



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



Welcome to the United States Public Health Service!

The 2018* **TOP TIPS** for Scientists in the USPHS

WEBSITES

A. Explore these key websites:

1. Commissioned Corps Management Information System (CCMIS): Public Health Service (PHS) personnel management site where PHS-wide updates are posted (*check site regularly for updates*[†]): <https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/>
 - a. **Login** section contains access to officer personnel information websites
 - b. **Assignments** contains information about Service Member Civil Relief Act and Permanent Change of Station moves
 - c. **COER** contains information on your annual evaluation, the Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report (COER)
 - d. **Compensation** contains information on retirement pay, regular pay, and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) retirement contributions
 - e. **Forms** contains information on forms for many parts of an officer's career
 - f. **Medical Affairs** contains information on dental and immunizations
 - g. **Policy** contains information on current and past USPHS policy
 - h. **Promotions** contains information on current and past promotion cycles, promotion checklists, and other promotion relevant information
 - i. **Readiness** contains information on the Annual Physical Fitness Test (APFT), readiness status, Readiness and Deployment Operations Group (RedDOG), and the rotational calendar
 - j. **Training Academy** contains information on the Officer Basic Course (OBC)
2. Electronic Commissioned Officer Resources Processing System (eCORPS)
Leave system: <https://phsleave.lyceum.com/Login.aspx>
 - a. Username is first four letters of last name (ALL CAPS) and last four numbers of SSN
 - b. This system allows you to request different types of leave from your duty station
 - c. The system will require that you identify a leave granting authority
3. Officer Secure Area sign in: https://dcp.psc.gov/osa/osa_security_statement.aspx. Login is through the Access Management System (AMS) chip and pin system. Main page is the **PHS Dashboard**, where you can find your SERNO (PHS ID), eCORPS user ID, employee ID, current billet number, licensure status and expiration date, latest report of readiness status, latest report of physical examination, latest report of medical history, information on promotion status, and immunization details. Officer links on the left give you access to your

* Information is up-to-date as of November 2018.

[†] While the CCMIS website is updated frequently, not all pages are updated with the same regularity, so some information may be out-of-date.

- a. Electronic Official Personnel File (eOPF):
 - View official documents related to your tenure in the PHS: Application Documents, Personnel Orders, PHS awards, past COERs, Promotion Board Score Sheets
 - Upload documents that support your contributions to PHS: CV, Officer Statement, Continuing Education Documents, Letters and Certificates of Appreciation, BLS certifications
 - b. Interface where you submit your annual evaluation (COER)
 - c. Interface where you can input your billet number and retrieve a description
 - d. Electronic Document Upload (eDOC-U) – where you can upload documents into your OPF
 - e. RedDOG (Readiness and Deployment Operations Group) – where you can use the self service tab to
 - Update your **personal information**
 - Add your **readiness information** (physical fitness exam results, roles) and view your waivers and readiness status
 - Update your BLS **certification** and view your training history
 - Request assistance via the **readiness assistance form**
4. Commissioned Corps Learning Management System (CCLMS)—training used at OBC: <https://usphstraining.hhs.gov/login/index.php>
 - a. Training used at OBC
 - b. Email PHScota@hhs.gov if you have login trouble
 5. Responder eLearn: <https://respondere-learn.hhs.gov/>
 - a. Eight basic readiness courses
 - b. Field Medical Readiness Badge Courses
 - i. The Field Medical Readiness Badge (FMRB) recognizes officers who have met criteria beyond the required basic force readiness standards. This is an important recognition of deployments and knowledge of deployment related skills.
 - c. Username is first 3 letters of last name (lowercase) followed by 5 digit PHS SERNO
 - d. Email “technical support” at NDMSHelpdesk@hhs.gov if you have login trouble
 6. Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) site: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/>
 - a. The Career Development Subcommittee website may be particularly useful for new officers and those up for promotion: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/careerdev-sc.aspx>
 7. USPHS Scientist Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/USPHSScientist/

B. Sign up for key listservs to ensure receipt of current information. Some recommendations are:

1. Scientist category:
 - a. via e-mail: LISTSERV@LIST.NIH.GOV. Type the following text in the message body: “subscribe USPHS-Scientist” and provide your name
 - b. via web: <https://list.nih.gov/>. Find the USPHS-Scientist list on the List of Lists, then click on the list name to go to the main archive page for the list. Click “Join” or “leave the list” and fill in the form
2. Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG): <https://list.nih.gov/cgi-bin/wa.exe?SUBED1=JOAG&A=1>
3. Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR): When you update your personal information in the RedDOG Tab in the [Officer Secure Area](#), you will be added to the listserv.
4. Agency-specific listservs may be available. Contact your agency Commissioned Corps liaison officer for details.
5. A specialty specific listserv is available for [psychologists](#). Reach out to current [PsyPAG](#) leadership for

more details.

