

## **PHS Commissioned Corps Promotion Ceremony**

The U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps is one of the seven Uniformed Services of the United States. Promotion is an integral part of an officer's career and is formally recognized by the Uniformed Services with a promotion ceremony. An official promotion ceremony provides an opportunity for an officer to receive recognition from his/her peers and family, enhances esprit de corps among officers, increases visibility of the service, and may enhance recruitment and retention of officers. Operating Divisions (OpDiv), Agencies and local facilities are encouraged to have a promotion ceremony to assure that each officer is recognized at this milestone in his/her career. This guide is designed to assist Operating Divisions, Agencies, and local units in planning and carrying out a promotion ceremony for their officers.

### **What Organization Unit Should Hold the Promotion Ceremony**

Depending on the size of the organizational unit and the number of individuals being promoted, a promotion ceremony can be a lavish affair or a small personalized activity. In general, the ceremony should be conducted at the highest level possible starting at the Operating Division or Agency then going to the Institute, Area, Center or Bureau then to the Service Unit or Division. It is hoped that promotion ceremonies will take place at many different levels in an organization. For example, the Indian Health Service (IHS) could have a IHS Promotion Ceremony for officers in the Washington, D.C. Metro Area, the IHS Phoenix Area could have a Promotion Ceremony for officers in the Phoenix Metro Area or for Phoenix Indian Medical Center only and the Whiteriver Service Unit could have a ceremony for officers from their own Service Unit. Each officer would participate in only one ceremony.

While it is important for officers to be recognized at the highest organization unit possible, the importance of family participation and recognition by supervisors and peers must also be taken into account. For example, while a physician in the IHS at Whiteriver, Arizona could travel to the IHS Headquarters in Rockville, MD for the IHS Promotion Ceremony, it would probably be more significant for the officer to participate in a local ceremony and have his/her family, supervisor and colleagues in attendance. No matter what the size of the activity, it is important to remember that this is a major milestone in the officer's career and if possible family, friends and colleagues of the officer being promoted should be invited, included and involved in the ceremony.

### **When Should the Promotion Ceremony Take Place**

Officers are promoted on the first day of the quarter in which they are eligible (January, April, July, October). For most officers, promotion is on the first day of July. The Division of Commissioned Personnel releases the promotion list in early June so that officers will have time to order their new rank devices before their promotion takes effect. The promotion ceremony should be planned to take place as close to the promotion date as possible. Often it is not possible to have multiple promotion ceremonies throughout the year. If only one ceremony is planned, all officers that are to be promoted during the year should be included in the ceremony.

If promotion is tied to a graduation ceremony, such as a Senior COSTEP completing his/her professional education or an EIS officer completing training, the promotion ceremony, if possible, should be part of the graduation ceremony or commencement exercise.

## **How Far Ahead Should You Plan**

Preparations should begin with sufficient lead time to invite dignitaries, and the officers family, friends and colleagues. If it is a OpDiv ceremony involving the OpDiv Head and other dignitaries, or a graduation ceremony involving a university or college, 2-4 months advanced preparation may be required. If the ceremony involves one officer and his/her family and local colleagues, a week or two may be sufficient time to plan the event. To assist in the planning process a promotion ceremony checklist has been developed (see Appendix A).

## **Who Should Be Invited**

Individuals invited to attend or participate in the promotion ceremony will vary depending on the organizational unit and location of the ceremony. No matter what the organizational unit, local officers being promoted, their families and their supervisors should be invited. Additionally, the highest ranking official for the organization and the highest ranking PHS Commissioned Officer, in that location or area, should be invited to participate. For example, if the Food and Drug Administration held a Promotion Ceremony in Rockville, Maryland, dignitaries could include the FDA Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Center Directors, Office Directors, Division Directors and the Surgeon General (as the highest ranking officer in the Washington, D.C. Metro Area). On the other hand, if the ceremony is being held an FDA District Office invitations could be sent to the District Office Director, Director of Compliance, and the Director of Investigations and the highest ranking PHS Commissioned Officer, in the local area, to participate in the ceremony.

## **How Formal Should the Promotion Ceremony Be**

The promotion ceremonies can be very formal including the use of an honor guard and having promotees piped through (using a Bosn Mate from the Navy or the U.S. Coast Guard) to much less formal depending on the dignitaries involved, available resources, location and the number of officers being promoted. For example, a promotion ceremony in Washington, D.C. involving the Surgeon General and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Administrator might be more formal due to availability of funding, the number of local of officers to assist in the ceremony, and the availability of an honor guard and Bosn Mate. A promotion ceremony in the HRSA Midwest Cluster Kansas City Field Office might be less formal due to the lack of these resources.

To assist you in preparing a Promotion Ceremony, an average (not too formal, not too informal) example of a promotion ceremony protocol is provided (see Attachment B) along with an example of a Promotion Ceremony program (see Attachment C).

