



DATE: 7/24/2023

TO: Surgeon General

FROM: Chair, Junior Officer Advisory Group

SUBJECT: Request to Update the Junior Officer Advisory Group's Charter- **DECISION**

ISSUE

The Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) requests a committee charter update to strengthen committee management and align operational standards with the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) and Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) (Tab A and Tab B).

BACKGROUND

JOAG's original charter was created by the Junior Officer Ad-Hoc Advisory Group (JOAHAG) in 1999. On December 7, 2001, JOAG was officially chartered as a Commissioned Corps entity under the OSG. The current version of the JOAG Charter was approved by OSG on April 5, 2016 and has not been updated in nearly 6 years (Tab C). JOAG recognizes the need to update its charter to improve committee management and align with OSG and CCHQ's current operational standards. The requested charter revisions are summarized below:

- Mission:
 - Included acronym for the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps.
- Relationship Of the Junior Officer Advisory Group To The U.S Public Health Service:
 - Updated name of the Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS Inc.
- Objectives:
 - Corrected spelling of the word "advise".
- Functions:
 - Spelled out COSTEP acronym to reflect "Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program".
 - Spelled out MOLC acronym to reflect "Minority Officers Liaison Council"
- Voting Membership:
 - Corrected spelling of the word "basic"
 - Included reference to eligibility requirements under Subsection 1.
 - Increased the number of Voting members from 22 to 23.
 - Updated language to better flow as it pertains to a new committee being established or dissolved.
 - Added in clarifying language regarding geographical location of two voting members being at least 75 miles from the Washington D.C. & Atlanta Metropolitan area.
- Voting Membership Nomination Process:
 - Clarified language regarding self-nominations and the ability to be nominated by officer colleague.

- Replace the Financial Liaison with the Operations Liaison.
- Clarified language regarding a member accumulating four years of service as a voting member and their inability to seek out term extensions.
- JOAG Chair:
 - Updated the section to include “person” in title.
 - Aligned language regarding the chair to reflect title of the section. Specifically included language referencing “Chair Person” and “Chair”.
 - Corrected capitalization and grammatical errors
 - Replace the Financial Liaison with the Operations Liaison.
- Voting:
 - Updated grammatical error

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the request noted above be considered for approval.



Digitally signed by
Mouhamed H. Halwani
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Date: 2023.07.14
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Mouhamed Halwani, MPH, M.S., CHES, MB
LCDR, USPHS
2022 JOAG Chair

DECISION

Approved _____ x _____ Disapproved _____ Date 7/24/2023



Vivek H. Murthy MD, MBA
VADM, USPHS

Attachments:

- TAB A – Revised JOAG Charter, dated October 2022_Clean version
- TAB B – Revised JOAG Charter, dated October 2022_Redlined version
- TAB C – Last approved JOAG Charter, dated January 2012

THE JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER

I. MISSION

The Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) is a public health professional group whose purpose is to provide advice and consultation to the Surgeon General (SG) and other Corps and non-Corps entities on interests and concerns specific to junior officers in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps.

II. RELATIONSHIP OF THE JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP TO THE U.S PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

The Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) provides advice and consultation to the SG, Chief Professional Officers (CPOs), Professional Advisory Committees (PACs), the Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS Inc. (COA), and other Commissioned Corps groups on issues relating to professional practice and personnel activities affecting junior officers in the USPHS Commissioned Corps. The JOAG members represent junior officers from all USPHS categories, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Operating Divisions and Staff Divisions (OPDIVs/STAFFDIVs), and those non-HHS programs staffed by Commissioned Corps personnel. The JOAG consists of knowledgeable professionals who represent a cross-section of the interests, concerns, and responsibilities of junior officers of all categories in organizations staffed by USPHS personnel.

III. OBJECTIVES

The JOAG serves in a resource, advisory, and liaison capacity to assist in the development and coordination of activities related to junior officers in the Commissioned Corps with the specific functions of:

1. Identifying and advocating on behalf of junior officer issues and concerns.
2. Assisting the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), the Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) or its successors or assignees, the PACs, and the CPOs in the assessment of policies, personnel needs, and in recruitment, training, utilization, and recognition of junior officers.
3. Developing position papers, statistical reports, and/or guidelines where appropriate, to advise and comment on issues relating to staffing and utilization issues, professional practice and personnel activities affecting junior officers.
4. Promoting junior officer development and utilization.
5. Promoting cooperation and communication between junior and senior officers throughout the USPHS.
6. Serving as a liaison between junior officers and other USPHS or external components and providing advice and consultation to the Agency Heads and OPDIV/STAFFDIV upon request.
7. Serving as communication link and information resource for junior officers.

