

MANUAL: Personnel
Chapter Series CC--Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual
Part 2--Commissioned Corps Personnel Administration

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Chapter 25--Performance Evaluation and Career Development
Subchapter CC25.2--Career Development
Personnel INSTRUCTION 4 -- Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and
Extern Program (JRCOSTEP)

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Section A. Purpose and Scope

This INSTRUCTION describes the Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) and sets forth the criteria and procedures for participation.

Section B. Authority

1. JRCOSTEP is authorized by Section 218 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act (42 U.S.C. 218a) and regulations prescribed in 42 CFR 21.54.
2. The authority to administer the PHS Commissioned Corps is prescribed in Section 215 of the PHS Act (42 U.S.C. 216). The authority for daily administration of the PHS Commissioned Corps has been delegated to the Director, Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP).

Section C. Description

1. JRCOSTEP provides full-time college students with an opportunity to:
 - a. Become acquainted with the organization and mission of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) and Programs to which PHS officers are assigned, and with career opportunities they offer in health-related professions. Such professions include, but are not limited to, the fields of audiology, biological sciences, biostatistics, clinical psychology, computer science, dental hygiene, dentistry, dietetics, engineering, environmental health, health education, industrial hygiene, laboratory technology, medical record administration, medicine, nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physical sciences, physician assistance, public health, sanitary sciences, social work, speech pathology, epidemiology, therapy (occupational or physical), epidemiology, and veterinary medicine; and
 - b. Gain experience and training in a professional environment while furthering their professional education.
2. JRCOSTEP is operated on a year-round basis in order to accommodate students attending college under various scheduling systems (quarter, trimester, or semester).
3. Under this program, students who are eligible, and based on the criteria described in Section E., of this INSTRUCTION, will be:

- a. Commissioned in the PHS Reserve Corps as Junior Assistant Health Services Officers; and
 - b. Called to active duty for training assignments during periods when they are out of school under the scheduling system of their school, providing, such assignments are for at least 31 consecutive days, but not more than 120 consecutive days' duration in any fiscal year. For those occasions where a JRCOSTEP participant is permitted to have two assignments, there may not be an inactivation and subsequent recall to active duty within the same calendar month.
4. JRCOSTEP assignments may range across a spectrum of public health activities in the research, clinical, regulatory, health promotion or disease prevention, and administrative areas. Every practical effort will be made to match the assignment preferences and educational interests of the student with the needs of PHS.
 5. Toward the end of each training assignment, the JRCOSTEP officer and the assignment will be evaluated. For this purpose, Form PHS-4772, "Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) Status Report," will be provided to each JRCOSTEP officer, and Form PHS-4469-1, "JRCOSTEP Evaluation Questionnaire," will be provided to his/her immediate supervisor. The JRCOSTEP officer will have the opportunity to review this evaluation and retain a copy, if desired, prior to its being forwarded to the Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP). Review by the JRCOSTEP officers will be evidenced by their signature on the questionnaire.

Section D. Criteria for OPDIV or Program Participation

To participate in the JRCOSTEP program, the OPDIV or Program to which the JRCOSTEP officer is assigned, must:

1. Commit the required portion of a full-time equivalent (FTE) position;
2. Make available all necessary funds for the pay and allowances, uniform, if required, travel, transportation, and any training expenses of the officer, including Temporary Duty (TDY) expenses, if appropriate; and
3. Using Form PHS-6279, "JRCOSTEP Statement of Duties," (see Exhibit I), provide a plan of utilization and training for the officer. The plan must include a description of:
 - a. Major duties and responsibilities of the officer's assignment;

- b. The specific nature of the orientation and training to be given in order to acquaint the officer with his/her assignment and the mission, organization, and career opportunities of the PHS and its commissioned corps; and
- c. The name, grade, and organizational location of the senior staff member (preceptor) designated to provide supervision and direction to the JRCOSTEP officer. Each JRCOSTEP officer must receive professional supervision from a PHS commissioned officer, a civil service employee, or other designated health care provider approved by the Director, DCP, and must be in an assignment related to, and appropriate for his/her field of education or training.

