



Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service
Scientist Professional Advisory Committee



Mentoring Subcommittee

**SCIENTIST PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(SciPAC)**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE
MENTORING SUBCOMMITTEE**

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EX SCIENTIA VERA • *Truth From Knowledge*

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SciPAC Mentoring Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedures

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I. PURPOSE

The goal of the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) Mentoring Subcommittee (SC) is to provide mentoring services to active duty and ready reserve officers in the Scientist category.

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to supplement the SciPAC Charter and SciPAC SOP by providing specific and detailed guidelines on the duties and responsibilities for each position on the SciPAC Mentoring SC and the operations and procedures currently employed by the SC.

II. GOVERNING BODY AND OFFICERS

a. Organization

i. Structure

The SC consists of a voting Chair and voting/non-voting Co-chair (s; optional) (appointed by the SciPAC Chair), Secretary (optional, appointed by the SC Chair), and SC members. The SC members may lead or co-lead a team, serve as team members, and/or serve as liaisons to other SCs.

ii. Size

There is no limit to the size of the SC. The Chair/Co-chair(s) shall make final determination on whether new members shall be accepted based on the needs of the SC.

iii. Representation

The Chair/Co-chair(s) make efforts to ensure the members are diverse and inclusive of Scientist Officers across OPDIVs, rank, scientific disciplines (e.g., psychologists, epidemiologists, laboratory scientists), gender, racial, and ethnic minority representation, as well as considerations of geography. Information on PHS officer distribution can be obtained from the [Commissioned Corps Management Information System \(CCMIS\)](#). Officers seeking to join the Mentoring SC may be asked to share their curriculum vitae or a statement of interest with SC leadership to match their knowledge, skills, and experience with the needs of the SC.

b. Officers – Roles & Responsibilities

i. Chair

The Chair shall set and provide leadership to ensure the timely completion of SC objectives and to recommend strategies or actions that best address issues affecting mentoring activities. The Chair or a designee (usually a Co-chair) shall accomplish these goals by carrying out the following duties:

- a. Establish the SC roster by recruiting SC members and through open calls for members via the SciPAC listserv
- b. Schedule regular committee meetings with frequency at the Chair's discretion
- c. Provide a written summary of the SC's activities to the SciPAC Executive Secretary monthly, in addition to an oral summary during each full meeting of the SciPAC
- d. Submit the SC section of the SciPAC End of the Year Report to the SciPAC Chair
- e. Ensure timely completion of other SC-related tasks or special projects, as requested by the SciPAC Executive Board
- f. Monitor the activities of teams to ensure completion of goals

ii. Co-chair (s; optional)

The Co-chair(s), if appointed, shall support the Chair in the duties and responsibilities listed in section II.b.i. Because this position is considered optional, the duties and responsibilities of this[ese] Officer(s) are flexible and defined as needed. The Co-chair(s) serve as the Chair if the Chair is unavailable (e.g., deployment).

iii. Secretary (optional)

The Secretary, if appointed, shall provide the following support activities to the Mentoring SC Chair/Co-chair(s):

- a. Document and maintain accurate minutes of the meetings, including the attendance of members
- b. Prepare, distribute, and inform SC members of the agenda and minutes of each meeting
- c. Provide additional support to the Chair/Co-chair(s), as requested
- d. Develop and issue letters of appreciation for SC members

If a Secretary is not appointed, these responsibilities shall belong to the Chair.

iv. Team Leads

Team Leads, shall attend regular meetings of the Mentoring SC and provide a written monthly report of their activities to the Chair, Co-chair(s), and Secretary (if appointed). Team Leads shall ensure timely completion of tasks and special projects as requested by the Chair or Co-chair(s) (See section III.b. for additional details about teams).

v. Subcommittee Members

SC members shall support the Chair/Co-chair(s) with their responsibilities and actively participate in SC activities.

III. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

a. Meetings

The SC shall meet on a regular basis, such as monthly, as designated by the Chair. The Chair may call special meetings of the SC members, based on specific projects, as needed.

b. Teams

The Chair/Co-chair(s) (optional, selected by the SC Chair/Co-Chairs) will develop teams to support the Mentoring SC's goal of providing mentoring services to officers in the Scientist category. At a minimum, Teams will consist of a Team Lead, appointed by the SC Chair. The Team Lead may solicit additional members as needed. The number of teams, their duties, and the number of team members will remain flexible based on what the Chair and Co-chair(s) deem necessary. Current teams and responsibilities include:

- i. **Matching Team** - responsible for the full range of day-to-day activities to ensure a successful mentor-mentee matching program.
 - a. The Matching Team (MT) consists of a Lead and Co-Lead(s) (optional; selected by the SC Chair/Co-Chairs) responsible for supporting the goals of the Team and providing the leadership to ensure the timely completion of Team objectives. SC members shall support the Team Lead/Co-Lead(s) with their responsibilities and actively participate in SC activities.
 - b. The MT includes a subset of officers within the SciPAC Mentoring SC who track and file all documentation related to mentor requests, mentor volunteers, mentor/mentee matches, mentorship agreements, and mentor and mentee applications. The MT also assists mentees with finding a mentor and following up with officers when their mentorship agreements expire. The minimum core duties and responsibilities for the MT are stated below.
 - i. MT Lead and Co-Lead(s)
 - a. Serve as the points of contact for all MT activities
 - b. Provide updates and other requested information to the SC Chair, Co-chairs, and Secretary (if appointed)
 - c. Develop goals and timelines for MT activities in consultation with the SC Chair
 - d. Ensure the MT has the volunteers needed to fulfill all duties
 - e. Ensure all team members are properly trained and have the information needed to fulfill their duties
 - f. Respond to ad-hoc requests for information from mentors and mentees

- g. Report on behalf of the MT at all SC meetings. The report consists of the information outlined above and any other relevant information the MT wishes to share with the Chair and other members of the SC.
 - h. Forward all documents received from the Chair to the appropriate members of the MT and Matching Coordinators (FDA, CDC, other) to facilitate matching mentor and mentees.
 - i. Draft MT reports for each SC meeting, reporting the number of:
 - i. Mentees awaiting assignment
 - ii. Percent of all Scientist officers serving as either a mentor or mentee
 - iii. Mentorship Agreements that were renewed quarterly
 - iv. Total active mentorship agreements on file
 - j. Update the Mentor/Mentee tracking spreadsheet on max.gov or maintain this independently to be entered into the database at a later time (necessary for version control of the database).
 - k. Draft letters of appreciation for all Scientist officers who served as a mentor during any part of the recent operational year. The letter of appreciation template (Attachment A) will be reviewed by the SC and submitted to the SciPAC Chief Professional Officer and Chair for concurrence before dissemination. Every attempt will be made to disseminate letters of appreciation no later than August 31st (the last day) of the current operational year.
- ii. Matching Coordinators
- a. A matching coordinator will be designated for agencies with a significant number of applications, including;
 - i. CDC
 - ii. FDA
 - iii. Others - The Other Agency Coordinator will match Officers in all other OPDIVs and STAFF DIVs.
 - b. Work with officers to make an official match
 - c. Report matches to MT lead and Co-Lead for entry into the tracking database developing the MT report for SC meetings
 - d. Review the applications and agreements received from the MT Lead and Co-Lead
 - e. Send an introductory e-mail to officers who request to serve as mentors (when a match is not being made)
 - f. Send an introductory e-mail to officers requesting a mentor to inform them of the matching process and to ask additional questions (if needed) to assist with identifying a match
 - g. Review the tracking database and mentor applications to identify mentors who fit the mentees request
 - h. Contact potential mentors to determine their availability and to determine if they feel they are a good match for the mentee (based on data from the mentee application)

