



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

OPNAVINST 1120.7A  
N1/BUPERS-31  
20 APR 2012

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1120.7A

From: Chief of Naval Operations

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

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1310.02 of 8 May 2007  
(b) Program Authorization 116  
(c) OPNAVINST 1210.5  
(d) SECNAVINST 1000.7F  
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.04 of 27 December 2006  
(f) DoD Instruction 1205.05 of 30 March 2012  
(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) SECNAV M-5510.30 of 1 Jun 2006  
(l) SECNAVINST 5300.28E  
(m) NAVMED P-117  
(n) SECNAVINST 1920.6C  
(o) NAVPERS 15839I  
(p) OPNAVINST 1427.2  
(q) DoD 6025.13-R of 11 June 2004

1. Purpose. To revise regulations governing:

a. Appointment of officers in the Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) of the Nurse Corps (NC), under references (a) and (b), and in either component through lateral or inter-service transfers under references (c) through (f).

b. Voluntary recall of NC officers transferred to the active duty list (ADL).

c. Award of entry grade credit on appointment in the NC under references (g), (h), and (i).

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 1120.7.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all individuals appointed as regular and reserve officers in the NC and should be reviewed in its entirety.

4. Policy. The Department of the Navy will maintain authorized strength and grade levels in the NC 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 RC 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 civilian registered nurses, Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC), Nurse Candidate Program (NCP), Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECP), and Seaman to Admiral-21 (STA-21) graduates. All initial appointments shall be in the Regular Navy, designator 2900.

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 RC qualified in the approved specialties.

c. Requirements for the Selected Reserve (SELRES) and Individual Ready Reserve will be filled primarily through transfer of officers from the ADL via the career transition office following a recommendation by the Professional Review Board (PRB). Requirements that cannot be met from this source will be met through direct procurement.

#### 5. Accession Plan

a. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (DCNO (MPTE) (N1)) will establish an annual accession plan for the AC and RC which together with retention incentives, will attain authorized strength in each of the specialties in the NC.

b. In determining the proportions of accession programs used to attain and maintain specialty authorizations, both the current and projected supply and demand for nurses in each of the approved nursing specialties shall be considered. Maximum

use of the most effective program relative to cost and time to attain NC officers and account of continuation rates will be used. Programs 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 nurses shall be maintained.

6. Basic Qualifications. To be eligible for appointment as an NC officer in either the AC or RC, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

a. Citizenship. Must be a citizen of the United States and pass a personnel security investigation as identified in reference (k).

b. Entry Age. The entry age standard for appointment in the AC and RC is that the applicant be able to attain 20 years of active commissioned service by age 62. Age waivers may be granted for continuation beyond statutory separation or retirement under reference (g) when a manning shortfall exists against authorized strength in a nursing specialty.

(1) Age Limit Waivers. The maximum age qualification for initial appointment may be waived for applicants who do not exceed age 47 at time of commissioning on a case-by-case basis for direct commission and reserve recall. Emphasis will be placed on undermanned specialties and those with a pattern of missed recruitment goals. NCP, MECP, STA-21 and NROTC program age limits remain unchanged and applicants for these programs are **not** eligible for age 47 waiver consideration. Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (COMNAVCRUITCOM) is granted waiver authority. All waiver requests shall be coordinated through the Bureau of Naval Personnel and the Officer Community Manager (BUPERS-315).

(2) Applicant Acknowledgement of Age Limitations. Before appointment in the AC or RC, applicants who will be unable to complete 20 years of active commissioned or credible service by age 62 will be required to acknowledge in writing that they are ineligible for a regular appointment.

(3) Record of Age Waivers Authorized. COMNAVCRUITCOM, acting for DCNO (MPTE) (N1), shall maintain on file written justification for each waiver granted.

c. Moral Character. Must be of good moral character and of unquestioned loyalty to the United States as determined by interview and investigation. As prescribed in reference (l), individuals who are chemically dependent, who abuse drugs or alcohol, whose pre-service abuse of drugs or alcohol indicates a proclivity for continued abuse, or who has a record of any drug trafficking offenses, shall not be permitted to enter the NC.

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

e. Availability for Mobilization. Appointments in the RC, 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 the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV).

7. Professional Qualifications. To be eligible for appointment in the NC or for voluntary recall from the RC to the ADL, applicants must meet the following requirements:

a. Education

(1) Must be a graduate of a school of nursing accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) that conferred a nursing baccalaureate or an advanced nursing degree.

