

Tips and Tricks: Military Customs & Courtesies

USPHS MISSION: To protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our Nation.

MOTTO: In Officio Salutis (In the Service of Health)

CORE VALUES (“Officership”): Leadership, Service, Integrity, Excellence

January 4, 1889: USPHS Birthday!

Uniform:

- 1) Never drag your anchors! The “crown” of the anchor should be at the front.
- 2) Do not appear in uniform when under the influence of alcohol.

Saluting:

1. Always initiated by junior officer to a senior officer
 - a. Accompany salute with greeting “Good morning, Sir/Ma’am”
2. Always returned by the officer saluted
3. Hand drops sharply *after* saluted officer has dropped his/hers
4. No saluting indoors (covered area)
5. Always when in uniform (normally not given if in civilian clothes)
6. National Anthem (“Colors”):
 - a. Whenever/wherever played, all personnel in uniform (not in formation) face the flag (or music if flag not in view).
 - b. Stand at attention with salute and held until last note.
 - c. If indoors- stand at attention and face flag or music- do not salute.
 - d. If not in uniform- stand at attention, remove headdress (if any) with right hand and place right hand over heart.
 - e. Vehicles in motion will be halted on base until finished.
7. Proper Hand salute:
 - a. Right hand, until tip of forefinger touched lower part of headdress or forehead, slightly above and to the right of the right eye (thumb and fingers joined, palm to left (avoids showing palm), upper arm horizontal, forearm inclined at 45-degree angle).

Covers:

- 1) Cover may be removed when entering, departing, or while riding or driving on and off base in a privately owned vehicle (POV) or bicycle.
- 2) Covers should be worn by the driver of a POV when entering a military installation if required to return a salute.
- 3) Covers must be worn outdoors whenever in uniform (unless supervisor designates a specified area, such as a parking lot, a “covered” area).

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Rank:

- 1) Identify officer ranks/insignias of sister services ([page 3](#) below).
- 2) Always walk on the left side of a more senior officer.
- 3) If superior rank officer enters a room, the first officer who sees them, calls the room to “Attention”, but does not salute.
- 4) When enter/exit a vehicle, junior officer is first to enter and senior officer first to exit.

Uniformed Services (in order of precedence, when in formations):

- 1) [United States Army](#) (USA)
- 2) [United States Marine Corps](#) (USMC)
- 3) [United States Navy](#) (USN)
- 4) [United States Air Force](#) (USAF)
 - a. Initially formed as part of the US Army as “US Army Air Corps” and became the “US Army Air Forces” before becoming USAF.
- 5) [United States Space Force](#) (USSF)
- 6) [United States Coast Guard](#) (USCG)
- 7) [United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps](#) (USPHS)
- 8) [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps](#) (NOAA)

Federal executive Departments:

- 1) Department of Defense (DOD): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force
- 2) Department of Homeland Security (DHS): Coast Guard
- 3) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): USPHS
- 4) Department of Commerce (DOC): NOAA

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Referencing: *Leadership, Protocol, & Service Standards (second edition 2014)- U.S. Public Health Service Officer's Guide*
https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/molc/documents/officership_protocol.pdf
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/ccis/documents/CCPM26_1_2.pdf

Uniformed Service Rank Chart

GRADE	Department of Health & Human Services				Department of Defense			RANK
	Sea Services				Land Services			
	U.S. Public Health Service	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	Coast Guard	Navy	Army	Air Force	Marine Corps	
01								Second Lieutenant
02								First Lieutenant
03								Captain
04								Major
05								Lieutenant Colonel
06								Colonel
07								Brigadier General
08								Major General
09								Lieutenant General
10								General



Chart provided by HHS (<https://www.templateroller.com/template/204423/uniformed-service-rank-chart.html>)

Note: US Space Force wear modified USAF uniforms and has USAF rank/insignia