

**WELCOME TO THE
UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)
ENGINEER CATEGORY**



MACHINATORES VITAE
(Engineering For Life)

September 2023

**Engineer Professional Advisory Committee (EPAC)
Career Development Subcommittee (CDS)**

This document is provided for information only. Commissioned Corps Directives, Policies, and Procedures are regularly updated by the USPHS Commissioned Corps Headquarters. Reference the USPHS Commissioned Corps Management Information System (CCMIS) at <https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/> for authoritative information.



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



Table of Contents

I. First 90 Days (<i>within three drill periods for Ready Reserve officers</i>)	3
II. Within your First Calendar Year.....	4
III. Prior to your first Opportunity for Promotion.....	8
IV. Miscellaneous	11
Document Revision Log	15
Frequently Used Links	15

Engineer Category Motto

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Engineer category's motto is:

“Machinatores Vitae: Paratus, Volens, Peritus.”

Engineering for Life: Ready, Willing, Able.

ENGINEERING FOR LIFE: USPHS Commissioned Corps Engineers are problem solvers who improve human health and quality of life. We stand **READY** to respond immediately, **WILLING** to face uncertainty and risk, and **ABLE** to deliver life-sustaining solutions.



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I. First 90 Days (*within three drill periods for Ready Reserve officers*)

- Become involved with EPAC.
 - Subscribe to the EPAC Listserv: <https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/engineer/>
 - Consider attending the EPAC General Meetings (General Meeting Call-In information is sent via e-mail to those who join the Listserv or can be found on the EPAC website: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/default.aspx>)
 - Learn about EPAC and the opportunities within the EPAC Subcommittees at <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/>
 - EPAC By-laws provide a comprehensive overview of the organization's structure, rules of conduct and several other helpful information: [2023 EPAC By-Laws](#).
 - Consider developing a Mentoring relationship with a senior engineer officer to help with your career
 - The EPAC considers mentoring to be a vital component of career development and enhancement. A strong, viable mentoring program will not only strengthen the career potential of our engineers, but it is also key to developing competent and confident leaders that will be faced with the public health challenges of the 21st century. Request a mentor via EPAC at the following link https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/cd_mentoring.aspx



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II. Within your First Calendar Year

- Ensure you establish and then maintain Basic Readiness standards as soon as possible, preferably no later than the first 3 to 6 months from Call to Active Duty.
 - The standards include, but are not limited to:
 - Current Public Health Update (PHU)
 - The Periodic Health Update (PHU) is required annually and is based on your birthdate. You have the month preceding, during, and following (3 months) your birth month to perform and submit the required components of the PHU. Those officers born at the end of the year have alternative timelines, e.g. January births have January through March to complete the annual exams. Exams will vary depending on medical status, such as vision needs, pregnancy, and verified weight condition. Dental and mental health are included, each with their own documents that must be signed and uploaded into the eOPF for approval. More information can be found at the following link https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/Medical%20Affairs/MA_Periodic_Health_Update.aspx
 - Current BLS certifications (CCI 241.01)
 - Refer to the [USPHS Readiness: Down to Basics](#) and [CCI 241.01](#)
 - Successful completion of all 12 required training modules (Refer to the [USPHS Readiness: Down to Basics](#))
 - Passing Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT)
 - Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT) is the process for officers to demonstrate a minimum level of physical fitness and requirements necessary to ensure officers can meet the rigors of deployment. You must complete the APFT under the observation of an Approved Testing Official, which may include an officer (any service) in person or virtually or a federal employee adult. More information is available here: https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/REDDOG_APFT_m.aspx
 - Current immunizations (https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/Medical%20Affairs/MA_immunizations_m.aspx)



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



- Record of height/weight standards and BMI, if applicable.
(https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/weightstandards_m.aspx)
 - Procuring all required uniforms ([JOAG New Officer Guide](#))
 - Completing your Deployment Preparation Plan,
<https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/deploymentprepplan.aspx>
 - Read and heed email communications from USPHS CCHQ as pertinent updates are typically distributed via email.
 - More information on Readiness Essentials can be found here:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/ReDDOG/REDDOG_essentials_m.aspx#MEMBERSHIP
- Be prepared for deployment. Officers are added to a team (PHS1-S) during or near OBC and should be prepared to deploy for field familiarity within 6 months, as needed.
- USPHS Deployment Information and Master Checklist:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/RedDOG/Forms/Deployment_Checklist_March2016.pdf
 - Deployment Preparation Checklist (PharmPAC):
<https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/documents/DeploymentsPreparation.pdf>
 - Packing list (TPAC): dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/documents/PackingList_8-2021.pdf
 - EPAC Readiness: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/readinessnew.aspx>
 - PHS Deployment Preparation Plan:
<https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/deploymentprepplan.aspx>
 - Deployment Plans with Loved Ones: [deployment/preparing-for-deployment/](#)
 - Prepare a Will: [financial-legal/legal/estate-planning/writing-a-last-will-and-testament/](#)
 - Prepare a POA: [military-life-cycle/friends-extended-family/military-power-of-attorney/](#)