6. Chartered advisory organization listservs exist for the Minority Officer Liaison Council (MOLC), Black Commissioned Officer Advisory Group (BCOAG), American Indian/Alaskan Native Commissioned Officer Advisory Council (AIANCOAC), Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC), and Hispanic Officer Advisory Committee (HOAC). Please check the [CCMIS website](#) for more information.
7. Other chartered group listservs exist for the PHS Athletics Group, PHS Ensemble, SG Honor Guard, PHS Band, Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group (SOAGDAG), Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board (CCWIAB) and Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE). Please check the [CCMIS website](#) for more information.

GROUPS

C. SciPAC

1. Participate in the Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) monthly teleconferences. The teleconferences occur at 1200 ET on the first Tuesday of every month (Toll-free number: 1-866-782-0573, Passcode: 2214354#). All Scientist officers are encouraged to participate. Attendance on the SciPAC monthly call is taken into consideration when applying to become a SciPAC voting member. Non-mandatory training sessions sometimes occur immediately following the SciPAC teleconference starting ~1300 EST using the same dial-in number and passcode. The meeting information website is <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/meetings.aspx>.
2. Become an active SciPAC subcommittee member. There are 11 SciPAC subcommittees: Awards, Career Development, Category Day, Mentoring, Policy Review, Recruitment & Retention, Readiness, Rules and Membership, Science, Visibility, and Website—see <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/subcommittees.aspx> for more information. The Chair of each subcommittee is a SciPAC voting member, as are often the Co-chairs.
3. Get a mentor to help with career navigation and promotion by contacting the SciPAC Mentoring Subcommittee Chair: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/mentoring-SC.aspx>.
4. The SciPAC Recruitment and Retention subcommittee offers support to new officers through its Peer Support Network and Call to Active Duty seminars. Contact the subcommittee chair for current activities and more information. <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/recruitment-readiness-retention-SC.aspx>.

D. JOAG

1. Consider participating in the Junior Officer Advisory Group (JOAG) general meeting teleconferences. The teleconferences occur at 1 PM ET on the second Friday of every other month (toll-free number: 1-641-715-3580; passcode: 131583#). All junior officers (Lieutenant or Lieutenant Commander for Scientists) are encouraged to participate.
2. Consider getting a peer mentor from the peer to peer mentoring network through JOAG. Contact information can be found at https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/JOAG/committees_pdevelopment.aspx.
3. Consider becoming an active JOAG member. JOAG has 9 committees: Awards, Communications & Publications, Membership, Outreach, Policy & Procedures, Professional Development, Public Health & Community Service, Readiness & Deployment, and Recruitment & Retention.
4. For more information about JOAG, visit: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/JOAG/>.

E. Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG)

1. If you are a psychologist, you can join the Psychology Professional Advisory Group (PsyPAG) by contacting the current Membership Chair. PsyPAG is an advisory group for clinical psychologists with members from SciPAC and the Health Services Professional Advisory Committee (HSPAC). PsyPAG teleconferences are held 6 times a year (February, April, June, August, October, and December) on the first Wednesday of the month at 12 PM ET. (1-866-782-0573, Passcode: 2214354#). To learn more about PsyPAG, go to: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/hso/pags-psypag.aspx>.
2. Consider becoming an active PsyPAG member. PsyPAG has 7 subcommittees: Policy and Procedures, Membership, Professional Development, Recruitment & Retention, Advocacy, Research and Conference, and Communications. Opportunities for involvement include subcommittee volunteering, subcommittee Chair/Co-Chair, as applicable. PsyPAG also hosts a monthly teleconference to support psychologists pursuing board certification and provides opportunities for involvement during the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.