- i. CC's the MT Lead and Co-Lead(s) on all correspondence to keep the tracking database updated with the match date and matching information
 - j. The Matching Coordinator sends an introductory e-mail to the mentor and mentee and copies all other members of the MT. The message will include the following attachments and include instructions for returning the completed documents to the SC:
 - i. SciPAC Mentorship one-pager
 - ii. SciPAC Mentorship Agreement
 - k. Follows up with official matches if an agreement is not received within two months from the date of the official match e-mail.
 - ii. Secretary
 - Files Mentorship Agreements on max.gov.
 - iii. Renewal Coordinator(s)
 - a. Conducts quarterly renewal inquiries with mentees whose agreement is scheduled to end within the quarter to determine if the agreement will be renewed. If no response is received within one month of the renewal inquiry, the relationship shall be considered inactive.
 - b. If the agreement will not be renewed, mentees are asked if they would like a new mentor.
 - c. If a mentee determines they would like a new mentor, the coordinator informs the Co-Leads to coordinate with the appropriate Matching Coordinator. A mentee may make this request at any time.
 - d. If the agreement will be renewed, the tracking database is updated accordingly with an updated end date and any updated contact information.
 - e. Maintains an archive of discontinued relationships. Inactive relationships can be discontinued at any time as requested by the mentor or mentee.
- c. Applications to become a Mentor or Mentee
 - i. Officers should complete the SciPAC Mentorship Application PDF Form and forward by email their completed application to the MT Lead and Co-Lead or designee.
 - ii. Officers eligible to be a mentor include Scientist officers at the O-4 (with at least one-year time in grade) or higher grades. Eligible Scientist officers in the grade of O-4 will be matched only to Scientist mentees in a grade of O-3 or below.
 - iii. MT Lead and Co-Lead will follow up directly with any officer who submits a request without an application form.

- d. The mentee is responsible for contacting their mentor to complete the Mentorship Agreement. The completed Mentorship Agreement should be returned to the MT Lead and Co-Lead(s) and Matching Coordinators. Mentees are also responsible for responding to annual renewal requests.
 - e. All documents and files containing Scientist officer information shall be stored in folders on max.gov with access limited to team members. Access to max.gov sub-folders is controlled by the Chair/Co-chair(s). A detailed list of mentors (current and archived), mentees, and matches shall be kept by the Team Lead(s) with a copy stored on max.gov.
 - f. To ensure a smooth transition at the end of each operating year, the Team Lead and Co-Lead(s) will provide a copy of the following items to the Mentoring SC Chair/Co-Chair(s): Team’s current procedures, a list of the Team’s annual goals, a list of accomplishments (see Attachment C), a list of officers supporting the team efforts, and a copy of team meeting minutes (if applicable).
- ii. Recruitment Team** – responsible for outreach and recruitment of Scientist officers to serve as mentors and mentees.
- a. The Recruitment Team (RT) consists of a Lead and Co-Lead(s) (optional; selected by the SC Chair/Co-Chairs) responsible for supporting the goals of the Team and providing the leadership to ensure the timely completion of Team objectives. SC members shall support the Team Lead/Co-Lead(s) with their responsibilities and actively participate in SC activities.
 - b. The RT also includes a subset of officers within the SciPAC Mentoring SC who track and file all documentation related to the Peer Support Network (PSN). The minimum core duties and responsibilities for the RT are stated below.
 - i. RT Lead and Co-Lead
 - a. Serve as the points of contact for all RT activities
 - b. Provide updates and other requested information to the SC Chairs
 - c. Develop goals and timelines for RT activities in consultation with the SC Chair/Co-chair(s)
 - d. Ensure the RT has the appropriate number of volunteers to fulfill all duties
 - e. Ensure all team members are properly trained and have the information needed to fulfill their duties
 - f. Report on behalf of the RT at all SC meetings. The report consists of the information outlined above and any other relevant information the RT wishes to share with the Chair/Co-Chair(s) and other members of the SC.
 - g. Forward all documents received from the Chair/Co-Chair(s) to the appropriate members of the RT

