



**Environmental Health Officer
Professional Advisory Committee**



The EHO Assessment

October 2021 News and Updates

A place to learn about current events and updates from the EHOPAC

EHOPAC Leadership Message

Welcome to another edition of the all-digital format for EHO News and Updates!

Disclaimer: This newsletter/article is for informational purposes only and does not reflect official views of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps or USPHS Commissioned Corps leadership.

EHO's

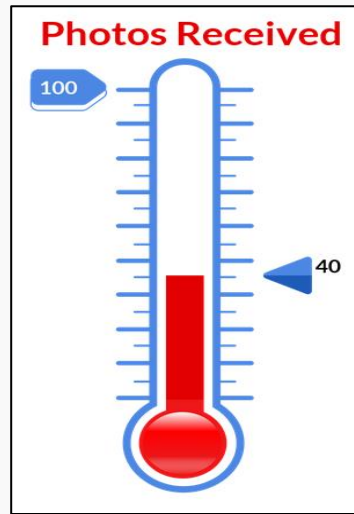
October is upon us! We hope by the time you read this issue you will have enjoyed all of the messaging, networking, and webinars from Environmental Health Month. I truly enjoyed all of the thought-provoking sessions, community building, and esprit de Corps, and I hope you did too. We will be working to get much of the recorded content available for you to access in case you couldn't join the live sessions or just want to go back and reference it later. This month we'll be looking forward to our executive committee elections and beginning transition planning for the upcoming operational year. We also want to thank CDR Travis Bowser for his steadfast service to the EHOPAC the past 6 years, as he rotates off at the end of the year. His service to the Career Development Subcommittee has been essential in the maintenance and development of many products like the EHO CV template and helping us crosswalk the old and new benchmarks. He will be missed! We also want to welcome LT Braden Hickey, who was voted in as an IHS voting member for a 2022-2024 term. We are looking forward to the energy, enthusiasm, and innovation she will surely bring to the PAC. Finally, we will be engaged in end-of-year mentoring and information sharing as we hope to prepare Public Health Service officers for another promotion submission cycle. We encourage you to work with your mentor if you have specific questions. (If you don't have a mentor, please sign up

to get one!) We hope you enjoy this issue and find the information useful. If you have any questions or concerns just let us know.

Important EHOPAC Subcommittee Updates

Communications:

Figure 1. Photobook Goal Tracker



The final deadline to submit photos for the **2021 EHOs in Action photobook** is **October 31!** We need a last-minute rush of submissions to create a robust photobook to present to Commissioned Corps leadership and to raise awareness of the great work EHOs do. Please submit photos from your duty station, deployments (USPHS Commissioned Corps or agency), COSTEP assignments, physical fitness events, volunteer work, or recruitment events.

The **2021 EHOs in Action photobook** raises USPHS Commissioned Corps leadership's awareness of the great work EHOs do. Please submit photos from your duty station, deployments (USPHS Commissioned Corps or agency), COSTEP assignments, physical fitness events, volunteer work, or recruitment events.

In addition to photos of EHOs in action, we also welcome photos of interesting scenery or events that represent unique work, an environmental health issue, or an accomplishment. Think creatively!

Request:

- Send high resolution photos from 2021 to CDR Christopher Smith at nxz0@cdc.gov with "EHOs In Action photobook submission" in the subject line.
- Include a short description (a sentence or two) that can be used as a caption and identifying the Public Health Service officers in the photo.

- Photo release forms are required for images with non-USPHS Commissioned Corps people. Please email CDR Christopher Smith (nxz0@cdc.gov) or LCDR April Hill (April.hill@hhs.gov) for the form.
- 2021 photos will be accepted through October 2021.

Readiness:

CCHQ Mask Guidance

Consistent with CDC guidance issued 7/27/2021, RADM Orsega announced updated mask guidance for Public Health Service officers on 7/29/2021. In areas of [substantial or high community transmission](#) as determined by CDC, Public Health Service officers, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear face masks inside of Federal buildings. All Public Health Service officers in a deployed status are required to wear face masks, practice physical distancing, and avoid large group outings. Where a locality has imposed additional pandemic-related requirements more protective than those set forth and required by CCHQ, those requirements should be followed in that locality.

