

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
Public Health Service

Chapter CC23--Staffing  
Subchapter CC23.1--Recruitment; General  
Personnel INSTRUCTION 4--Appointment under the Commissioned Officer  
Residency Deferment (CORD) Program

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Section A. Purpose and Scope

1. This INSTRUCTION establishes policies and provides procedures and instructions for applying for appointment and deferment under the Commissioned Officer Residency Deferment Program.
2. The Commissioned Officer Residency Deferment Program, developed and conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service with the cooperation of the Selective Service System, permits a limited number of draft-eligible physicians (1) to become Inactive Reserve Officers in the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service, and (2) to complete one or more years of formal residency training before serving on active duty. The

CORD Program supplements the Intramural Residency Training Program of the Public Health Service by providing a steady supply of trained Reserve Officers for active duty.

3. In this Program, selected physicians who are obligated for two years of military service under the general provisions of the Military Selective Service Act are deferred by the Director, Selective Service System, for residency training in specialties that are pertinent to the projected requirements of the Public Health Service. CORD Program participants are usually deferred for the period necessary to complete the minimum residency training requirements for certification by American Specialty Boards.
4. Deferments are approved for periods of one year, and eligible CORD Program officers must reapply annually for continued participation in the Program. Redeferment requests are considered in terms of the individual officer's desires, his acceptability to the hospital, and the needs of the Public Health Service.
5. CORD Program participants are appointed commissioned officers in the Inactive Reserve of the Public Health Service. They do not receive pay from the Service until called to active duty. The stipend normally paid by the hospital to residents may be accepted by CORD Program officers.
6. When residency training is completed and/or deferment is terminated, the CORD Program officer is obligated to serve on active duty with the Public Health Service for a period of at least 24 months. This period of service will satisfy Selective Service obligations and no further service is required. Assignments are generally in the clinical specialty in which the officer is trained or by prior agreement in a non-clinical assignment in which specialty training is required.

#### Section B. Authorization

This program is authorized under Paragraph 21.54, PHS Regulation.

#### Section C. CORD Program Specialties

CORD Program applicants are selected for residency training in the following specialties:

Specialty*	<u>Minimum Years of Residency Training for Board Certification**</u>
Anesthesiology	2
Dermatology and Syphilology	3
General Practice	2

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Internal Medicine	3
Neurology	3
Obstetrics and Gynecology	3
Ophthalmology	3-4
Occupational Medicine	3
Orthopedic Surgery	4
Otolaryngology	4
Pathology - Anatomical	3
Pathology - Clinical	3
Pathology - Anatomical and Clinical	4
Pediatrics	2-3
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	3
Preventive Medicine and Public Health	3
Psychiatry	3
Radiology	3-4
Surgery	4
Urology	4

\*Specialty categories are subject to change depending upon requirements of the Service.

\*\*The above minimum years of Residency Training are subject to change.

Section D. Applications for CORD Program Deferment

1. Requirements. To participate in the CORD Program an applicant must be:
  - a. found fully qualified for appointment as a commissioned officer in the Public Health Service.
  - b. a graduate of a medical school approved by the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association.
  - c. liable for two years of military service under the general provisions of the Military Selective Service Act.

- d. eligible for a residency which is approved by the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association.
2. How, When and Where to Apply. Form PHS 50, "Application For Appointment As A Commissioned Officer In The Public Health Service", must be submitted, in duplicate. This form may be obtained from, and should be returned to:
- Office of Personnel and Training  
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201
- a. To be considered for participation in the CORD Program with deferment beginning the following July 1, applications must be received as follows:
- (1) For the NIH Associate Program -- April 10
- (2) For other PHS Programs -- July 1
- b. Resubmission of the Form PHS 50 is not required of physicians in the following groups:
- (1) Eligible physicians who submitted an application for a Reserve Commission when they applied to the National Institutes of Health for the Clinical and Research Program are considered for CORD Program participation and residency deferment provided that they have met the deadline date.
- (2) Other physicians who have submitted an application for a Reserve Commission and PHS Inactive Reserve Corps officers may apply for deferment by letter. Letters must be received within the established deadline dates.
- c. Form PHS 2525 "Request for Deferment and Hospital Agreement" will be sent to all selected applicants. This form, properly executed, must be received before March 15 for a deferment beginning the following July.
- (1) Participants in the CORD Program must train in residency programs that are approved by the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association.
- (2) The residency training must be fully creditable by appropriate Specialty Boards toward the fulfillment of minimum residency requirements for certification.
3. NIH Associate Program. Physicians who wish to be considered for CORD Program deferment and subsequent assignment to the National Institutes

of Health as a Clinical Associate must comply with the application requirements of NIH in addition to the above. Inquiries about the NIH Associate Program should be directed to:

Chief, Clinical and Professional Education  
Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

#### Section E. Questionnaire

1. Physicians who apply for CORD Program participation are requested to list their active duty assignment preferences on a questionnaire.
2. Descriptions of Public Health Service programs accompany the questionnaire.