Section E. Criteria for Student Participation

To be eligible for JRCOSTEP, the student must:

- 1. Be a United States citizen; and
- 2. Be under age 44 upon entrance on active duty, following graduation; and
- 3. Have no more than eight (8) years of active Federal military service upon call to active duty as a JRCOSTEP officer; and
- 4. Have accomplished, or be accomplishing, one of the following:
 - a. Completion of a minimum of the first required year of study in dental, medical, optometry, podiatry, or veterinary school prior to assignment; or
 - b. Completion of a minimum of two years of a baccalaureate program prior to assignment in the following courses of study: audiology, computer science, dental hygiene, dietetics-nutrition, engineering, environmental health, laboratory technology, medical record administration; nursing, pharmacy, physician assistance, sanitary science, speech pathology, therapy (occupational or physical); or
 - c. Enrollment in a master's or doctoral program in a commissionable health-related field other than those named above; or
 - d. Completion of a baccalaureate degree in any field with subsequent enrollment in a certificate or master's program to complete training for biostatistics, dental hygiene, epidemiology, health education, industrial hygiene, physician assistance, laboratory technology, occupational or physical therapy, physical science, public health, social work.

The Director, DCP, in consultation with the Chief Professional Officer of the respective category, may waive the requirement in item 4., above, in cases of uniquely qualified applicants.

5. Within 3 months after the date of completion of the JRCOSTEP assignment, be scheduled to:
 - a. Return to college or university as a full-time student; or
 - b. Enter a postgraduate degree program, completion of which would satisfy the educational requirements for unrestricted appointment in the PHS Commissioned Corps.
6. Be recommended to PHS by a dean, faculty advisor, or department head of the college or university where the student is currently enrolled; and
7. Be free, at the time of completion of the qualifying degree, of any obligation or responsibility that would conflict with extended active duty in PHS; and
8. Meet appropriate appointment standards for extended active duty in the PHS Commissioned Corps (see Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual (CCPM), INSTRUCTION 4, Subchapter CC23.3, "Appointment Standards and Appointment Boards, of this manual)."

Section F. Procedures for Application

1. Application for JRCOSTEP is made on Form PHS-50, "Application for Appointment as a Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps." Certain additional forms must be completed and supporting documents furnished. The necessary forms to make application to JRCOSTEP may be obtained by the student on an individual basis by calling the JRCOSTEP Coordinator in DCP, or by accessing the DCP Web site at <http://dcp.psc.gov> for information on Commissioned Corps policies and publications.
2. Students who have served a previous JRCOSTEP assignment, and who are still eligible to participate in JRCOSTEP program, may apply for additional JRCOSTEP assignments by writing to the JRCOSTEP Coordinator in DCP and stating dates of availability for assignment.

New applications or requests for consideration for additional JRCOSTEP assignments must be received in DCP within the specified timeframe for the assignment period desired. Applications received either before or after the specified dates will not be considered. All additional materials required for completion of the application process except current transcripts must be received in DCP no later than the last date of the appropriate date window. Transcripts must be received no later than one

month after the window closing date. An application is made for the specific single timeframe only. For subsequent timeframes, the applicant must submit a new request for consideration with new dates of availability. Below, are the specific acceptance windows for submission of applications:

Application Acceptance Window	Assignment Opportunities
June 1 - September 30	January 1 - April 30
September 1- December 31	May 1 - August 31
January 1 - April 30	September 1 - December 31

3. The specific inclusive dates the student expects to be available for active duty are to be included in the new application or the request for additional JRCOSTEP assignments. Applications or requests submitted without specific dates of availability will not be considered.
4. Incomplete applications (Form PHS-50) will not be considered.