Required Readiness and Officership Trainings

Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) is providing new training for all Public Health Service officers to promote improved readiness and officership. The training topics identified below were influenced by an analysis of feedback and data points from temporary duty, deployment, and OPDIV assignments. This initial set of training courses address relevant cultural, ethical, and deployment readiness topics. Courses are available now in the Commissioned Corps Learning Management System (CCLMS).

- Cultural Awareness
- Harassment
- Resiliency
- Ethics

Upon completion of the required training and the post-training plan evaluations, you will be able to download a certificate of completion. Completion data for all Public Health Service officers will be tracked and managed by CCHQ. Public Health Service officers are not required to upload training certificates to their eOPF. **All required training must be completed by December 31, 2021.**

Reminder: Get your Annual Flu Shot

The annual influenza shot is now available. Readiness checks for influenza vaccination do not occur between September and December, which allows Public Health Service officers to complete this readiness requirement and **submit documentation via the eDOC-U upload no later than December 31, 2021.** You will see an “N/A” on the Officer Secure Area dashboard for influenza in the 90-day projection through December. If your influenza vaccine records haven’t been uploaded and received by the Medical Affairs Branch (MAB), you will see “Not Qualified” in the January

2022 column, so pay attention to your Readiness and Deployment Branch (RDB) Self-Service immunization record and the OSA dashboard to ensure the vaccination record is received.

Readiness Status and Pre-Administration Checks for Promotion

Please continue to monitor your readiness status on the officer dashboard, which displays projected or future readiness status beginning with next month's readiness check. Report any concerns to the readiness team at PHSReadiness@hhs.gov. Do not wait until you are notified of current or historic readiness non-compliance. Per policy, Public Health Service officers have 90 days to adjudicate their readiness records should there be any errors regarding the determination of an officer's readiness status (refer to [POM 821.75](#)). This will ensure you are evaluated for promotion, if in the eligibility cohort for PY2022.

Mentoring and Orientation:

Mentoring Moments and Tips

[NIH-HHS – Mentor/Mentee Meeting Discussion Items](#)

NIH has a helpful checklist of conversation starters and activities to boost mentoring sessions. For example, share career stories, discuss mentee's strengths and how to enhance their growth, and Identify/refine 1-3 objectives to work on together.

Training and Events:

The Training and Events subcommittee hosted another successful Virtual Training Series in September. Topics included COVID-19, virtual networking, promotion, awards and environmental justice. From senior leaders to junior EHOs, thank you to all the speakers and attendees!

Environmental Justice Workgroup:

The newly formed EHOPAC Environmental Justice (EJ) Working Group (EJWG) partnered with the Training and Events Subcommittee to offer a virtual training on September 21, 2021. The event was organized and moderated by LCDR Christine Lloyd and LT Janesa Licorish. The training served to (1) introduce EHOs to key EJ concepts, and (2) spotlight EHO engagement with underserved and overburdened communities. The day opened with remarks from the EHOPAC Chair and continued with three presentations and a panel discussion. Sessions were recorded and will be available on the Commissioned Corps Learning Management System. Public Health Service officers will be notified when the trainings are live.

EHOPAC Working Groups like the EJWG are term-limited to two years of activity before either dissolving or converting to a long-term subcommittee. EHOs are uniquely positioned and qualified to

help advance HHS and national priorities to achieve greater health equity for EJ communities. The EJWG asks for your input in informing future EJ engagement efforts of the EHOPAC and EHO category, and more broadly.

Your Feedback is Needed

- How can the working group better engage with EHOs? Are there opportunities to collaborate with the PHS more broadly?
- What type of EJ resources and training would be most beneficial to EHOs?
- How can we spotlight the contributions of EHOs in advancing EJ and communicate our impact to PHS leadership and our Agencies?