- h. Develop documents, announcements, and other solicitation information to support recruitment of Scientist officers based, in part, on specific current needs communicated by the MT
- ii. Peer Support Network (PSN) Coordinators
 - a. Facilitate and provide the opportunity for experienced O-3 Scientist officers (defined as having served on active duty or ready reserve in PHS at least two years) to support and guide new call to active duty (CAD) officers and ease the transition of the new CADs during acclimation into the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS).
 - i. Provide support and one-on-one guidance for new CADs about getting involved in PHS activities and connect new officers with PHS resources by matching new CAD officers with experienced O-3 Scientist officers.
 - ii. Provide early career support, resources, and services information to Scientist officer CADs (attachment B includes a comparison between the PSN and SciPAC Mentoring programs).
 - iii. Draft letters of appreciation (LOA) for all Scientist officers who served as a PSN O-3 Scientist officer during any part of the recent operational year. The LOA template (Attachment A) will be reviewed by the SC and submitted to the SciPAC Chief Professional Officer and Chair for concurrence before dissemination. Every attempt will be made to disseminate LOA no later than August 31st (the last day) of the current operational year.
 - b. The PSN Coordinator(s) shall provide leadership to ensure the timely completion of SC objectives, and recommend strategies or actions that best address issues affecting PSN activities and/or volunteers. The PSN Coordinator(s) or designee(s) shall accomplish these goals by carrying out the following duties:
 - i. Determine the appropriate size of the PSN Unit and staff it appropriately
 - ii. Schedule unit meetings as needed
 - iii. Provide a written summary of the PSN Unit activities to the SC RT monthly/quarterly or as requested
 - iv. Organize and orient PSN Unit members to the tasks they will be expected to complete
 - v. Draft any required recruitment notices
 - vi. Track the matching of new CADs and PSN mentors
 - c. Monitor and track all new Scientist officers completing Officer Basic Course (OBC) and send invitation email to apply for a PSN guide (defined below) match

- i. Review new CAD and O-3 Scientist officer PSN applications to identify an appropriate match
 - ii. Send match email/letter and supplemental documentation to the O-3 Scientist officer match to initiate contact with new CAD
 - iii. Track matches in the Excel match sheet on Max.gov
 - iv. Solicit O-3 Scientist officers to apply for/join the pool of available guides
 - v. After a period of 1-year, coordinate an opportunity for PSN participants to be matched with an official SciPAC mentor, if not already matched
 - d. New CAD Officer: After being matched with an experienced O-3 Scientist officer, meets as needed with this officer to receive feedback and advice
 - i. Meets with experienced O-3 Scientist officer regularly (monthly or as needed)
 - ii. Discusses pressing topics with the experienced O-3 Officer
 - e. PSN guide: An experienced O-3 Scientist officer who is willing to meet as needed with one or more new CAD officers and provide feedback.
 - i. Meets as needed with matched new CAD Scientist officer (monthly or as needed)
 - ii. Provides feedback to specific questions posed by the New CAD. This feedback can include advice on such topics as:
 - a. Uniform wear
 - b. Permanent chance of station (PCS)
 - c. First promotion cycle
 - d. Awards
 - e. Any other topic related to the first few years in PHS
 - c. All documents and files containing Scientist officer information shall be stored in folders on max.gov with access limited to team members. Access to max.gov sub-folders is controlled by the Chair/Co-Chair. A detailed list of current experienced O-3 Scientist officer volunteers and matched CADs shall be kept by the Team Lead and Co-Lead(s) with a copy stored on max.gov.
 - d. To ensure a smooth transition at the end of each operating year, the Team Lead/Co-Leads will provide a copy of the following items to the Mentoring SC Chair/Co-Chair(s): the team's current procedures, a list of the team's annual goals, a list of accomplishments (Attachment C), a list of Officers supporting the team efforts, and a copy of team meeting minutes (if applicable).
- iii. Capacity Building Team** – responsible for developing activities and products to increase mentor and mentee skills to facilitate successful mentoring relationships.