THE JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER

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IV. FUNCTIONS

In carrying out its broad mission and objectives, the functions of the JOAG shall include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Provide general professional advice and recommendations:
 - a. Review and comment on issues referred to JOAG by the SG, OSG, Chief Professional Officers, PAC Chairs, Special Initiatives Workgroups, Agency Heads, and/or Program Heads.
 - b. Deliberate issues, develop findings, and present recommendations to groups designated in Section IV, Subsection 1 (a).
 - c. Provide advice on the professional aspects of junior officership (e.g., new technologies, regulations, curricula, roles, etc.)
 - d. Provide advice on ethical and professional standards issues that impact junior officers.
 - e. Review and provide recommendations concerning proposed or needed changes to appointment standards and professional requirements (e.g., licensure required to maintain high quality staff).
2. Provide junior officer development and readiness advice to OSG:
 - a. Advise on Commissioned Corps practices concerning career development.
 - b. Advise on operating practices concerning the appropriate/optimum use of personnel designed to best meet USPHS needs and the needs of the individual.
 - c. Advise on issues related to USPHS promotion practices.
 - d. Provide recommendations for the selection of candidates for training and/or other career development options.
 - e. Identify both continuing and long-term intramural/extramural education needs of junior officers and identify and recommend training and/or experience opportunities designed to meet these needs.
 - f. If requested by Agency Heads or OPDIVs/STAFFDIVs, review applications for long-term training, assess appropriateness of requested training in terms of the individuals and the services needed, and provide recommendations for the approval and disapproval of such requests.
 - g. Provide professional development (e.g., Journeyman Speaker Series, Peer-to-Peer Professional Development, ad-hoc Q&A sessions).
3. Provide advice and assistance on staffing issues:
 - a. Assess and project the need for junior officer staffing levels throughout the USPHS, when requested.
 - b. Provide advice on the goals, objectives, and procedures designed to meet junior officer staffing needs.
 - c. Provide guidance for recruitment to the short-term student affiliation programs (Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program, summer students, etc.). Facilitate mentorship for these officers when appropriate.
 - d. Develop, and/or review and critique USPHS recruitment materials, procedures, and

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- 87 programs. Assist in the development of orientation materials for newly-hired junior
88 officers and provide advice/recommendations concerning orientation.
- 89 e. Help establish networks of current junior officers who can assist and facilitate
90 recruitment activities for junior officers.
- 91 f. Provide guidance to approved USPHS recruiters concerning the recruitment of
92 qualified junior officer candidates.
- 93 4. Communicate and encourage appropriate use of awards/recognition systems:
94 a. Identify, establish, and help administer special professional JOAG awards.
95 b. Promote awareness of the existing award programs and opportunities.
- 96 5. Serve as a communication link and information resource for JOAG:
97 a. Communicate to the PACs and other professional groups and programs (Minority
98 Officers Liaison Council, COA Board, etc.) information concerning professional,
99 ethical, and technical issues relating to junior officers.
- 100 b. Encourage individual membership in, and involvement with, professional
101 organizations and societies in order to promote open communication with non-
102 federal colleagues.
- 103 c. Ensure the distribution of minutes and/or other JOAG-developed materials to the
104 extent possible and appropriate to junior officers. Ensure the availability of JOAG
105 minutes to other PACs and the OSG through the JOAG website.
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V. VOTING MEMBERSHIP

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- 109 1. Basic Eligibility Requirements: At the time of appointment to the voting
110 membership, each JOAG member shall be an Active Duty PHS officer at or below the
111 rank of Lieutenant Commander (LCDR/O-4), and not be eligible for promotion to the
112 temporary rank of Commander (CDR/O-5) prior to July 1st of the second year of their
113 appointment term. A JOAG Voting Member may hold a simultaneous membership
114 in their respective PAC, if permitted by the PAC. In addition, officers must maintain
115 basic readiness standards.
- 116 2. General eligibility: Staff from any Agency or OPDIV/STAFFDIV may serve on JOAG as
117 a voting member, so long as they meet the basic eligibility requirements listed in
118 Section V, Subsection 1.
- 119 3. Size of the JOAG: The JOAG shall have 23 voting members to ensure that the
120 Committees are led by Voting Members. In the event a new Committee is
121 established or one is dissolved, JOAG shall increase or decrease the voting
122 membership to ensure appropriate Voting Members in leadership of each
123 Committee.
- 124 4. Organizational Representation: In order to provide the range of experiences and
125 perspectives necessary for addressing issues before JOAG, all efforts will be made to
126 ensure the broadest representation possible among all agencies that are staffed by
127 PHS officers.
- 128 5. Geographic Considerations: All efforts will be made to ensure JOAG has at least two
129 Voting Members whose regular duty station is geographically 75 miles outside of the
130 Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area.