Please provide responses and any other feedback to CDR Michelle Dittrich (yhf8@cdc.gov) and LCDR Aaron Niman (niman.aaron@epa.gov).

Officer Leader Profile

We are happy to share another **Officer Leader Profile**, spotlighting fearless leaders in our category!

LCDR Steven Galvez
Emergency Response Coordinator/FDA
Fresno, CA

I am currently an Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) with the Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) Office of Human and Animal Food Operations – Division West 5. I recently started this position at the end of August 2021. As an ERC, I monitor and coordinate division responses to national emergencies, disasters, consumer complaints, tampering, epidemiological investigations, industry reported issues, and emergency preparedness exercises. I serve as District liaison and technical expert for all state and local health departments for all outbreak and emergency coordination activities in California, Nevada, Hawaii, and Pacific Islands. I also assist in coordination of state Rapid Response Teams (RRT) and advise RRTs during activation and response to outbreaks, emergencies, and special events. Flexibility has been key when working with different individuals. I learned this immediately when I first became a Supervisory Consumer Safety Officer with the FDA, supervising a team of 8-12 Consumer Safety Officers who were conducting human and animal food inspections. When I first entered the position, I thought each of them would adapt to my leadership style. This was far from the truth and I had to come to the reality that I should not just maintain one leadership style. Things became much easier when I became much more flexible and adapted to each individual person. You cannot treat each person equally, but you can treat them all fairly and that was something I learned early on as a leader. I will carry over all the skills I have learned throughout my career to help me with other government officials within my area of responsibility.

Career Highlights/Accomplishments

- Emergency Response Coordinator during the 2019 vaping outbreak that caused six illness and three deaths in the Pacific Northwest.
- Transportation Unit Lead in Puerto Rico during Hurricane Irma/Maria, coordinated over 100 rental cars and the logistics of moving over 100 responders throughout Puerto Rico.

Education/training



Figure 2. LCDR Galvez

“Change might not be fast and it isn’t always easy. But with time and effort, almost any habit can be reshaped.”

~Charles Duhigg,
The Power of
Habit

- BS Environmental Health – California State University, Fresno in 2006
- MA Emergency and Disaster Management – American Military University in 2020
- REHS/RS, CP-FS, and CCFS through NEHA

Professional associations

- Member, National Environmental Health Association
- Vice President, Uniformed Service Environmental Health Association
- International Health Committee Chair, Washington State Environmental Health Association

Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) Updates

COER 2021:

The 2021 annual COER covers the period from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021.

Important Dates for the 2021 Annual COER

- Online Annual COER is available to officers on **1 October 2021**
- Online Annual COER is due to the Rater by **31 October 2021**
- Online Annual COER is due to the Reviewing Official (RO) by **30 November 2021**
- Online Annual COER is due to the Agency Liaison by **31 December 2021**
- Online Annual COER is due to Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) by **15 January 2022**

COER Policy

- As a reminder, the latest COER policy takes effect starting with the current evaluation year (1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021).
- Please review [COER CCI 351.01](#) and [COER POM 821.73](#) for any changes from previous years.

Promotion Year 2022 CV Format

For Promotion Year 2022, RADM Taylor and the EHOPAC Executive Committee recommend Public Health Service officers **continue to use the old format and ensure your CV addresses the new benchmarks.**

The old format can be found on the [EHOPAC Website Resources Page](#), under **Career Development - Current CV, CV Cover Sheet, and Continuing Education Summary Templates**.

This includes:

- **CV Template**, Updated June 2020 (Microsoft Word: 48KB, 6 pages)
- **CV Cover Sheet Template**, Updated June 2020 (Microsoft Word: 22.8 KB, 1 page)
- **CV Cover Sheet Supplemental Guidance**, Updated June 2020 (PDF: 226 KB, 1 page)
- **Continuing Education Summary Template**, Updated May 2020 (Microsoft Word: 31.7 KB, 3 pages)

Transitioning to one CV format **for Promotion Year 2023** is intended to simplify and standardize the promotion process across all categories. In addition, this will provide officers a concise and effective platform to present information to the board members.