#### Section F. Selection for Residency Deferment

1. CORD Program applicants are tentatively selected for deferment on the basis of:
  - a. The anticipated needs of the Service for physicians with specialty training.
  - b. The professional promise of applicants within the various specialties needed by the Service.

Note: Even though tentatively selected an applicant cannot participate unless found fully qualified for appointment as a commissioned officer.

#### Section G. Placement of Selected Applicants

The Public Health Service makes every effort to match the active duty assignment preferences of CORD Program applicants with projected Service requirements for specialists.

#### Section H. Notification of Applicants

1. Each CORD Program applicant is notified on or before October 1 of the action taken on his application for deferment beginning the following July. Selected applicants are advised of (1) PHS Program in which they will serve their 24 months Selective Service obligation and (2) the expected call-to-active-duty-date.
2. This action remains tentative until the applicant is appointed a commissioned officer. Acceptance of appointment is deemed to imply full concurrence in the planned active duty assignment.

#### Section I. Applicants not Selected for CORD Program Deferment

Applicants who are not selected for residency deferment but who are found qualified for appointment as commissioned officers may request consideration for active duty at the end of the training year in which the CORD Program application is submitted or may withdraw their application for an Inactive Reserve Commission.

#### Section J. Redeferments

1. Deferments for residency training are approved for a period of 12 months (July-June).
2. Each year CORD Program officers who desire to continue residency training and CORD Program participation, must submit two copies of "Request for deferment and Hospital Agreement", Form PHS-2525, before March 15. Officers who do not request redeferment are called to active duty with the Public Health Service at the end of the current training year.

#### Section K. Questions and Answers

The questions most frequently asked by CORD Program applicants are answered below:

1. Since the deadline has passed - and I have just learned of the CORD Program - may I still apply?

No, the July 1 application deadline for CORD Program consideration beginning the following July 1, is strictly adhered to.

2. May I be deferred for a research fellowship?

No, CORD Program deferments are granted only for formal residency training in the clinical and public health specialties.

3. May I be deferred for graduate training?

No, deferment may not be recommended for periods of basic science or other graduate training unless the academic training is an integral part of a clinical residency program and counts toward satisfying minimum board requirements.

4. For what rank am I eligible?

If you enter the CORD Program immediately following internship, you will be appointed in the grade of Assistant Surgeon (Inactive Reserve), which is equivalent to Lieutenant, JG., in the Navy. When called to active duty, you will receive a promotion to the grade of Surgeon (Reserve), which is equivalent to Lieutenant Commander in the Navy.

5. May I apply for CORD Program participation and residency training that

exceeds the minimum residency requirements of my specialty board?

Yes, but such applications are usually not approved except to fulfill special Service needs.

6. I was selected for the CORD Program and residency training in surgery but have now decided I wish to train in pediatrics. May I change my specialty?

No, changes in specialty are not permitted after selections are made.

7. Is there an age limit for the CORD Program?

Yes, you must complete CORD Program participation and begin active duty before age 32.

8. Is it possible to withdraw from the program prior to actual deferment?

Yes, you may withdraw your CORD Program application at any time prior to appointment as a commissioned officer; or, if you have already been appointed, you may resign the commission.

9. What happens if I am not found qualified for a commission?

If you are not found qualified for a commission, you cannot participate in the CORD Program - even though tentatively selected - and you will be so notified as soon as the determination is made.

10. I am now in residency training, may I apply for the CORD Program?

Yes, provided you comply with the application requirements and have not received an induction notice.

11. May I apply simultaneously for the Berry and CORD Programs?

Yes

12. Upon completion of my residency training and/or deferment, what is my obligation to the PHS?

Two years of active duty satisfies your obligation to the PHS as well as to Selective Service.

13. May I be deferred for active duty with the Peace Corps?

No.

14. If I am not selected for the NIH Associate Program, may I be considered for deferment under some other PHS activity?

Yes, if you apply and are not accepted for an NIH Associate assignment, you may elect (1) to be considered for residency deferment and subsequent active duty in one of the other activities of the Public Health Service, (2) to request active duty, or (3) to withdraw your application for a commission.

15. Are participants in the Senior Medical Student Program and Senior ROTC of the Army (or other service) eligible for the CORD Program?

No.

16. As an intern in a USPHS hospital (or other uniformed service hospital), am I eligible for the CORD Program?

If you are interning - or have interned - as a commissioned officer on active duty in the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Public Health Service, you are not eligible to participate in the CORD Program.

17. I have applied for the CORD Program. Will the induction notice I recently received from my local Selective Service Board alter my status as a CORD Program applicant?

Yes. If you receive an induction notice after applying for the CORD Program, notify the Office of Personnel and Training immediately.

18. I have received notification of selection for CORD Program participation and deferment beginning July 1. Is it possible for my deferment to begin February 1?

No, deferment before July 1 cannot be arranged.

19. May I change hospitals while participating in the CORD Program?

Yes, provided the new program is approved by the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association, all the training is fully creditable by your specialty board, and you notify the Office of Personnel and Training.

20. Where do I send my questions about the CORD Program?

For additional information, write to:

CORD Program, USPHS  
Office of Personnel and Training  
Department of Health, Education and Welfare  
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201