THE JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER

- 131 6. Gender and Minority Representation: All efforts will be made to ensure JOAG
132 includes gender, racial, and ethnic minorities in the composition of its Voting
133 Membership.
- 134 7. Personnel System: JOAG will consist entirely of junior officers commissioned in the
135 USPHS.
- 136 8. Rank Restrictions: Voting membership in JOAG is restricted to officers at rank of
137 Lieutenant Commander (LCDR/O-4) and below.
- 138 9. PAC Representation: At a minimum, the JOAG Voting Membership must select a
139 Voting Member from each of the USPHS categories. One Voting Member is selected
140 to be a liaison to their PAC.
- 141 10. Ex-Officio Members (non-voting): The Immediate Past Chair is a non-voting ex-
142 officio member of JOAG if their Voting Member term would have otherwise expired
143 and if they are not appointed to another term. The Immediate Past Chair serves to
144 help ensure continuity of JOAG operations. JOAG may identify other individuals to
145 serve as ex-officio members to provide substantive coordination with relevant
146 professional and academic organizations.
- 147 11. Liaison Members: The JOAG may identify individuals to serve in a liaison capacity to
148 provide information or assist with activities, e.g., staff from the Office of the
149 Secretary or the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health.
- 150 12. JOAG Senior Advisor (non-voting): The Senior Officer Advisor to the JOAG is an Ex-
151 Officio member with a three-year term. The Senior Advisor is expected to be a
152 consultant to the JOAG and advise the JOAG on its issues, concerns, policies and
153 procedures. The Senior Advisor may advocate for the JOAG but may not officially
154 represent the JOAG. The Senior Advisor must be an officer ranked O-6 and above
155 and can be stationed at any Agency. The OSG will solicit nominations for the JOAG
156 Senior Advisor. Application packets received for the JOAG Senior Advisor will be
157 reviewed and discussed amongst the JOAG voting membership. Nominees for the
158 JOAG Senior Advisor will be interviewed by the JOAG Executive Committee and
159 ranked in order of preference. This list will be provided to the SG, who will make the
160 final selection and appoint the Senior Advisor to JOAG.

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VI. VOTING MEMBERSHIP NOMINATION PROCESS

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- 164 1. Annually, the JOAG Membership Committee will solicit nominations for upcoming
165 JOAG Voting Membership vacancies via Listserv, the JOAG website, and through the
166 PACs. Nominations can be submitted by the individual or by an officer colleague.
167 After applications are received, the JOAG Membership Committee will notify the
168 appropriate Chief Professional Officer (CPO) and respective Agency Head (Agency
169 Commissioned Corps Liaison) in writing concerning nominees under consideration
170 from their respective professional disciplines/programs, and, if necessary, make
171 requests for additional nominees meeting the membership requirements as set forth
172 in Section V. The nominee's Agency Head or CPO has the option of eliminating, from
173 consideration, nominees from their respective agency or category.

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175 The JOAG Membership Committee will collect and prepare all application packets for
176 review by the rest of the current Voting Members. Eligible Voting Members will
177 review and make member selections. The Membership Committee will review all
178 agency/CPO responses and present their selections to the JOAG. The JOAG will
179 review and approve the Membership Committee selections for new Voting
180 Members. The JOAG recommendations and accompanying nomination materials
181 will be transmitted to the SG for concurrence and appointment.

182 2. This nomination process shall be conducted so that the final nomination package is
183 available for the OSG's consideration no less than 60 calendar days prior to the
184 expiration of the regular term of the Voting Member. Should the need arise to fill
185 the remainder of the unexpired term of a Voting Member, the vacancy shall be filled
186 by an officer selected from the currently serving alternates through a process that is
187 consistent with the rigor followed in the annual Voting Member selection process.
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189 VII. TERM OF APPOINTMENT

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- 191 1. The term of appointment for a Voting Member will be two years. Terms will be
192 staggered so that approximately one-half of the terms will expire annually. The
193 JOAG operational year begins October 1.
 - 194 2. If the election of a Voting Member to an executive position on the JOAG would
195 necessitate an extension beyond the officer's initial membership term, their term
196 will be automatically extended. The extension can be up to 2 years and is dependent
197 on the needs of the position (e.g., Chair-Elect (2 years), Vice-Chair (1 year),
198 Operations Liaison (1 year), or Executive Secretary (1 year)), and the officer's
199 preference. However, once a Voting Member has accumulated four years of service
200 as a JOAG Voting Member, they are not eligible for term extensions, regardless of
201 circumstance.
 - 202 3. Alternates: Cognizant of the demands of the Voting Member's primary work
203 responsibilities, and the JOAG's need to conduct business, each Voting Member shall
204 appoint and inform the Chairperson and Executive Secretary of a single individual
205 who can serve as their alternate. Such alternates do not have voting privileges when
206 serving in the place of a primary Voting Member. The alternate does not have to be
207 of the same category or rank as the Voting Member. It is the responsibility of the
208 primary JOAG Voting Member to keep the alternate fully informed and
209 knowledgeable of JOAG activities.
 - 210 4. Attendance: Any Voting Member of the JOAG who frequently misses meetings
211 without just cause, does not vote on JOAG business items, does not participate in
212 required activities, or does not complete assigned tasks in accordance with the JOAG
213 Bylaws, can, at the discretion of the JOAG Chair in consultation with the Senior
214 Advisor, be asked to voluntarily resign from the JOAG, or the JOAG Chair, in
215 consultation with the Senior Advisor, can initiate a request to OSG to terminate the
216 officer's Voting Membership and so inform the OPDIV Agency Liaison.
 - 217 5. Removal: A Voting Member may be removed from the JOAG at the request of the