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- Document your APFT score annually.
 - On Form PHS-7044:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/forms/FORMS_Readiness_m.aspx. Officers will complete the form with the signature of the testing official, create a new APFT record within Self-Service and upload a hardcopy document via eDOC-U to supplement the new APFT record. All officers will need to enter the last name of the testing official who views and verifies their APFT, and the remaining fields will auto populate if the testing official is another USPHS Commissioned Corps officer. CCHQ will periodically audit the officer and the observing officer to verify that the APFT was viewed, and information entered into eDOC-U is accurate.
- Maintain Retention Weight Standards.
 - BMI between 19.0 – 27.5 kg/m² – compliant. If BMI is above or below the specified range, then refer to the link
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/weightstandards_m.aspx
- Ensure the completion of any relevant Commissioned Officer's Effectiveness Report (COER).
 - The COER is the annual performance review for Commissioned Officers. Officers will be instructed by CCHQ when to initiate a COER. Evaluation year begins 1 October through 30 September of the following year. There are annual, interim, transfer, and promotion COERs depending on the officer's situation. Officers are recommended to provide language to their rater to assist in writing their statement. The HHS Competency Framework linked below is a great resource for developing the language.
<https://humancapital.learning.hhs.gov/competency/framework.asp> . COERs are accessible through the "Forms" tab within the Officer Secure Area. Policy. A detailed user guide can be found here:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/COER/COER_Index_m.aspx
- Determine your rater and reviewing official for the COER process.
 - Your direct supervisor is your rater. *For ready reserve officers, your regional commander is your rating official.* The supervisor of your direct supervisor is typically your reviewing official. Officers with IHS serving under an MOA for a tribal organization may have an IHS federal supervisor that serves as your reviewing official. Officers detailed to non-HHS agencies or missions may have a different structure and should confirm with their supervisor who will serve in these roles. It should be noted that not all officials responding to the COER are necessarily Commissioned Officers but may be civilians.



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



- If your direct supervisor is a civilian with limited to no experience completing the COER, share pertinent information to assist them in the process.
 - The COER Civilian Training guide linked below will be helpful.
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/COER%20Civilian%20Guide.pdf

- Various situations require a COER:
 - Annual evaluation
 - Rater Change (transfer/interim, separation, or retirement of the officer or rater)
 - Temporary Duty Assignment
 - Adverse action
 - The COER System User Guide provides more info. [COER System User Guide](#)

- Receiving awards and nominating others for awards are an important part of officership:
 - Review CCI 511.01 – Awards Program
(https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/COAP/COAP_award_criteria_m.aspx)



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



III. Prior to your first Opportunity for Promotion

- Understand Non-Competitive Promotions:
 - Only applies to engineer officers eligible for temporary and permanent O-2 and O-3. Non-competitive temporary promotions are not reviewed by a Promotion Board, unless otherwise directed by the Surgeon General (SG). An administrative review is conducted on a quarterly basis to review documentation of eligible Officers. If all criteria are met and all necessary documentation is received by the Director of USPHS Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ), promotions are then granted. More information is available at https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_non_competitive_m.aspx
 - Furthermore, “Reserve [USPHS Commissioned] Corps officers serving on extended active duty who are eligible for permanent promotion to the Assistant (O-2) and Senior Assistant (O-3) grades will be promoted on the first day of the month following the date upon which the officer attains eligibility for promotion provided”:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/ccis/documents/CCPM23_4_1.pdf
- Determine your promotion eligibility dates:
 - Dates required to determine eligibility are located in the Secure Area of the CCMIS website and on your Promotion Information Report (PIR) within your eOPF. These dates are related to an officer’s T&E (time and experience). Officers should review their T&E to ensure it has been calculated properly and work with their respective liaison should they find an error.
- Calculate USPHS promotion eligibility dates:
 - If you would like to, you can calculate this information. Promotion eligibility information is displayed in your Officer Secure Area. Additionally, the Health Services Professional Advisory Committee (HSPAC) has developed a promotion calculator available at https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/hso/documents/USPHS_Promotion_Eligibility_Calculator_v2.xlsx. Additionally, the promotion eligibility dates are also shown on the Officer Secure Area Dashboard.