(2) Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA), Nurse Practitioners (NP), and Certified Nurse Midwives (CNM) must have graduated from a graduate educational program approved by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Educational Programs or Schools and have passed the certification examination from a professional specialty organization.

(3) Students in their final academic year of a baccalaureate degree-nursing program may be accepted for a delayed appointment subject to successful completion of their degree program.

(4) Graduates of foreign schools of nursing who obtained their Bachelors of Science in Nursing Degree from an institution outside the United States which is not accredited by the NLNAC or CCNE are eligible for commissioning upon meeting the following criteria:

(a) Awarded a Bachelor or Master of Science in Nursing from a NLNAC or CCNE accredited program.

(b) Has demonstrated oral and written English language proficiency.

(c) Is licensed as a registered professional nurse per paragraph 7b.

(d) Nursing programs must have been accredited as stated in paragraph 7a(1) at the time the degree was conferred.

b. License. Must possess a current license, in good standing, to practice as a registered professional nurse from a State, territory or commonwealth of the United States, or the District of Columbia, awarded upon successful completion of the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

(1) Before appointment, applicants will be required to acknowledge in writing that they are aware of license requirements. All NC officers in the AC and RC are required to obtain, possess and maintain an active and current license to practice as a registered professional nurse. The expense of obtaining and maintaining a license to practice as a registered professional nurse is the responsibility of the individual.

(2) Recent baccalaureate degree nursing graduates including those granted delayed appointment, or selected for appointment through either the NCP or direct accession must pass the NCLEX prior to reporting for active duty.

(3) Recent baccalaureate degree nursing graduates who attended a Navy NC pipeline program while in an active duty

status may be appointed before licensure, but must take the NCLEX to become a registered professional nurse at the first opportunity following graduation.

c. Failure to Obtain Licensure

(1) Any NC officer who fails to obtain the required professional licensure after three unsuccessful NCLEX attempts will be processed for re-designation per reference (n).

(2) Once an individual has been placed in the re-designation board process by BUPERS-315, the re-designation process will not be rescinded, even if the member successfully completes the NCLEX.

(3) Officers not selected for re-designation or retention will be administratively discharged per reference (n).

(a) Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN (M&RA)) may relieve an officer of incurred active duty obligation, considering the comments and recommendations of DCNO (MPTE) (N1), when such action would be in the best interest of the naval service.

(b) Officers with no incurred active duty obligations and officers for whom active duty obligation has been waived shall be separated for cause under reference (n).

d. Certification. CRNAs, NPs, and CNMs must obtain, possess and maintain certification by a nationally recognized professional organization.

e. Failure to Obtain Certification. Advanced practice NC officers who fail to obtain certification after three unsuccessful attempts will be reverted back to their primary NC specialty.

f. Indoctrination Requirements

(1) All newly appointed officers of the NC (with the exception of those who access through the NROTC Nurse Option Program) will complete an officer indoctrination-training course prior to reporting to their first duty station.

(2) All newly appointed officers appointed directly into the RC will attend Officer Development School and complete SELRES mobilization training and correspondence courses within 1 year of appointment.

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

8. Examination of Professional Qualifications. BUMED, Director, Navy Nurse Corps (M00NC) shall examine and certify the professional qualifications of all applicants for appointment in the NC.

a. Direct Appointments. BUMED (M00NC) shall examine and certify the professional qualifications of all applicants, and the completeness and authenticity of the entering individual credentials file (ICF) or individual professional file (IPF), as applicable. COMNAVCRUITCOM shall ensure direct commission AC and RC nurses shall be pre-credentialed by Centralized Credentials and Privileging Department (CCPD) prior to application submission to the PRB.

b. Voluntary Recall. Reserve and retired officers must be currently licensed nurses in good standing and presently engaged in nursing practice. BUMED (M00NC) shall recertify professional qualifications as specified for appointment. Recalled reserve officers will be recalled in the rank held as a reservist and will not have entry grade recomputed.

c. PRB Procedures

(1) BUMED (M00NC) shall appoint an NC PRB to examine the professional qualifications of all applicants. The PRB shall be composed of senior NC officers. At least three, but not more than five, PRB members shall review applicants' records. The senior member of the PRB shall be in the grade of captain or above.

(2) The PRB 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 and licensure.