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218 Chair for just cause (non-attendance, disciplinary action, etc.). In such case, the Chair
219 will make a recommendation to the Senior Advisor, who, if concurred, will make a
220 recommendation to the SG for removal of the Voting Member. The SG will make the
221 final determination of removal of the Voting Member.
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223 **VIII. JOAG CHAIRPERSON**

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- 225 1. Election and Role of Chairperson (also known as Chair): The JOAG Chair will be
226 elected by the Voting Member.
 - 227 2. Term of the Chair: The JOAG Chair shall be elected as the Chair-Elect in the year
228 prior to serving as Chair. If a circumstance arises where the Chair-Elect is unavailable
229 to progress to Chair, the JOAG may choose to elect a Chair without serving first as
230 Chair- Elect. Alternately, the JOAG may choose to re-elect an incumbent Chair for
231 one additional year if the Chair-Elect is unwilling or unable to progress to Chair in the
232 subsequent year and the incumbent Chair has not been promoted to the rank of
233 Commander. In no case will any officer be allowed to serve more than two years as
234 the JOAG Chair.
 - 235 3. Immediate Past Chair: Immediately following the Chairs term, the former Chair
236 may serve an additional year in the role of Immediate Past Chair. If their Voting
237 Member term would have otherwise expired and if they are not appointed to another
238 term, they may serve as Immediate Past Chair in a non-voting, ex-officio capacity. The
239 role of the Immediate Past Chair will be to provide advice and consultation to the
240 current Chair as needed.

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242 **IX. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

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- 244 1. The JOAG shall develop its own internal operations and procedures (e.g., Bylaws,
245 Standard Operating Procedures). These shall include, at the minimum provisions
246 covering the following:
 - 247 a. Operational year: Determine and report to OSG on a quarterly basis.
 - 248 b. Frequency of meeting: Meetings will be held once per quarter at a minimum.
 - 249 c. Agenda: A meeting agenda and appropriate background material is to be made
250 available to the members.
 - 251 2. Records and Reporting:
 - 252 a. Minutes of each JOAG meeting will be developed and approved by a majority of
253 the JOAG Voting Members and/or by the JOAG Chair.
 - 254 b. Minutes and reports of the JOAG will be distributed in accord with Item IV (5) (C)
255 FUNCTIONS.
 - 256 c. The JOAG must establish a system to maintain a permanent file of the official
257 minutes and reports of the PAC.
 - 258 d. JOAG Chair will be prepared and available to brief the SG and DSG, or their
259 representative, and their Senior Advisor quarterly as scheduled by OSG.
 - 260 3. Executive Secretary: The Executive Secretary must be a member of the Voting

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- 261 Membership.
- 262 4. Quorum: A Quorum consists of at least 50 percent of the JOAG Voting
- 263 Membership. An alternate attending in lieu of the member shall be counted in
- 264 determining the quorum requirement.
- 265 5. Voting: Where voting is required or appropriate, i.e., election of the Chair, action
- 266 will be determined by the simple majority of those Voting Members present.
- 267 6. Subcommittees: Where the JOAG elects to establish standing or ad hoc
- 268 subcommittees, said membership may include non-JOAG Voting Members
- 269 provided that the Chair of the subcommittee is, when practicable, a Voting
- 270 Member of the JOAG.

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272 Revised, February 10, 2023

273 **Decision:**

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276 Approved Vivek Murthy Disapproved _____ Date 7/24/2023

277 Vivek Murphy, MD, MBA

278 VADM, USPHS

279 U.S. Surgeon General

THE JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP CHARTER

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107 **V. VOTING MEMBERSHIP**
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169 Commissioned Corps Liaison) in writing concerning nominees under consideration
170 from their respective professional disciplines/programs, and, if necessary, make
171 requests for additional nominees meeting the membership requirements as set forth
172 in Section V. The nominee's Agency Head or CPO has the option of eliminating, from
173 consideration, nominees from their respective agency or category.

174

175 The JOAG Membership Committee will collect and prepare all application packets for
176 review by the rest of the current Voting Members. Eligible Voting Members will
177 review and make member selections. The Membership Committee will review all
178 agency/CPO responses and present their selections to the JOAG. The JOAG will
179 review and approve the Membership Committee selections for new Voting
180 Members. The JOAG recommendations and accompanying nomination materials
181 will be transmitted to the SG for concurrence and appointment.