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



- Understand the competitive promotion checklist:
 - In general, the checklist requires officers to accomplish the following before specified deadlines:
 - eOPF Corrections
 - CV and Cover Page submission
 - Ensure COERs/ROS are available
 - Officer's Statement submission
 - Required License/Certification submission
 - eOPF Support Documents submission (LOA, COA, CEU)
 - Officer Promotion Packet Verification System
 - Additional information is available at:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_checklist_m.aspx
- Review the CV, CV Cover Page and CE Summary Sheet information and templates:
 - It is always best to treat these as a “living” document that is frequently updated as necessary. This ensures critical information isn't missed and allows for an effortless update when the document is needed. Additional guidance and templates are available at the following links:
 - CCHQ: dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_cv
 - EPAC CDS: [CV, CV Cover Page and CE Summary Sheet Template](#)
- Understand what the Reviewing Official's Statement (ROS) is.
 - The ROS is required if the officer is up for promotion. It is generally completed by the Reviewing Official with input from the officer. The ROS addresses the officer's promotion readiness, leadership effectiveness, and contribution to the Agency's mission. Officers are recommended to provide a COER “feeder” to assist raters in developing an accurate narrative of accomplishments. More information is available at:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_ROS_m.aspx



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



- Similarly, understand what the Officer's Statement (OS) is.
 - The OS is a one-page document drafted by the officer to summarize their support of USPHS Commissioned Corps activities, commitment to visibility as an officer, and vision and expectations of a career in the USPHS Commissioned Corps and the USPHS Commissioned Corps mission. The OS is only required if the officer is up for promotion. Detailed instructions and a template are available at:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_OS_m.aspx

- Familiarize yourself with the Promotion Information Report (PIR).
 - The PIR is a “real-time” snapshot of an officer's career within the USPHS Commissioned Corps. It is used by the promotion boards to obtain an overview of the officer up for promotion. It is critical to review the PIR to ensure all information is accurate. Detailed information is available at:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_information_report_m.aspx

- Review and plan your professional development with the Promotion Benchmarks as a guide.
 - The promotion benchmarks are developed by Chief Professional Officers to assist officers with a model for possible career progression. These are guidelines and recommendations, not requirements and also not guarantees of promotion if benchmarks are met. The benchmarks are used by the promotion board to help evaluate each officer up for promotion. More information is available at:
https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_category_benchmarks_m.aspx

- Tips and General Information for uploading information into eOPF:
 - CCHQ: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_eOPF_m.aspx
 - PharmPAC: https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/pharmacy/sc_career_eopf.aspx



**ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET**



IV. Miscellaneous

- Note there is a difference between telework and remote work:
 - The table below provides the similarities and differences between telework and remote work. For more information see, “CCHQ Connect Session #8: Telework Policy – 08/10/22” available within CCMIS>OSA Login> OASH Leadership Presentations & Reports. Policy and FAQ information available at: <https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/TeleworkFaq.aspx>

	Telework	Remote Work
Definition	Common recurring ability to work from home with expectations for periodic work in the office.	No expectation to be work from a formal office at any time.
Duty Station	Assigned agency worksite	Requires remote billet orders with officer’s address listed as duty station.
Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)	Calculated based on the duty station.	
Alternate Worksite (AWS)	Generally considered an employee’s approved telework site.	Not applicable, but able to be utilized for a 2 nd approved worksite (Agency dependent)
Telework Agreement	Can be revoked per the terms of the telework agreement. If revoked, the officer is required to report in person to their assigned duty station.	Not applicable, unless an AWS was approved for a 2 nd site in addition to their duty station.
Traveling	Traveling 250+ miles away from the officer’s duty station requires leave permission, else the officer is considered Absent Without Leave – specific for on-call alert station during on-call months.	If ordered to attend a different location for work besides duty station or an approved AWS, travel is paid according to Joint Travel/Agency Regulations.
Moving residences	Under 250 miles from duty station is permitted with no requirement of formal orders and no moving entitlements. No change in BAH.	PCS orders required to change duty stations. BAH is recalculated for the new place of residence. Be aware of changing leases if you are renting as changing your duty station location without orders may violate regulations. Contact Agency Liaison for specifics on handling PCS timing. If relocating over 50 miles, then the officer is required to have their Agency pay moving entitlements. Requirement not waivable.
MTF	Determined by the proximity to duty station or residence. Officer’s convenience.	
DTF	Selection based on the individual officer’s USPHS Commissioned Corps dental plan policy.	



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



- Schedule leave on eCORPS: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/eCORPS_m.aspx
 - Log into the system to view leave balances and to submit leave requests. Choose the type of leave and the applicable dates. "Bookended" weekends (when you take Friday and Monday off) require you to take annual leave on Saturday and Sunday as well, which the system enters automatically. Your supervisor must approve the leave. After the leave has been taken, you will need to return to the system and verify if the leave was used and/or confirm any changes. For specific questions, contact your Leave Approving Official (LAO) and the USPHS Commissioned Corps Agency Liaison https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/liaison.pdf.