F. Commissioned Officers Association (COA)

1. Consider joining the Commissioned Officers Association (COA). This organization exists to promote the mission and interests of the USPHS and its officers.
2. Consider attending the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, sponsored by the sister organization of COA, the Commissioned Officers Foundation for the Advancement of Public Health (COF). The conference is held in late spring/early summer in a different state each year. It is a great way to network, hear and meet high-ranking leaders, and attend SciPAC's Category Day. Mark your calendar and book your room early. Go to <https://www.phscof.org/symposium.html> for details.
3. Consider joining your local COA branch. These local branches that may be able to provide support and resources for anything from policies to uniform wear, as well as provide an opportunity to meet other officers in your area. Go to <http://www.coausphs.org/> for details.

G. Minority Officer Liaison Council (MOLC)

1. Consider joining MOLC. This organization serves in a resource and advisory capacity to assist in the development, coordination, and evaluation of activities related to ethnic minority officers it represents in the PHS with specific objectives. Go to <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/molc/> for details.

H. Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group (BCOAG)

1. Consider joining BCOAG. This organization provides assistance and consultation to the Office of the Surgeon General on issues related to the representation and participation of African-Americans in the USPHS. Go to <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/bcoag/> for details.

I. Asian Pacific American Officer Committee (APAOC)

1. Consider joining APAOC. This organization provides assistance and consultation to the Office of the Surgeon General on issues related to the representation and participation of Asian Pacific Americans in the USPHS. Go to <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/apao/> for details.

J. Hispanic Officer Advisory Committee (HOAC)

1. Consider joining HOAC. This organization provides assistance and consultation to the Office of the Surgeon General on issues related to the representation and participation of Hispanic Americans in the USPHS. Go to <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/hoac/> for details.

K. American Indian/Alaskan Native Commissioned Officers Advisory Committee (AIANCOAC)

1. Consider joining AIANCOAC. The function of the AIANCOAC is to provide advice and consultation to the Surgeon General on issues related to professional practice and the personnel activities (Commissioned Corps or Civil Service) of American Indian and Alaska Native individuals. Go to <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/aiancoac/> for details.

L. Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group (SOAGDAG)

1. Consider joining SOAGDAG. This organization provides advice and consultation to the Surgeon General on issues related to LGBT officers and other sexual and gender minorities and their allies in the USPHS. Go to <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/sogdag/> for details.

M. Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE)

1. Consider joining PACE. This organization provides officers with the opportunity to put themselves at the forefront of the National Prevention Strategy (NPS) by actively interacting with citizens at the community level. The focus is to educate the public about the Commissioned Corps, the NPS, and all other Office of the Surgeon General initiatives.

PAY AND BENEFITS

N. Obtain ID cards and enroll in benefits

1. Common Access Card (CAC), i.e. Uniformed Services ID, is often obtained at Officer Basic Course (OBC)
2. Dependent Identification Card (use the following link to find a facility):
<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/appj/site?execution=e1s1>
3. Enroll self and family members into the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)
<https://www.tricare.mil/deers/>
4. Enrollment in TRICARE (military and uniformed services health care program): This is automatic for USPHS officers; dependents can elect to enroll in various health plans. Changes to the initial enrollment can be made via the TRICARE patient portal link:
<https://tricare.mil/FindDoctor/AllProviderDirectories/Military/SecurePatientPortal>
5. Officers are enrolled in Delta Dental: <https://feds.deltadentalins.com/phsaddp/>
Enroll dependents in dental plan through the following link:
<https://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/Dental/TDP/Enrollment>
6. Manage your Thrift Savings Plan retirement savings.
<https://www.tsp.gov/index.html>

O. Understand your pay

1. Use the Regular Military Compensation Calculator to compute your regular military compensation, <http://militarypay.defense.gov/Calculators/RMC-Calculator/>, including:
 - a. Base Pay
 - b. Basic Allowance Subsistence
 - c. Basic Allowance Housing
 - d. Federal Tax Advantage
2. Call the Compensation Team at 240-276-8799
 - a. Note: the 301-427-3280 number on the bottom of the earnings statement is not in service
 - b. Ask to speak to the payroll technician assigned to you (based on the last digits of your social security number). This technician will be helpful if you ever need to make changes to your compensation details (e.g., marriage, addition of dependent, permanent change of station).
 - c. Request that they walk through your pay stub and answer any questions you may have.
 - d. Ensure they have the right address and contact information on file.