(3) The PRB shall recommend to BUMED (M00NC) which specific qualifications of the entry grade credit table are met; recommend entry grade credit for those qualifications; state the degree to which documented supervisory and managerial experience qualifies applicants for appointment in the grade of commander and above for assignment to specific classes of command, executive and administrative billets in those grades; provide an evaluation of the quality and desirability of the candidate based on their professional qualifications and experience in the nursing specialty for which being considered; and confirm the authenticity of the documents comprising the entering ICF or IPF. The PRB shall make its report directly to BUMED (M00NC), without intervening endorsements or clearances.

(4) BUMED (M00NC), or designee, shall forward approval directly to DCNO (MPTE) (N1), or designee, without intervening endorsements or clearances.

(5) Once BUMED (M00NC) has approved the applicant's professional qualification, DCNO (MPTE) (N1) shall determine whether the applicant is otherwise qualified for a commission as an NC officer in the specialty for which designated. DCNO (MPTE) (N1) may delegate this authority to COMNAVCRUITCOM with appropriate guidelines.

9. Entry Grade Credit. Entry grade and rank within grade upon appointment shall be determined by the number of years of entry grade credit awarded for prior active commissioned service, including service in an active status in an RC as required by references (g), (h), and (i), and for advanced education, training, and professional experience. Service shall be credited subject to the computation and maximum credit criteria specified in the following table and in paragraphs 10 and 11 below.



**ENTRY GRADE CREDIT TABLE**

	<b>QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>CREDIT</b>
1.	Commissioned service on active duty or in an active status as an NC officer in any of the Uniformed Services.	1 year for each year.
2.	Commissioned service on active duty or in an active status in any of the Uniformed Services other than as an NC officer.	½ year for each year.
3.	Successful completion of advanced degrees in nursing or related fields which contribute to fulfilling the requirements for assignment to the nursing specialty authorized by DCNO (MPTE) (N1) and identified by a specialty classification code in reference (o), part B to which the applicant will be appointed. Advanced degrees normally qualifying for entry grade credit are in the following fields: Clinical Nursing Specialty, NP/CNM, Nurse Anesthetist, Education and Nursing, Healthcare or Business Administration. Advanced degrees in fields not listed above may be credited when the degree contributes directly toward meeting a requirement approved by DCNO (MPTE) (N1) and identified by a nursing specialty classification code in reference (o), part E based on the recommendations of DCNO (MPTE) (N1), when approved on a case-by-case basis by ASN (M&RA). Credit may be given for only one degree in a single non-nursing field. Credit for the degree shall be based on full-time-equivalent education but not more than 2 years for a master's degree or 4 years for a doctorate degree. Credit shall not be awarded for a degree earned concurrently with the Baccalaureate degree and shall not be awarded for the qualifying degree for entry into the NC.	1 year for each year or 1 month for each month limited by level of degree earned.
4.	Credit may be granted for nurse experience gained as a fully licensed Baccalaureate prepared nurse.	½ year for each year of experience

		up to a maximum of 3 years. (If 6 months or less, no credit will be granted).
5.	In unusual cases, additional credit may be granted for special professional nursing experience in the specialty or subspecialty in which appointed when that experience is accrued after obtaining the qualifying degree. This additional credit applies only to individuals who have experience level needed by the NC that uniquely distinguishes them from the normal qualifications required for appointment as a commissioned officer. To be credited, the experience must be associated with the advanced education credited under qualification 3 above and contribute directly to performance in a nursing specialty or subspecialty authorized by DCNO (MPTE) (N1) and identified by a specialty classification code or subspecialty code in reference (o), part B.	1 year for each year of special professional nursing experience up to a maximum of 3 years credit. (If total creditable experience is 6 months 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 a warrant officer.
- d. Credit will not be granted for work experience prior to the qualifying degree.

e. Graduates of the service academies will not be awarded credit for service performed or education, training or experience obtained before graduation from the academy.

f. When computing entry grade credit under qualifications 4 and 5, maximum credit must be earned under qualification 4 before earning any credit under qualification 5. Experience of half year or less earns no credit.

g. The recall of an NC officer in the RC 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 7 years. After considering the recommendations of BUMED (M00NC) and DCNO (MPTE) (N1), ASN (M&RA) may waive these limits on a case-by-case basis to a maximum of 11 years in the following circumstances:

a. For Appointment as a Reserve Officer for Service on the ADL. When there is a shortage against authorized strength in the nursing specialty for which the appointee is nominated which cannot be met by:

(1) Direct procurement of qualified registered nurses with 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 SECNAV.