Section G. Selection of Students

The selection of students for JRCOSTEP assignments is conducted once for each specific period of the year, and is based on the qualifications of the applicants and the anticipated staffing needs of PHS. Selections are for specific timeframes and cannot be made for assignment periods outside the one specific period under consideration. No reviews or preselections of JRCOSTEP officers (i.e., outside of the formal selection process) will be permitted. Formal reviews and selections will be conducted in several days to one-week period with the applications remaining open for the three-week period that follows. Subsequent to the one-month period, all applications for a specific cycle will be closed and will no longer be available for consideration. The selecting OPDIV or Program will notify the student as well as DCP of their selection within five workdays. DCP will notify the applicants that were not selected of their non-selection or ineligibility for the JRCOSTEP program.

Section H. Calls to Active Duty

1. For each student selected, the OPDIV or Program will submit a Form PHS-1662, "Request for Personnel Action - Commissioned Officer," and Form PHS-6279 through the appropriate channels and through their Commissioned Corps Liaison to DCP. The effective date of entrance on duty, and the effective

date for release from active duty must be stated on the Form PHS-1662. This will serve in lieu of Form PHS-1373, "Separation of Commissioned Officer," which is not required upon completion of the JRCOSTEP assignment.

2. The report to an active duty date must not be on a weekend day, a Federal holiday, or the 31st of any month.
3. The JRCOSTEP Coordinator, DCP, will notify the OPDIV or Program representatives of the approval or disapproval of a new statement of duties.
4. The applicant selected for a JRCOSTEP assignment will be called to active duty by official personnel orders issued by DCP. Personnel orders establish the effective date of entry on active duty and the date of release from active duty. OPDIV or Program officials cannot authorize PHS commissioned officers' appointments nor can they issue officers' official call to active duty personnel orders or direct their travel to a duty station. Failure to comply with these dates by late arrival or early departure may result in the JRCOSTEP officers being placed in Absent Without Leave (AWOL) status for those days when they were not at their assigned duty station. Any changes to these official dates must be effected by an official personnel order from DCP. Requests for such changes must be received in DCP 10 days prior to the new effective date.
5. Travel without printed orders or without explicit verbal orders from DCP will result in the loss of the officer's travel and transportation allowance. In addition, the officer will not be paid for any days worked before the personnel order is issued.

Section I. Entitlements and Status

JRCOSTEP officers called to active duty are entitled to some, but not all, of the rights, benefits, and privileges accorded to PHS commissioned officers serving on extended active duty. There are restrictions on travel and transportation entitlements and health care, and there is no coverage under disability retirement or severance pay authorities. JRCOSTEP officers, as are all PHS commissioned officers, are subject to PHS requirements regarding their personal conduct and obligations. (See CCPM INSTRUCTION 1, Subchapter CC26.1, "Standards of Conduct," of this manual.) The following is a brief summary of entitlements and obligations of JRCOSTEP officers:

1. Uniforms: Unless otherwise directed, JRCOSTEP officers are not required to wear the PHS uniform, and thus are not normally entitled to receive the one-time \$250 uniform allowance. Each OPDIV or Program will notify DCP, in writing, by December 31, of its policy for the following year for the authorization for JRCOSTEP officers to wear uniforms at their duty stations. There will be no site-specific exceptions to an OPDIV's or Program's overall policy. For those OPDIVs or Programs where uniforms will

be authorized, the OPDIVs or Programs are encouraged to contact the JRCOSTEP officers prior to their reporting date, to identify and assist those officers who wish to secure and wear the uniform. Some of the benefits for wearing the uniform include increased identification of the individual with the PHS Commissioned Corps, esprit de corps, and visibility of junior officers. The Director, DCP, may direct a JRCOSTEP officer to wear the uniform pursuant to INSTRUCTION 2, Subchapter CC26.3, "Directive to Wear the Public Health Service Uniform," of the CCPM, if the officer submits a written statement which will include the signature of his/her supervisor stating that the wearing of PHS uniform will be beneficial to the officer in the performance of his/her duties (see Exhibit II, of this INSTRUCTION).