- 182 2. This nomination process shall be conducted so that the final nomination package is
183 available for the OSG's consideration no less than 60 calendar days prior to the
184 expiration of the regular term of the Voting Member. Should the need arise to fill
185 the remainder of the unexpired term of a Voting Member, the vacancy shall be filled
186 by an officer selected from the currently serving alternates through a process that is
187 consistent with the rigor followed in the annual Voting Member selection process.

188

189 **VII. TERM OF APPOINTMENT**

190

- 191 1. The term of appointment for a Voting Member will be two years. Terms will be
192 staggered so that approximately one-half of the terms will expire annually. The
193 JOAG operational year begins October 1.

- 194 2. If the election of a Voting Member to an executive position on the JOAG would
195 necessitate an extension beyond the officer's initial membership term, their term
196 will be automatically extended. The extension can be up to 2 years and is dependent
197 on the needs of the position (e.g., Chair-Elect (2 years), Vice-Chair (1 year),
198 Operations Liaison (1 year), or Executive Secretary (1 year)), and the officer's
199 preference. However, once a Voting Member has accumulated four years of service
200 as a JOAG Voting Member, they are not eligible for term extensions, regardless of
201 circumstance.
- 202 3. Alternates: Cognizant of the demands of the Voting Member's primary work
203 responsibilities, and the JOAG's need to conduct business, each Voting Member shall
204 appoint and inform the Chairperson and Executive Secretary of a single individual
205 who can serve as their alternate. Such alternates do not have voting privileges when
206 serving in the place of a primary Voting Member. The alternate does not have to be
207 of the same category or rank as the Voting Member. It is the responsibility of the
208 primary JOAG Voting Member to keep the alternate fully informed and
209 knowledgeable of JOAG activities.
- 210 4. Attendance: Any Voting Member of the JOAG who frequently misses meetings
211 without just cause, does not vote on JOAG business items, does not participate in
212 required activities, or does not complete assigned tasks in accordance with the JOAG
213 Bylaws, can, at the discretion of the JOAG Chair in consultation with the Senior
214 Advisor, be asked to voluntarily resign from the JOAG, or the JOAG Chair, in
215 consultation with the Senior Advisor, can initiate a request to OSG to terminate the
216 officer's Voting Membership and so inform the OPDIV Agency Liaison.
- 217 5. Removal: A Voting Member may be removed from the JOAG at the request of the
218 Chair for just cause (non-attendance, disciplinary action, etc.). In such case, the Chair
219 will make a recommendation to the Senior Advisor, who, if concurred, will make a
220 recommendation to the SG for removal of the Voting Member. The SG will make the
221 final determination of removal of the Voting Member.
- 222

223 **VIII. JOAG CHAIRPERSON**

224

- 225 1. Election and Role of Chairperson (also known as Chair): The JOAG Chair will be
226 elected by the Voting Member.
- 227 2. Term of the Chair: The JOAG Chair shall be elected as the Chair-Elect in the year
228 prior to serving as Chair. If a circumstance arises where the Chair-Elect is unavailable
229 to progress to Chair, the JOAG may choose to elect a Chair without serving first as
230 Chair- Elect. Alternately, the JOAG may choose to re-elect an incumbent Chair for
231 one additional year if the Chair-Elect is unwilling or unable to progress to Chair in the
232 subsequent year and the incumbent Chair has not been promoted to the rank of
233 Commander. In no case will any officer be allowed to serve more than two years as
234 the JOAG Chair.
- 235 3. Immediate Past Chair: Immediately following the Chairs term, the former Chair
236 may serve an additional year in the role of Immediate Past Chair. If their Voting

237 Member term would have otherwise expired and if they are not appointed to another
238 term, they may serve as Immediate Past Chair in a non-voting, ex-officio capacity. The
239 role of the Immediate Past Chair will be to provide advice and consultation to the
240 current Chair as needed.

241

242 IX. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

243

244 1. The JOAG shall develop its own internal operations and procedures (e.g., Bylaws,
245 Standard Operating Procedures). These shall include, at the minimum provisions
246 covering the following:

- 247 a. Operational year: Determine and report to OSG on a quarterly basis.
- 248 b. Frequency of meeting: Meetings will be held once per quarter at a minimum.
- 249 c. Agenda: A meeting agenda and appropriate background material is to be made
250 available to the members.

251

2. Records and Reporting:

252 a. Minutes of each JOAG meeting will be developed and approved by a majority of
253 the JOAG Voting Members and/or by the JOAG Chair.

254 b. Minutes and reports of the JOAG will be distributed in accord with Item IV (5) (C)
255 FUNCTIONS.

256 c. The JOAG must establish a system to maintain a permanent file of the official
257 minutes and reports of the PAC.