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

b. For Appointment in the Inactive Duty RC. When there is a shortage against authorized strength in the nursing specialty for which the appointee is nominated which cannot be met by:

(1) Transfer of officers from the ADL.

(2) Direct procurement of qualified registered nurses with grades of lieutenant commander and below.

(3) In-zone promotion under the 5-year promotion plan approved by SECNAV.

(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 NC from the effective date of this instruction. There shall be no retroactive changes.

13. Appointments. Appointments in the NC shall be made subject to the following guidance governing entry grade, date of rank, precedence and application processing:

a. Entry Grade. A prospective NC 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 NC officer who is awarded entry grade credit under the entry grade credit table shall be appointed in a grade based on total entry grade credit awarded under reference (i). 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 reference (d), officers transferred from other Uniformed Services into the NC 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) when the transfer is of a non-nurse officer.

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(e)(1)), incident to appointment shall be placed on the ADL under reference (p).

(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 these 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 Navy Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM), Officer Career Progression Division (PERS-80), 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055. The request must be received by NAVPERSCOM (PERS-80) 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)), shall be placed on the reserve active status list under reference (p).

d. Minimum Service Requirement per reference (g).

(1) AC. Three years (36 months) from the date of appointment. The balance of service, sufficient to complete 8 years total, may be served in an individual ready reserve status.

(2) RC. Remain commissioned in the Navy Reserve for 8 years.

14. Application Processing

a. To facilitate rapid application processing, DCNO (MPTE) (N1) will establish all military and professional nursing documentation to be required for application for active duty force and inactive duty RC.

b. Completed applications for appointment and immediate service on the ADL shall be submitted to COMNAVCRUITCOM within 45 days from the date the applicant signs the application for commission.

c. DCNO (MPTE) (N1) may authorize delayed commissioning in the following instances:

(1) When the applicant requests a later time.

(2) When a baccalaureate nursing student is granted conditional acceptance pending successful completion of degree, the selectee must sign a statement of understanding to that effect. The commissioning may be delayed up to 6 months following graduation.

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

e. 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 (q). The professional credential documents are to be assembled in the prescribed entering credentials file (ICF or IPF) for use by subsequent duty stations for credentials review and clinical privileging or assignment of clinical support staff duties without further need for verification by those duty stations.

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

g. DCNO (MPTE) (N1) shall include in the recruiting reports, a report of performance against the maximum time standards established in this paragraph including an evaluation of problems identified and corrective actions taken.

15. Responsibilities

a. CNO is responsible for:

(1) Procurement and appointment of NC officers per this instruction.

(2) Establishing the annual accession plan for the active duty force and the inactive duty RC.

b. DCNO (MPTE) (N1):

(1) Will approve entry grade credit; establish entry grades and dates of rank of NC officers per the guidelines in this instruction.

(2) Will ensure that all direct accession applications are processed within the maximum time standard in this instruction.

(3) May propose changes in the policies governed by reference (g) for submission by ASN (M&RA) to Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (ASD) (HA)).

c. BUMED (M00NC) shall:

(1) Certify professional qualifications and provide the calculation of entry grade credit based on these qualifications to DCNO (MPTE) (N1).

(2) Establish the NC PRB.

d. COMNAVCRUITCOM shall:

(1) Determine grade and date of rank based on calculations provided by BUMED (M00NC), subject to approval of DCNO (MPTE) (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 ASD (HA).

(3) Prepare for DCNO (MPTE) (N1) the annual summary report and supplementary information required by reference (h) and paragraphs 12 and 14 of this instruction.

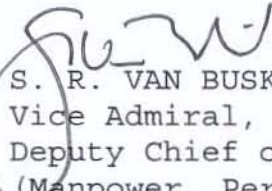
(4) Ensure direct commission AC and RC nurses shall be pre-credentialed by CCPD prior to application submission to the PRB.

e. Career Transition Office (PERS-9X) shall ensure all applicants receive a recommendation from the PRB prior to accession as a SELRES.

f. Senior nurse executives (SNE) and directors of nursing shall report all NCLEX failures to both BUPERS-315 and BUMED, Office of the Nurse Corps (NOOC) to ensure uniform tracking and prompt adjudication. SNE and directors of nursing will assist members with re-designation requests.

16. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, shall be managed per SECNAV Manual 5210.1 of January 2012.

17. Reports. The PRB reports required by paragraph 7c are exempt from reports control per SECNAV Manual 5214.1 of December 2005.

  
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