If the JRCOSTEP officer is directed to wear the uniform by the Director, DCP, the officer may be paid a uniform allowance pursuant to CCPM INSTRUCTION 3, Subchapter CC22.4, of this manual.

2. Travel and Transportation Entitlements: JRCOSTEP officers are entitled to travel and transportation allowances as set forth in the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR). The JFTR provides that the Government will bear certain costs of travel and transportation for the officer and the shipment of certain household goods from the place from which called to active duty to the duty station and return. Travel performed or shipments effected prior to issuance of official copies of the personnel order are not reimbursable, and travel of dependents is also not reimbursable. If the JRCOSTEP officer fails to complete the minimum 31-day tour, return travel costs will not be provided by the Government. The Government may direct the JRCOSTEP officer to use a particular mode of transportation to and from the duty station. Travel and transportation allowances are summarized as follows for those situations where the JRCOSTEP officer is given a choice of transportation mode:
 - a. Travel by privately owned conveyance: In this situation the officer is entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses according to the mileage allowance as set forth in the JFTR. Travel time will be computed according to the JFTR, and no per diem allowance is payable when mileage allowances are paid.
 - b. Travel by common carrier: The officer may elect to travel by common carrier at Government expense, or at personal expense and claim reimbursement later.
 - (1) If the officer elects to travel by common carrier at Government expense, the sponsoring OPDIV or Program will issue a Form SF-1159, "Transportation Request," to cover the cost of transportation. In this situation, the officer may be entitled to per diem allowances as identified in the JFTR.
 - (2) If the officer elects to travel by common carrier at his/her personal expense, he/she may apply for reimbursement of actual

common carrier costs plus any per diem allowances payable, or elect to apply for reimbursement on a mileage basis.

- c. Shipment of household goods: A common carrier ticket authorizes shipment of baggage within certain weight limits at no extra costs. This method of shipment should be used if at all possible. However, officers may ship up to 600 pounds of personal effects at Government expense from the place (city) from which called to active duty and return to the same city.

If a shipment of up to 600 pounds of household goods is necessary and authorized on the personnel order, the officer may ship at his/her personal expense and claim reimbursement for that expense, or request a Government Bill of Lading (GBL). Upon call to active duty, the request for a GBL should be addressed to the hiring OPDIV or Program. Upon release from active duty, the officer should present the personnel order to the appropriate official at his/her duty station and request a GBL request.

3. Military Flights: JRCOSTEP officers are not authorized to use space-available flights on military aircraft. Attempts to do so will be considered misconduct and are grounds for termination of the JRCOSTEP officer's commission.
4. Sick and Annual Leave: Sick leave must be requested and may be granted as needed. Annual leave is accumulated at the rate of one day of annual leave for each 12 consecutive calendar days of active duty. JRCOSTEP officers must request, and may be, granted annual leave at the discretion of their leave-granting authority. Lump-sum leave payments will not be made for unused annual leave at the time of separation. Therefore, all annual leave must be used during the JRCOSTEP officer's active duty tour or be forfeited. Annual leave may not be used to extend a tour of duty. A certified Form PHS-31, "Officer's Leave Record," must be submitted to DCP within 30 days after the date of the JRCOSTEP officer's separation. For further information on leave, see CCPM Subchapter CC29.1, "Leave of Absence," of this manual.
5. Pay and Allowances: JRCOSTEP officers receive the basic pay and basic allowance for housing (BAH) (if appropriate) and subsistence allowances of a Junior Assistant grade officer (pay grade O-1). (Note: Officers assigned to Government housing, do not receive BAH.) Deductions will be made for Federal and State income taxes relating to basic pay, for Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA), and for Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), if selected. Appropriate base pay credit will be given to JRCOSTEP officers with creditable prior Uniformed Service.