- a. The Capacity Building Team (CBT) consists of a Lead and Co-Lead(s) (optional; selected by the SC Chair/Co-Chairs) responsible for supporting the goals of the Team and providing the leadership to ensure the timely completion of Team objectives. SC members shall support the Team Lead/Co-Lead(s) with their responsibilities and actively participate in SC activities.
- b. The CBT also includes a subset of officers within the SciPAC Mentoring SC who coordinate specific mentoring trainings. The minimum core duties and responsibilities for the CBT are stated below.
 - i. CBT Lead and Co-Lead(s)
 - a. Serve as the points of contact for all CBT activities
 - b. Provide updates and other requested information to the SC Chair and Co-Chair(s)
 - c. Develop goals and timelines for CBT activities in consultation with the SC Chair and Co-Chair(s)
 - d. Ensure the CBT has the volunteers needed to fulfill all duties
 - e. Ensure all team members are properly trained and have the information needed to fulfill their duties
 - f. Report on behalf of the CBT at all SC meetings. The report consists of the information outlined above and any other relevant information the CBT wishes to share with the Chair and Co-Chair(s) and other members of the SC.
 - g. Forward all documents received from the Chair and Co-Chair(s) to the appropriate members of the CBT
 - h. Develop training materials and programs in various formats (e.g., presentations, discussion panels, guides) to support and maximize increasing mentor skill building based, in part, on specific current needs communicated by the MT and RT.
 - ii. Category Day Liaison(s)
 - a. Participate in the planning and coordination of an on-site or virtual mentoring activity taking place during the annual Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) Scientific and Training Symposium Category Day to promote mentoring skill building.
 - i. Participate in the annual planning of Category Day
 - ii. Advocate for time on the agenda for a mentoring activity, training, or panel presentation
 - iii. Develop an activity within the allowable constraints, with input and guidance from the CBT Lead/Co-Lead(s)
 - b. Identify on-site or virtual facilitators for mentoring activity
 - c. Coordinate development and availability of all necessary materials for mentoring activity
 - d. Provide names and roles of all Scientist officers who support Category Day mentoring activities to Category Day planning committee to ensure appropriate recognition

- e. Review Category Day evaluation feedback to improve planning and execution of on-site or virtual activity
- c. To ensure a smooth transition at the end of each operating year, the Team Lead/Co-Leads will provide a copy of the following items to the Mentoring SC Chair/Co-Chair(s): Team's current procedures, a list of the team's annual goals, a list of accomplishments (Attachment C), a list of officers supporting the team efforts, and a copy of team meeting minutes (if applicable).

All teams may develop further written procedures that detail specific duties and/or functions. Procedures will be reviewed and revised as needed.

c. Review of Mentoring Subcommittee Documents

The Chair and/or Co-Chair(s) may request one or more teams to work with other teams to coordinate or facilitate the review of documents developed by the SC. Suggested SC documents for review are included as references (Section VI).

IV. SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

a. Requirements

All members of the SC will be active duty or ready reserve Scientist officers. Members of the SC shall be appointed annually by the SC Chair.

b. Letters of Appreciation

All SC members must actively participate in SC activities to be formally recognized for their contribution to the SC. Active participation includes attendance at minimum half of SC meetings. The SC Chair/Co-Chair(s) reserve the right to designate a SC member as active or inactive based on extenuating circumstances (e.g., deployments, emergency, critical work functions). Active members will be recognized with an LOA from SciPAC at the end of each SciPAC operational year. This letter may be placed in the officer's eOPF by the receiving officer. The SC Chair/Co-Chair(s) may delegate the responsibilities of verifying active participation of members and drafting LOA for signature to a specific individual or team.

V. TRANSITIONING

To ensure a smooth transition when a change in leadership occurs, the outgoing Chair/Co-Chair(s) will provide the incoming Chair/Co-chair(s) with written team procedures and up-to-date information on the status of current and planned activities. The outgoing Chair/Co-Chair(s) will provide the annual summary of activities.

VI. REFERENCES

The following key SC documents can be found on the USPHS Scientist Category [Mentoring webpage](#):

- a. Mentoring Program Application
- b. Mentor-Mentee Agreement Form
- c. Mentoring Guidebook
- d. Mentoring Chapter of the Scientist Officer Handbook
- e. Reference Guide for Mentors and Mentees
- f. The 5-Year Career Plan
- g. COVID-19 Mentor Outreach
- h. SciPAC Charter
- i. SciPAC SOP

VII. APPENDICES

Attachment A – Sample Letter of Appreciation for Active SciPAC Mentors

Attachment B – Comparison of Official SciPAC Mentoring Program and Peer Support Network

Attachment C – End of Year Reporting Format

Attachment A – Sample Letter of Appreciation for Active SciPAC/PSN Mentors



Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service

**Scientist Professional Advisory
Committee**



Mentoring Subcommittee

DD,YYYY

Dear RANK First Last;

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your valued service as an official mentor within the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee for Operational Year 2020.