258 d. JOAG Chair will be prepared and available to brief the SG and DSG, or their
259 representative, and their Senior Advisor quarterly as scheduled by OSG.

260 3. Executive Secretary: The Executive Secretary must be a member of the Voting
261 Membership.

262 4. Quorum: A Quorum consists of at least 50 percent of the JOAG Voting
263 Membership. An alternate attending in lieu of the member shall be counted in
264 determining the quorum requirement.

265 5. Voting: Where voting is required or appropriate, i.e., election of the Chair, action
266 will be determined by the simple majority of those Voting Members present.

267 6. Subcommittees: Where the JOAG elects to establish standing or ad hoc
268 subcommittees, said membership may include non-JOAG Voting Members
269 provided that the Chair of the subcommittee is, when practicable, a Voting
270 Member of the JOAG.

271

272 Revised, February 10, 2023

273 **Decision:**

274

275

276 Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Date _____

277 Vivek Murphy, MD, MBA

278 VADM, USPHS

279 U.S. Surgeon General

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH
SERVICE**

CHARTER

JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP

I. MISSION

The Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) is a public health professional group whose purpose is to provide advice and consultation to the Surgeon General and other Corps and non-Corps entities on interests and concerns specific to junior officers in the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

II. RELATIONSHIP OF THE JUNIOR OFFICER ADVISORY GROUP TO THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)

The JOAG provides advice and consultation to the Surgeon General, Chief Professional Officers (CPOs), Professional Advisory Committees (PACs), the Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF), and other Commissioned Corps groups on issues relating to professional practice and personnel activities affecting junior officers in the USPHS Commissioned Corps. The JOAG members represent junior officers from all USPHS categories, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Operating Divisions and Staff Divisions (OPDIVs/STAFFDIVs), and those non-HHS programs routinely staffed by Commissioned Corps personnel. The JOAG consists of knowledgeable professionals who represent a cross-section of the interests, concerns, and responsibilities of junior officers of all categories in organizations staffed by USPHS personnel.

III. OBJECTIVES

The JOAG serves in a resource, advisory, and liaison capacity to assist in the development and coordination of activities related to junior officers in the Commissioned Corps with the specific functions of:

1. Identifying and advocating on behalf of junior officer issues and concerns.
2. Assisting the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR) or its successors or assignees, the PACs, and the CPOs in the assessment of policies, personnel needs, and in recruitment, training, utilization, and recognition of junior officers.
3. Developing position papers, statistical reports, and/or guidelines where appropriate, to advice and comment on issues relating to staffing and utilization issues, professional practice and personnel activities affecting junior officers.

4. Promoting junior officer development and utilization.
5. Promoting cooperation and communication between junior and senior officers throughout the USPHS.
6. Serving as a liaison between junior officers and other USPHS or external components and providing advice and consultation to the Agency Heads and OPDIV/STAFFDIV upon request.
7. Serving as communication link and information resource for junior officers.

IV. FUNCTIONS

1. Provide general professional advice and recommendations:
 - a. Review and comment on issues referred to JOAG by the Surgeon General, Chief Professional Officers, PAC Chairs, Special Initiatives Workgroups, Agency Heads, and/or Program Heads.
 - b. Deliberate issues, develop findings, and present recommendations to groups designated in Section IV, Subsection 1(a).
 - c. Provide advice on the professional aspects of junior officership (e.g., new technologies, regulations, curricula, roles, etc.)
 - d. Provide advice on ethical and professional standards issues that impact junior officers.
 - e. Review and provide recommendations concerning proposed or needed changes to appointment standards and professional requirements (e.g., licensure required to maintain high quality staff.)
2. Act as a resource for and provide junior officer career development:
 - a. Advise on Commissioned Corps practices concerning career development.
 - b. Advise on operating practices concerning the appropriate/optimum use of personnel designed to best meet USPHS needs and the needs of the individual.
 - c. Advise on issues related to USPHS promotion practices.
 - d. Provide recommendations for the selection of candidates for training and/or other career development options.

- e. Identify both continuing and long-term intramural/extramural education needs of junior officers, and identify and recommend training and/or experience opportunities designed to meet these needs.
 - f. If requested by Agency Heads or OPDIVs/STAFFDIVs, review applications for long-term training, assess appropriateness of requested training in terms of the individuals and the services needed, and provide recommendations for the approval and disapproval of such requests.
 - g. Provide professional development (e.g., JOAG Journeyman Speaker Series, JOAG Job Shadowing Program, JOAG Peer to Peer Network).
3. Provide advice and assistance on staffing issues:
- a. Assess and project the need for junior officer staffing levels throughout the USPHS, when requested.
 - b. Provide advice on the goals, objectives, and procedures designed to meet junior officer staffing needs.
 - c. Provide guidance for recruitment to the short-term student affiliation programs (COSTEP, summer students, etc.). Facilitate mentorship for these officers when appropriate.
 - d. Develop, and/or review and critique USPHS recruitment materials, procedures, and programs. Assist in the development of orientation materials for newly-hired junior officers and provide advice/recommendations concerning orientation.
 - e. Help establish networks of current junior officers who can assist and facilitate recruitment activities for junior officers.
 - f. Provide guidance to approved USPHS recruiters concerning the recruitment of qualified junior officer candidates.
4. Communicate and encourage appropriate use of awards/recognition systems:
- a. Identify, establish, and help administer special professional JOAG awards.
 - b. Promote awareness of the existing award programs and opportunities.
5. Serve as a communication link and information resource for JOAG:
- a. Communicate to the PACs and other professional groups and programs (MOLC, COF Board, etc.) information concerning professional, ethical, and technical issues relating to junior officers.