For more information on the new CV format, please review the One CV format webinar on the [Learning Management System](#). Also, please reference the Commissioned Corps Management Information System (CCMIS) [promotion website](#) for important announcements, instructions, and information.

Leadership Announcements:

VADM Vivek Murthy has announced **RADM Denise Hinton** as the new Deputy Surgeon General of the United States. RADM Hinton has over 28 years of uniformed service and has served as Chief Scientist at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) since July 2017.

Additionally, **RADM Susan Orsega** will be the Senior Advisor to Assistant Secretary for Health and the Surgeon General. In doing so, she will follow in the footsteps of RADM Joan Hunter who has been serving as Senior Advisor since her term as CCHQ Director.

CCHQ is pleased to announce that **RADM Richard Childs** will be serving as Interim Director of CCHQ effective Monday, October 4th. CCHQ will begin searching for a permanent Director of Commissioned Corps Headquarters in the near future.

Carryover Leave Update:

As a result of our nation's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Public Health Service officers were not able to use their authorized leave in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) is pleased to announce that, as a part of the "Continuing Appropriations Act, 2022" signed by the President on September 30, 2021, officers can now carryover their leave in excess of 60 days for FY 2021.

Officers must still use their carryover annual leave by **September 30, 2023**. You will not have a full three years to use your carryover leave as you did for the leave carried over in 2020.

Upcoming Events

USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium Category Day Speaker

Submission

We are now soliciting speakers for the 2022 EHO Category Day during the USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium, which is tentatively scheduled for **Wednesday, May 25, 2022 (0800-1730) in Glendale, Arizona**. If conditions prevent the Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) from hosting an in-person Symposium, the EHOPAC will plan a Virtual Event featuring the speakers selected for the in-person event. If you are interested in participating as a speaker, please read on! EHOs interested in presenting should submit the following information by COB **Wednesday, October 20, 2021** to the EHO Symposium Planners.

Refer to the 'Submit your 2022 Symposium Abstract' e-mail dated 10/4/2021 for further guidance.

Topics in Public Health: Conversations in Equity Series

Save the Date: 2021 Upcoming Webinars

- October 22: Building Bridges of Trust with Diverse Communities
- November 19: Native American/American Indian Cultural Awareness: The Impact of Historical and Intergenerational Trauma
- December 10: Healthy People 2030: Eliminating Health Disparities and Achieving Health Equity Among Asian American and Native American Pacific Island Populations (AANAPI)

Registration information will be released via email. Sign up for the Listserv [here](#) to receive notifications of all offerings! All presentations will be offered from 2PM – 3PM ET.

Organization of the Month

Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes)

[Project ECHO](#) is a capacity building and information sharing platform started at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center. Using video-conferencing technology to train, advise, and support primary care providers, Project ECHO increases access to specialty treatment in rural and underserved areas for a variety of conditions.

While Project ECHO works towards improving healthcare providers understanding of complex public health issues, most topics and webinars are directly beneficial to the environmental health officer. Recent topics have included: global warming impact on vector-borne illness, heat related health

effects, and climate change. These resources are a helpful tool in communicating environmental health and environmental justice issues to our healthcare provider colleagues.

Register for the [Climate Change and Human Health ECHO](#) series on Wednesday's from 12:00-1:00pm MT.

About EHOPAC News

Do you have a news story to share? Submit your *EHOPAC News* stories or questions for inclusion in a future edition to LCDR Matthew Kozler matthew_kozler@nps.gov, LCDR Tyler White tyler.white@bia.gov, and LT Stephanie Bridges stephanie_bridges@nps.gov!

For More EHOPAC Information:

Visit the [EHOPAC Website](#)

Check out our FACEBOOK pages:

[EHO Closed Facebook Group](#)

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Thank you for all you do,

EHOPAC Communications Subcommittee – Publications Team

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