Mentorship is an essential aspect of officer development and it is largely through your dedication and commitment to mentorship that we are able to develop successful future Scientist leaders.

[*as applicable*] This year you were one of SciPAC’s most active mentors, serving as an official mentor to [1, 2-3, *or* 4-6] Officers. We greatly appreciate your willingness to share your time with multiple officers.

Thank you very much for your commitment to the Scientist Category of the USPHS.

Respectfully,

First Last, Qualifying Degree
CAPT, USPHS
Chief Scientist Officer

First Last, Qualifying Degree
RANK, USPHS
Chair, Scientist Professional Advisory Committee

Attachment B – Comparison of Official SciPAC Mentoring Program and Peer Support Network

If you are a new or recent call to active duty or ready reserves, the Peer Support Network (PSN) can help ease your transition and guide you through the onboarding and acclimation processes. If you are unsure which type of mentoring program is right for you as a prospective mentee or mentor, see this comparison.

	SciPAC Mentoring Program	SciPAC Peer Support Network
What is the purpose?	To provide career guidance, information, and assistance by pairing mentees with more senior Scientist officers who can offer a wealth of knowledge and experience.	To support and guide recently called to active duty (or ready reserves) (CAD) officers by easing the transition during acclimation into PHS and guide officers through the onboarding process.
Who can be a mentor?	O-4 Scientist officers (\geq 1-year time in grade), and any O-5 and O-6 Scientist officers	O-3 Scientist officers (\geq 2 years since PHS CAD)
Who can be a mentee?	Any Scientist officer	O-3 Scientist officers with <12 months since PHS CAD
How long does the relationship last?	An initial pairing is established for 1 year and is renewable annually at the discretion of the mentor and mentee.	An initial pairing is established for up to 2 years at the discretion of the mentor and mentee.
What are examples of topics generally covered?	Career assignments, mobility, awards, deployments, work-life balance, CV review, career strengths and weaknesses, recommendations to enhance promotion potential.	Uniform wear, permanent change of station (PCS)/mobility, PHS protocols, CCMIS, PHS/SciPAC communication, engagement in various activities (SciPAC, JOAG, COA).
Who do I contact to participate or if I have questions?	For questions contact the Recruitment Team. To become a mentor or request a mentor, complete the mentoring application .	For questions or to become a mentee or mentor in PSN, contact PSN Coordinators.

Attachment C – End of Year Reporting Template

	Example
Reporting Period	1 Sept 2019–31 Aug 2020
Subcommittee	Mentoring
Team	Mentee Happiness Team
Team Leader (Rank, Name, Role)	LCDR John Doe, Team Lead
Team Leader (Rank, Name, Role)	CDR Jane Doe, Team Co-Lead
Team Leader (Rank, Name, Role)	N/A
Team Accomplishment & Impact 1	Administered mentee happiness evaluation to 85 (85%) of 100 mentees with active mentor matches on file. Survey revealed an average happiness score of 4.3 (below average), leading to the team's development of a new initiative to raise mentee happiness scores.
Team Accomplishment & Impact 2	Called each mentee to discuss their happiness and offered ice cream coupons to those that were unhappy. Re-administered the mentee happiness evaluation 10 weeks later to 77 (77%) of 100 mentees with active mentor matches on file. Initiative led to an overall 4.2 point improvement in mentee happiness (8.5 vs 4.3).
Team Accomplishment & Impact 3	N/A
Team Change 1*	We developed a new 10-question, semi-annual mentee happiness evaluation, which is stored on max.gov.
Team Change 2*	We dissolved the Coping with Mentee Sadness Team and incorporated all 13 volunteers into the Mentee Happiness Team
Team Change 3*	N/A
Team Recommendation 1 for next year	Continue semi-annual administration of the mentee happiness evaluation and personal phone calls to all mentees with below average happiness scores; consider administering the survey in Mar/Sep instead of Jan/Jul.
Team Recommendation 2 for next year	Consider changing the intervention from ice cream coupons to PHS coins.
Team Recommendation 3 for next year	N/A

*Please list any changes that occurred--including but not limited to new forms, decisions to expand/dissolve this team over the year, new decisions or rules made, development of new protocols