- b. Encourage individual membership in, and involvement with, professional organizations and societies in order to promote open communication with non-federal colleagues.
- c. Ensure the distribution of minutes and/or other JOAG-developed materials to the extent possible and appropriate to junior officers. Ensure the availability of JOAG minutes to other PACs and the Office of the Surgeon General through the JOAG website.

This list of functions is not all inclusive. JOAG has the responsibility to identify and add functions as necessary to carry out its objectives. Such functions shall be in concert with the overall mission of JOAG.

V. MEMBERSHIP

1. **Basic Eligibility Requirement:** At the time of appointment to the voting membership or extension of their appointment (Section VII, Number 2), each JOAG member shall be an active duty officer at or below the rank of Lieutenant Commander (LCDR/O-4), and not be eligible for promotion to the temporary rank of Commander (CDR/O-5) prior to July 1st of the second year of their appointment term. A JOAG voting member may hold a simultaneous membership in their respective PAC, if permitted by the PAC. If a VM is promoted to O-5 prior to the end of their JOAG term, the VM is expected to complete the remainder of the JOAG operational year in which the officer was promoted.
2. **General eligibility:** Staff from any Agency or OPDIV/STAFFDIV may serve on JOAG as a voting member, so long as they meet the basis eligibility requirements listed in Section V.
3. **Size of the JOAG:** The JOAG shall have 21 voting members to ensure that all of the Committees are led by voting members. If in the event that there is a new Committee established or one that is dissolved, JOAG shall increase or decrease the voting membership to ensure that we have voting members leading all of the Committees.
4. **Organizational Representation:** In order to provide the range of experiences and perspectives necessary for addressing issues before JOAG, every effort must be made to have the broadest representation possible among all agencies that are routinely staffed by junior officers in the Commissioned Corps.
5. **Geographic Considerations:** The JOAG shall have, as voting members, at least two individuals whose regular duty station is geographically removed by a distance of 75 miles or more from the Washington and Atlanta Metropolitan areas.
6. **Gender and Minority Representation:** Every effort will be made to assure that the JOAG does not consist (1) entirely of men or entirely of women, or (2) entirely of one race or ethnicity, so long as no selection is made to the JOAG solely on the basis of gender or race.

7. **Personnel System:** JOAG will consist entirely of junior officers commissioned in the USPHS.
8. **Rank Restrictions:** Voting membership in JOAG is restricted to officers at rank of Lieutenant Commander (LCDR/O-4) and below.
9. **PAC Representation:** At a minimum, a voting member must be selected from each of the USPHS categories.
10. **Ex-Officio Members (non-voting):** The former JOAG Chair may serve 1 year as an ex-officio member, regardless of rank. The JOAG Senior Advisor is an ex-officio member with a 3 year term. Ex-officio members need not meet the basic eligibility requirements identified above.
11. **Liaison Members:** The JOAG shall have formal and informal liaisons who interact with the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR) or its successors or assignees, the CPO/PAC Chairs Group, the Minority Officer Liaison Committee (MOLC), each categorical Professional Advisory Committee (PAC), the Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF), and the Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board (CCWIAB). Liaisons may be identified and selected, as needed, to address ad hoc issues of importance to the JOAG. The JOAG Chair shall assign JOAG liaisons to these groups.
12. **JOAG Senior Advisor (non-voting):** The Senior Officer Advisor to the JOAG is an Ex-Officio member with a three-year term. The Senior Advisor is expected to be a consultant to the JOAG and advise the JOAG on its issues, concerns, policies and procedures. The Senior Advisor may advocate for the JOAG, but may not officially represent the JOAG. The Senior Advisor must be an officer ranked O-6 and above and can work for any agency. The Office of the Surgeon General will solicit nominations for the JOAG Senior Advisor. Application packets received for the JOAG Senior Advisor will be reviewed and discussed amongst the JOAG voting membership. Nominees for the JOAG Senior Advisor will be interviewed by the JOAG voting membership and ranked in order of preference. This list will be provided to the Surgeon General who will make the final selection and appoint the Senior Advisor to JOAG.