CAREER MANAGEMENT

P. If your supervisor is not a PHS officer, meet with your supervisor to discuss:

1. The PHS mission: <https://www.usphs.gov/aboutus/mission.aspx>
2. Your readiness requirements and deployment “on call” times, if applicable: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/ReDDOG/REDDOG_essentials_m.aspx#MEMBERSHIP
https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/Forms/Basic_Readiness_Checklist.pdf
3. Supervisor role in the annual COER. See the website below for additional information: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/COER/COER_Index_m.aspx
4. The benchmarks by which you will be measured for promotion: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/resources-and-links.aspx>
<https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/2019-SCIENTIST-Benchmarks.pdf>

Q. Understand the promotion process and get organized

1. Review Scientist Category benchmarks: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/resources-and-links.aspx>
<https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/2019-SCIENTIST-Benchmarks.pdf>
2. Update your CV into the required format for PHS Scientists:
CV guidelines: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/SciPAC-Scientist-Category-CV-Guidelines.pdf>
3. SciPAC enlists other Scientists to review your CV and provide advice each fall. Contact the Career Development Subcommittee for more information: <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/careerdev-sc.aspx>
4. Review the COER (supervisory evaluation) process: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/COER/COER_Index_m.aspx
5. During promotion-eligible years:
 - a. Write a strong Officer’s Statement (OS)—why you should be promoted: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_OS_m.aspx
 - b. Secure a Reviewing Official’s Statement (ROS)—why your second linesupervisor (or supervisor’s supervisor) thinks you should be promoted: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_ROS_m.aspx
6. Complete readiness requirements—Basic Life Support (BLS) and APFT (Annual Physical Fitness Test), annual(self-reported) and 5-year full medical and dental exams, deployment role (done after basic ready), online training (8 modules in addition to the 4 FEMA courses done at OBC), immunizations, height and weight requirements, etc.
 - a. See Basic Readiness Compliance Checklist for details: https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/RedDOG/Forms/Basic_Readiness_Checklist.pdf
7. Make sure your certifications/licenses/credentials are up-to-date with DCCPR, if applicable. Check your OPF in the Secure Area: https://dcp.psc.gov/osa/osa_security_statement.aspx
For more info, see also: https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/promotions/PROMOTIONS_licensure_and_certifications_m.aspx

R. Awards

1. Familiarize yourself with the awards process:
https://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/COAP/COAP_frequently_asked_questions_m.aspx
2. Understand the value of letters of appreciation and awards (See SciPAC Benchmarks):
<https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/2019-SCIENTIST-Benchmarks.pdf>

S. Job Vacancies

1. Once subscribed to the SciPAC listserv, you will receive weekly updates of job announcements from around the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

ABBREVIATIONS

T. Familiarize yourself with key abbreviations, including those found in this top tips document:

AIANCOAC	American Indian/Alaskan Native Commissioned Officer Advisory Committee	FMRB	Field Medical Readiness Badge
AMS	Access Management System	HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
APFT	Annual Physical Fitness Test	HOAC	Hispanic Officer Advisory Committee
APAOC	Asian Pacific American Officer Committee	JOAG	Junior Officer Advisory Group
BCOAG	Black Commissioned Officers Advisory Group	LT	Lieutenant
BLS	Basic Life Support	LCDR	Lieutenant Commander
CAC	Common Access Card	MOLC	Minority Officer Liaison Council
CAPT	Captain	OBC	Officer Basic Course
CCLMS	Commissioned Corps Learning Management System	OS	Officer's Statement
CCMIS	Commissioned Corps Management Information System	OSG	Office of Surgeon General
CCWIAB	Commissioned Corps Women's Issues Advisory Board	PACE	Prevention through Active Community Engagement
CDR	Commander	PCS	Permanent Change of Station
COA	Commissioned Officers Association	PHS	Public Health Service
COER	Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report	PIR	Promotion Information Report
CV	Curriculum Vitae	PsyPAG	Psychology Professional Advisory Group
DCCPR	Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness	RADM	Rear Admiral
DEERS	Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System	RedDOG	Readiness and Deployment Operations Group
eCORPS	Electronic Commissioned Officer Resources Processing System	ROS	Reviewing Official Statement
eDOC-U	Electronic Document Upload	SOAGDAG	Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity Advisory Group
eOPF	Official Personnel Folder	SciPAC	Scientist Professional Advisory Committee
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	SERNO	PHS Serial Number
		SSN	Social Security Number
		TRICARE	health care program of the U.S. Military and Uniformed Services
		TSP	Thrift Savings Plan
		USPHS	United States Public Health Service

Bonus Tip: Do not hesitate to ask other PHS officers anything. Although the process can be overwhelming at times, other PHS officers have already been through it and can help you navigate.

Welcome Aboard!