## **Questions**

If you have additional questions about promotion ceremonies, contact your Agency Commissioned Corps Liaison.

**ATTACHMENT A**

**PROMOTION CEREMONY CHECK LIST**

**LOGISTICS**

- Select Program Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_
- Establish Promotion Ceremony Committee \_\_\_\_\_
- Select ceremony date and time \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine budget \_\_\_\_\_
- Select and reserve location for promotion ceremony \_\_\_\_\_
- Select and reserve location for reception (if different from ceremony) \_\_\_\_\_
- Select and invite Senior Officer or official for ceremony \_\_\_\_\_
- Select and invite Adjutant for ceremony \_\_\_\_\_

**INVITATIONS**

- Dignitaries \_\_\_\_\_
- Officer(s) Being Promoted and family \_\_\_\_\_
- Supervisors \_\_\_\_\_
- General Announcement Posted (mail, E-mail, bulletin boards) \_\_\_\_\_

**PREPARATIONS**

- Determine equipment needs (sound system, podium, chairs, etc.) and reserve equipment \_\_\_\_\_
- Develop materials (flyers, napkins, etc.) and ceremony program and send for printing \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine Decorations and order \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine Refreshments and order (or assign who is to bring what) \_\_\_\_\_
- Develop a seating chart (at least for dignitaries and officers and families) \_\_\_\_\_
- Contact officers and remind them to order shoulder Boards (unless provided by unit) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine Uniform of the Day and advise officers \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine parking needs and make appropriate arrangements \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine security needs (visitors to secure building may need badges) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine need for Color Guard (if so, arrange) \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine need for flags (American flag and Flag officer flags) for ceremony and order \_\_\_\_\_
- Request officer biography in advance of the ceremony \_\_\_\_\_
- Determine if ceremony will be photographed (if, so arrange for photographer) \_\_\_\_\_

**DAY OF CEREMONY**

- Set up stage (including podium, flags and sound system) \_\_\_\_\_
- Set up chairs (reserve seats for honorees and guests, if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_
- Set up refreshment room \_\_\_\_\_
- Arrange to have extra boards on hand (for both male and female officers)  
in the event an officer does not bring his/her new boards. \_\_\_\_\_
- Have a staff person at the door to hand out programs, greet visitors, seat dignitaries \_\_\_\_\_
- Collect new shoulder boards from Officers as they enter room \_\_\_\_\_

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **SAMPLE PROMOTION CEREMONY PROTOCOL**

#### **Personnel:**

Senior Officer - the senior ranking officer or the senior Operating Division or unit official

Adjutant - an officer to assist the Senior Officer

Officer(s) - officers to be promoted

Family Member - family member(s) of Officer

#### **Promotion Protocol**

1. Attendees, Officers and others seated in auditorium/room 5 minutes before ceremony.
2. Adjutant proceeds to podium.
3. Adjutant calls the room to ATTENTION, Senior Officer and dignitaries enter.
4. Senior Officer takes the podium and asks the room to be seated.
5. Senior Officer makes welcoming remarks.
6. Senior Officer turns the podium over to Adjutant and moves to center stage and faces the audience.
7. By order of rank (highest to lowest) Adjutant calls one Officer at a time to the stage to be promoted. (The Adjutant may call the audience to ATTENTION but may leave the audience seated, if desired.)
8. Officer and family member or dignitary proceed to stage. The Officer takes a position of ATTENTION to the LEFT of the Senior Officer, facing the audience. The family member stands to the LEFT of the Officer, facing the audience.
9. Adjutant or Senior Officer may make remarks about Officer being promoted and introduce family member or dignitary who will assist in the promotion.
10. Adjutant reads the promotion order. Adjutant hands correct shoulder boards to Senior Officer and family member (or dignitary if no family member present).
11. Senior Officer and family member replace the old shoulder boards with the new shoulder boards.
12. Senior Officer shakes the hand of the officer and family member.
  - If a Senior Commissioned Corps Officer is presiding, he/she stands in front of the officer (facing the Officer) and the promoted Officer renders a hand salute and holds salute until it is returned by the Senior Officer.
13. Adjutant initiates applause.
14. Promoted Officer and significant other exit stage.
15. Senior officer resumes position in front of audience and cycle is repeated for all Officers to be promoted.
16. CLOSING - Senior Officer takes to podium to make closing remarks (including where and when refreshments will be served).
  - if stage size permits, Senior Officer then asks newly promoted Officers and their family to stage to form a line (highest to lowest rank) - Senior officer invites all members of the audience to come up and congratulate promoted officers.
17. All proceed to refreshments

ATTACHMENT C - SAMPLE PROMOTION CEREMONY PROGRAM

*The 4th Annual*

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION  
COMMISSIONED CORPS

**PROMOTION  
CEREMONY**



Wednesday, July 7, 1999  
1:00 P.M.  
Conference Rooms D and E  
Parklawn Building