- Consider joining professional organizations/Officership opportunities are relevant to the PHS and the Engineer Category. The following list is not exhaustive:
 - Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) <http://www.same.org>
 - Commissioned Officers Association (COA) <http://www.coausphs.org>
 - American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) <https://www.asce.org/>
 - American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) <https://www.asme.org/>
 - Reserve Organization of America (ROA) <http://www.roa.org>
 - Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) www.amsus.org/
 - The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) <http://www.moaa.org/>
 - National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) <http://www.nspe.org/>
 - Project Management Institute (PMI) <https://www.pmi.org/>
 - Additional organizations are shown here: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/engineer/links-of-interest.aspx>
 - Other Officership opportunities within the CC include JOAG, Minority Officers Liaison Council (MOLC) which is comprised of the four core minority advisory groups:
 - American Indian/Alaska Native Commissioned Officers Advisory Committee.
 - Asian Pacific American Officers Committee
 - Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Committee
 - Hispanic Officers Advisory Committee
 - [JOAG New Officer Guide](#)

- Be aware of the mental health resources available to you:
 - Corps Care is a comprehensive program that assists officers with improving



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



readiness and preparedness, building resiliency, and cultivating healthier lives. More information is available at:

<https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/CorpsCare/About%20CorpsCare.aspx>

- Consider becoming involved in physical fitness alongside other USPHS Commissioned Corps officers:
 - The USPHS Athletics is an excellent group that provides several health outreach opportunities and events to improve fitness and build camaraderie with fellow PHS and non PHS members. [Public Health Service Athletics \(psc.gov\)](https://psc.gov)
- If you enjoy playing certain instruments, consider becoming involved with a USPHS Commissioned Corps group:
 - Yes. The USPHS Commissioned Corps Music Ensemble. This is a unique all-volunteer group consisting of ceremonial band, string and choral ensemble. The group is open to all officers who meet the basic level of readiness status. [Ensemble \(psc.gov\)](https://psc.gov)
- Be aware of this resource guide for USPHS officers expecting to be parents: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/ccwiab/ccwiabresources.aspx>
- Be aware of this resource guide for USPHS officers getting married or divorced, and for dependents surviving the death of a USPHS officer. <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/ccwiab/ccwiabresources.aspx>
- Review uniform wear and purchase information: [JOAG New Officer Guide](https://psc.gov)
- Review available benefits such as Compensation; Life Insurance; Leave, Thrift Savings Plan; Educational and Training Opportunities; VA Home Loan Program; Military Space-Available Travel; Retirement and more: [JOAG New Officer Guide](https://psc.gov)
- Review information regarding a Permanent Change of Station (PCS). Details on arranging your move, allowances, and other details can be found on CCMIS: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/travel/ASSIGNMENTS_travel_relocate_m.aspx
- Review TRICARE medical benefits information as well as separate dental benefits. After joining the TRICARE Active Duty Dental Program (ADDDP), you will need to get an Appointment Control Number (ACN) prior to each routine dental appointment. The ACN should be taken to your dentist to verify your enrollment in the ADDDP like proof of insurance. You can generate your own ACN online [here \(https://secure.addp-ucci.com/daddap/public/acnform.xhtml\)](https://secure.addp-ucci.com/daddap/public/acnform.xhtml) or by calling United Concordia at 1-866-984-2337.



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



- Be familiar with the USPHS Commissioned Corps Issuance System (CCIS) which is the official medium for issuance of policies, procedures, standards, instructions, and information governing personnel management of the USPHS Commissioned Corps: <https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/ccis/CCISForeword.aspx>



ENGINEER PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ENGINEER OFFICER WELCOME PACKET



Document Revision Log

Version	Description of Changes	Date Effective
2.2	Updated content under “Within you first calendar year” to reflect RDB policy, including timeline for readiness and deployment expectations.	09/26/2023
2.1	Updated USPHS and Engineer Seal spacing and Reference to “Corps” changed to “USPHS Commissioned Corps” per branding guidelines, Added link to the 2023 EPAC by-laws, Added frequently used links, Revised FAQ type of format to simple statements to remain consistent with the rest of the document, other minor updates.	07/19/2023
2.0	USPHS and Engineer Seal Updated, Sections removed for redundancy between JOAG New Officer Guide as well as other resources	03/22/2023
1.1	Website links updated	03/01/2016
1.0	Original Document	03/01/2010

Frequently Used Links

USPHS Commissioned Corps Information Management System: <https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/>

RedDOG: https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/REDDOG_APFT_m.aspx

EPAC: <https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/engineer/>

eCORPS: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/eCORPS_m.aspx