

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service

Chapter CC29--Officers' Relations, Services, and Benefits
Subchapter CC29.9--Miscellaneous
Personnel INSTRUCTION 3--Membership in Professional Organizations

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Section A. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this INSTRUCTION is to provide PHS commissioned officers with general information regarding membership in professional medical, dental, and other health organizations.

Section B. Authority

In accordance with the Standards of Conduct of the Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR 73.735-406) which are applicable to the PHS Commissioned Corps (Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual, Subchapter CC26.1, INSTRUCTION 1, "Officer Responsibilities and Conduct"), commissioned officers may be members of professional organizations and be elected or appointed to offices in such organizations. However, under these regulations, officers must avoid any real or apparent conflict of interest in connection with such membership.

Section C. Application for and Approval of Membership

1. Background. Many professional medical, dental, and other health organizations actively encourage qualified members of the uniformed services to apply for membership.
2. Employment Verification. In some instances, an organization may require an applicant to verify his/her employment with PHS for purposes of assessing membership rates, ascertaining employment status, or checking the veracity of the completed application. If employment verification is needed, the organization or the applicant may request such verification in writing from:

Director
Commissioned Personnel Operations Division
Office of Personnel Management
Office of Management, PHS
Room 4-35, Parklawn Building
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

3. Membership Approval. The decision to approve or disapprove an officer's application for membership rests solely with the organization concerned.

Section D. General Membership Information

1. Membership Rates. To encourage and increase membership, some professional organizations offer qualified members of the uniformed services reduced membership rates. The examples in paragraphs a. and b. below illustrate the policies of two professional organizations towards membership rates for active duty commissioned officers.
 - a. American Medical Association (AMA). The AMA currently offers active duty commissioned officers membership at substantially reduced membership rates. Although membership is offered at a reduced rate, there is generally no reduction in professional and personal services the member can receive. The AMA's fee structure for physicians in the uniformed services is based upon the physicians' employment statuses. For example, officers serving National Health Service Corps (NHSC) or other scholarship obligations are eligible for a lower membership rate than are officers serving without such obligations. However, both of these rates are normally lower than those rates charged physician members who are not in the uniformed services.
 - b. American Dental Association (ADA). The ADA also offers active duty dental officers in the uniformed services reduced membership rates. The ADA's membership fee structure is based on the dental officer's date of graduation from dental school, rather than on the officer's employment status.
2. Membership Information. Officers who wish to join a professional organization should obtain information on the membership requirements and fee structure directly from the organization concerned.