VI. NOMINATION PROCESS

1. Annually, the JOAG Membership Committee will solicit nominations for upcoming JOAG voting membership vacancies via Listserv solicitations, on the JOAG website as well as through the PACs. Self-nominations are acceptable. After applications are received, the JOAG Membership Committee will notify the appropriate Chief Professional Officer (CPO) and respective Agency Head (Agency Commissioned Corps Liaison) in writing concerning nominees under consideration from their respective professional disciplines/programs, and, if necessary, make requests for additional nominees meeting the membership requirements as set forth in Section V. The nominee's Agency Head or CPO has the option of eliminating, from consideration, nominees from their respective agency or category.

The JOAG Membership Committee will collect and prepare all application packets for review by the rest of the voting membership. Eligible voting members will review and make member selections. The Membership Committee will review all agency/CPO responses and present their selections to the JOAG. The JOAG will review and approve the Membership Committee selections for new voting members. The JOAG recommendations and accompanying nomination materials will be transmitted to the Surgeon General for concurrence and appointment.

2. This nomination process shall be conducted so that the final nomination package is available for consideration by the Surgeon General no less than sixty (60) calendar days prior to the expiration of any regular term of membership (August 1 of each term year).
3. Should the need arise to fill an unexpired term, the same process used for regular term appointments will be followed, except that the nomination package will be conveyed to the Surgeon General as soon as possible for action.

VII. TERM OF APPOINTMENT

1. The term of appointment for a voting member will be two years. Terms will be staggered so that approximately one-half of the terms will expire annually. The JOAG operational year begins October 1.
2. If the election of a member to the position of Chair-Elect on the JOAG would necessitate an extension beyond the officer's initial membership term, their term will be automatically extended. The extension can be up to 1 year. However, once a member has accumulated four years of service on the JOAG, they are not eligible for term extensions, regardless of circumstance.
3. Cognizant of the demands of the member's primary work responsibilities, and the JOAG's need to conduct business, each voting member shall appoint and inform the Chairperson and Executive Secretary of a single individual who can serve as their alternate. Such alternates do not have voting privileges when serving in the place of a primary member. The alternate does not have to be of the same category or rank as the voting member. It is the responsibility of the primary JOAG member to keep the alternate fully informed and knowledgeable of JOAG activities.
4. Any JOAG member who frequently misses meetings in a year without just cause can, at the discretion of the JOAG, be asked to voluntarily resign from the JOAG, or the JOAG can initiate a request to the Surgeon General to terminate said membership and so inform the Agency and CPO.

VIII. JOAG Chair

1. **Election and Role of Chair:** The JOAG Chair will be elected by the voting membership.

2. **Term of the Chair:** The JOAG Chair shall be elected as the Chair-Elect in the year prior to serving as Chair. If a circumstance arises where the Chair-Elect is unavailable to progress to Chair, the JOAG may choose to elect a Chair without serving first as Chair-Elect. Alternately, the JOAG may choose to re-elect an incumbent Chair for one additional year if the Chair-Elect is unwilling or unable to progress to Chair in the subsequent year and the incumbent Chair has not been promoted to the rank of Commander. In no case will any Officer be allowed to serve more than two years as the JOAG Chair.
3. At the expiration of the Chair's membership term, the Chair may serve an additional year as an ex-officio member, regardless of rank. The election of the Chair-Elect, Vice Chair, Financial Liaison and Executive Secretary can be found in the JOAG Bylaws.

IX. **(OMITTED)**

X. **OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES**


1. The JOAG shall develop its own internal operations and procedures (Bylaws), but these shall include, at the minimum, the following:
 - a. **Operational Year:** Determine the day and month chosen as the beginning of its operational year.
 - b. **Frequency of Meetings:** At a minimum, meetings will be held once per quarter.
 - c. **Agenda:** A meeting agenda, with appropriate background material, is to be made available to the members.
2. Records and Reporting:
 - a. Minutes of each JOAG general membership meeting will be developed and approved by the JOAG voting members.
 - b. Minutes and reports of the JOAG will be distributed in accord with Section IV (FUNCTIONS), Subsection 5 (c).
 - c. JOAG must establish a system to maintain a permanent file of the official minutes and reports of JOAG.
3. **Executive Secretary:** The Executive Secretary must be a JOAG voting member.
4. **Quorum:** A quorum consisting of at least 50 percent of the JOAG voting membership is required for voting.

5. **Voting:** Where voting is required or appropriate, i.e., election of the Chair, action will be determined by the simple majority of those voting members present so long as a quorum is met.

6. **Committees:** Where JOAG elects to establish standing or ad-hoc committees, said membership may include non-JOAG voting members provided that the Chairman of the committee is a voting member of JOAG.

[Revision, April 5, 2016]

Decision:

Approved  _____ Disapproved _____ Date April 5, 2016
Vivek M
VADM, USPHS
Surgeon General