PROMOTIONS

*Exceptional Capability Promotion to Lieutenant Commander:*

Kimberly A. Struble; Pharmacy Officer      CDER  
Vincent M. Williams; Sanitarian Officer      ORA

*To Lieutenant Commander:*

Kevin R. Calci; Sanitarian Officer      CFSAN

The Center for  
Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH)

The Center for  
Drugs Evaluation and Research (CDER)

The Center for  
Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN)

The Center for  
Veterinary Medicine (CVM)

The National Center for  
Toxicological Research (NCTR)



Presentation of the Colors  
United States Coast Guard Color Guard

The National Anthem  
Tracy Davidson O'Neill

Welcome  
RADM Marlene E. Haffner  
Director, Office of Orphan Products Development  
Food and Drug Administration Representative to the  
Surgeon General's Policy Advisory Council

Opening Remarks  
Jane E. Henney, M.D.  
Commissioner of Food and Drugs

Promotions  
Jane E. Henney, M.D.  
RADM Marlene E. Haffner  
LCDR Anthony Zeccola, Adjutant

Closing Remarks  
Jane E. Henney, M.D.  
RADM Marlene E. Haffner

*Special thanks to the families, friends, and colleagues of our newly promoted officers. Without your unwavering support, we wouldn't be here today celebrating one of the most significant events in an officer's career.*



The Food and Drug Administration

The Office of  
the Commissioner (OC)

The Office of  
Regulatory Affairs (ORA)

The Center for  
Biologics Evaluation and Research (CDER)

James L. Cobos; Pharmacy Officer      CDER  
Michael S. Coene; Engineer Officer      CDRH  
Ellen C. Frank; Pharmacy Officer      CDER  
Minnis T. Hendricks, Jr.; Scientist Officer      CVM  
Lisa M. Hubbard; Pharmacy Officer      OC  
Trinh K. Nguyen; Health Services Officer      CDER  
Eduardo L. Rodriguez; Sanitarian Officer      ORA  
Darin J. Weber; Scientist Officer      CBER  
William A. Russell, Jr.; Pharmacy Officer      CDER

**ATTACHMENT C - SAMPLE PROMOTION CEREMONY PROGRAMSAMPLE  
MEMORANDUM TO DIGNITARIES**

Date: (Today's Date)

From: (Chair, Promotion Committee or Senior Officer In-Charge)

Subject: Invitation to Promotion Ceremony - July 3, 2000

To: (Dignitary's Name)

We request your attendance at the annual (Operating Division, Organization or Unit name) Promotion Ceremony on July 3, 2000, at 10:00 a.m., in the Chesapeake Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Parklawn Building.

(Senior Officer or official's name) will be exchanging officers shoulder boards indicating their achievement of promotion in the PHS Commissioned Corps. Officers will be receiving a personnel invitation which will also include an invitation for their supervisors and family members. There will be light refreshments and photo opportunities.

We look forward to seeing you on July 3rd as we honor these officers.

(Chair, Promotion Committee  
or Senior Officer In-Charge)

## **SAMPLE MEMORANDUM TO OFFICERS BEING PROMOTED**

Date: (Today's Date)  
From: (Chair, Promotion Committee or Senior Officer In-Charge)  
Subject: Invitation to Promotion Ceremony - July 3, 2000  
To: (Names of Officers being promoted)

The (Operating Division, Agency or Unit Name) would like to cordially invite you and your family to the 2000 Promotion Ceremony that will be held on Monday, July 3, 2000 at 10:00 a.m., in the Chesapeake Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Parklawn Building. The Uniform of the Day will be Summer White.

Please share this invitation with your immediate supervisor since he/she is also invited.

Please respond to (Contact's Name and Phone Number) by Monday, June 19, 2000 as to the number in your party.

(Chair, Promotion Committee  
or Senior Officer In-Charge)

## **SAMPLE MEMORANDUM FOR GRADUATION CEREMONY**

Date: (Today's date)

From: (Chair, Promotion Committee or Senior Officer In-Charge)

Subject: Participation in Graduation Ceremony - June 2000

To: (Dean or Graduation Ceremony Coordinator's Name)

Ensign (Officer's Name) is expected to complete (his/her) course of study in (field of study) in (Graduation Month) 2000. Upon graduation Ensign (Officer's Name) will be promoted to the grade of Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG) and will be reassigned to another duty station in (Operating Division's Name). The officers of the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) would like to honor Ensign (Officer's Name) by having (his or her) promotion ceremony as part of the (graduation ceremony or commencement program). This would involve PHS officers attending the ceremony, reading the promotion orders and exchanging Ensign (Officer's Name) shoulders board with his new LTJG shoulder boards.

Please contact (Contact's Name) at (Phone Number) with information about the (graduation ceremony or commencement program) and whether or not you can accommodate our request.

(Chair, Promotion Committee  
or Senior Officer In-Charge)