N1), Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN(M&RA)) may waive the 6-year limit to a maximum of 8 years on a case by case basis in the following circumstances:

a. For appointment as a Regular officer for service on the ADL. When there is a shortage against authorized strength in the MSC specialty for which the appointee is nominated which cannot be met by:

(1) Direct and inservice procurement of qualified health professionals in the grades of lieutenant commander and below;

(2) Voluntary recall to active duty of qualified Reserve officers;

(3) In-zone promotion under the 5-year promotion plan approved by Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV); and

(4) When a gross inequity to the applicant would otherwise result.

b. For appointment in the Reserve component. When there is a shortage against authorized strength in the MSC specialty for which the appointee is nominated which cannot be met by:

- (1) Transfer of officers from the ADL;
- (2) Direct procurement of qualified health professionals in the grades of lieutenant commander and below;
- (3) In-zone promotion under the 5-year promotion plan approved by SECNAV; and
- (4) When a gross inequity to the applicant would otherwise result.

12. Entry Grade Credit in Transition Period. This instruction provides for entry grade credit to be awarded to individuals being appointed in the MSC from the effective date of this instruction. There shall be no retroactive changes as a result of this instruction to the entry grade credit granted to officers appointed in the MSC prior to the date of this instruction.

13. Appointments. Appointments in the MSC shall be made subject to the following guidance:

a. Entry Grade. A prospective MSC officer who is not awarded entry grade credit under the Service Credit Table shall be appointed in the grade of ensign with the date of rank coinciding with the date of appointment. A prospective MSC officer who is awarded entry grade credit under the Service Credit Table shall be appointed in a grade based on total entry grade credit awarded under reference (h). The minimum entry grade credit required for each grade is equal to the promotion flow points prescribed in the approved annual 5-year promotion plan in effect at the time of appointment. Under references (d) and (e), officers transferred from other uniformed services into the MSC of the Navy shall continue to hold the same grade and date of rank held in the losing uniformed service except as provided in reference (e).

b. Date of Rank. When the minimum entry grade credit required for appointment in a given grade is granted, the date of rank shall be the date of appointment. When entry grade credit is granted in excess of the minimum years required for appointment in a given grade, but less than the amount necessary to justify the next higher grade, the excess credit shall be used to adjust the date of rank within grade.

c. Assignment of Precedence. Each appointee will be placed on the ADL as follows:

(1) Appointees ordered to active duty or retained on active duty (other than reserve officers on active duty for special work (ADSW) as described in reference (f), section 641(1), incident to appointment shall be placed on the ADL under reference (s).

(2) Officers in the grades of lieutenant, lieutenant commander, and commander, in-zone and above-zone eligible officers whose placement on the ADL is within 1 year of the convening dates of selection boards, are automatically deferred unless they specifically request to be considered. Under reference (j), the officer may waive this deferment and request consideration for promotion, in writing, to the Active and Reserve Officer Career Progression Division (PERS-80) at the Navy Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM) as follows: Navy Personnel Command (PERS-80), 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-8000. NAVPERSCOM (PERS-80) must receive the request prior to the convening of the board.

(3) Appointees not concurrently ordered to or retained on active duty other than ADSW described in reference (f), section 641(1), and shall be placed on the inactive duty precedence list in an active status under reference (s).

14. Application Processing

a. To facilitate rapid application processing, DCNO (N1) will establish all military and professional documentation required for the application.

b. Completed applications for appointment on the ADL shall be forwarded to COMNAVCRUITCOM expeditiously.

c. Prospective appointees awaiting authorization for appointment in grades commander and above may be appointed in a grade of lieutenant commander pending approval of the higher grade. Officers who accept appointments in the lower grade may at their option be voluntarily separated if the grade for which nominated is not approved.

d. The professional credential documents must be obtained from the issuing source or validated for authenticity through contact with the issuing source or a secondary source approved by the Surgeon General to meet the requirements of reference (t).

e. COMNAVCRUITCOM shall notify DCNO (N1) and ASN(M&RA) when "high visibility" candidates are being considered for direct appointment in the inactive duty Reserve component. Such candidates include high-named-recognition individuals not connected with the government and non-SES government officials who occupy positions of significant responsibility.

15. Responsibilities

a. DCNO (N1) shall:

(1) Procure and appoint MSC officers per this instruction;

(2) Establish the annual accession plan for the active duty force and the inactive duty Reserve component;

(3) Approve entry grade credit and establish entry grades and dates of rank of MSC officers per the guidelines in this instruction;

(4) Ensure that all direct accession applications are processed within the maximum time standard in this instruction; and

(5) Propose changes in the policies governed by reference (i) for submission by ASN(M&RA) to ASD(HA).

b. BUMED (M00C4) shall:

(1) Certify professional qualifications and provide the calculation of entry grade credit to DCNO (N1); and

(2) Establish the MSC PRB and review qualifications under reference (b).

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c. COMNAVCUITCOM shall:


(1) Determine grade and date of rank based on calculations provided by BUMED (M00C4), subject to approval of DCNO (N1), per the guidelines in this instruction;

(2) Maintain statistical data required for preparation of summary reports for ASN(M&RA) and for special reports when required by the ASD(HA); and

(3) Prepare for DCNO (N1) the annual summary report and supplementary information required by reference (g) and paragraphs 13 and 15 of this instruction.

16. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format and media, shall be managed per SECNAV Manual (M-)5210.1 of November 2007.

17. Reports. The PRB reports required by paragraph 8c are exempt from reports control per SECNAV M-5214.1 of December 2005.



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