6. Identification Cards:

- a. JRCOSTEP officers are issued Form PHS 1866-1, "Commissioned Officer ID Card - Active Duty," (Green/Active and manually-prepared card), or DD Form 2, "United States Uniformed Services Identification Card," (Green/Reserve and machine-readable card), for his/her tour of active duty. The expiration date entered on the ID Card is the "relieved active duty" date stated on their official personnel orders. For further information regarding ID cards, call the Personnel Services Branch, DCP.
 - b. Bona fide dependents of a JRCOSTEP officer are eligible to possess Form DD-1173, "Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card," during the period that the officer is on active-duty only.
 - c. To establish identity for the benefits and privileges described in this INSTRUCTION, a JRCOSTEP officer shall present his/her ID card plus a copy of the personnel order which shows his/her name and active duty dates. The JRCOSTEP ID card and all dependent ID cards must be returned to the issuing office prior to the last day of active duty. Failure to return the ID cards will result in the delay in the issuance of the final paycheck, possible separation from the Inactive Reserve Corps, and potential legal actions.
7. Health Care Benefits: JRCOSTEP officers and their bona fide dependents are entitled to health care benefits during the period of active duty, subject to the provisions of Subchapter CC29.3, "Medical and Health Programs," of the CCPM, and the Dependents Medical Care Act (10 U.S.C. 1076 et seq.). JRCOSTEP officers and their family members have a limited health entitlement restricted to emergencies and space-available military care. All routine health care must be provided at a Military Treatment Facility (MTF). JRCOSTEP officers and family members are eligible for direct care at an MTF on a space-available basis only. A family member of a JRCOSTEP officer on active duty for a period of more than 30 days is also eligible for TRICARE.
8. Base/Post Exchange and Commissary Privileges: JRCOSTEP officers and their bona fide dependents are entitled to base/post exchange and commissary privileges only during the period the officer is serving on active duty.

Section J. Termination of Commission

Subject to satisfactory performance in his/her assignment, a JRCOSTEP officer may be retained in the Inactive Reserve Corps while enrolled as a full-time student in a training program that is in a career area which would qualify the officer for extended active duty. Upon completion of his/her professional education, the officer may request extended active duty in PHS. Commissions of those who do not request extended active duty will be terminated automatically within four years

after attaining eligibility for extended active duty. The commission of an inactive reserve officer who requests extended active duty but for whom no assignment is available will be terminated within two years of the initial request for extended active duty.

Section K. Privacy Act Provisions

Personnel records are subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974. The applicable systems of records are: 09-40-0001, "PHS Commissioned Corps General Personnel Records, HHS/PSC/HRS"; and 09-40-0002, "PHS Commissioned Corps Medical Records, HHS/PSC/HRS."

EXHIBIT I

Form PHS-6279, "JRCOSTEP Statement of Duties"

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
JUNIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER STUDENT TRAINING AND EXTERN PROGRAM (JRCOSTEP)
STATEMENT OF DUTIES

1. AGENCY / PROGRAM: _____ BUREAU / INSTITUTE / CENTER / DIVISION: _____

2. BRANCH: _____ SECTION: _____

3. DUTY STATION ADDRESS AND COMMERCIAL PHONE NUMBER: _____

4. DATES OF ASSIGNMENT: _____ START: _____ END: _____

5. ASSIGNMENT SETTING: _____

6. JRCOSTEP RESPONSIBILITIES: _____

7. TRAINING TO BE RECEIVED ON THE JOB: _____

8. JRCOSTEP PRECEPTOR: (Name, Title, Address, and Phone Number) _____

9. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR JRCOSTEP: _____

10. CATEGORIES: (Circle all applicable categories)

MEDICAL DENTAL NURSE ENGINEER SCIENTIST SANITARIAN
VETERINARY PHARMACY DIETETICS THERAPY HEALTH SERVICES (Specify) _____

11. AGENCY / PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVE: _____ SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

TYPE NAME AND TITLE _____

12. DCF JRCOSTEP REPRESENTATIVE: _____ SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

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EXHIBIT II

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM TO REQUEST PAYMENT OF A UNIFORM ALLOWANCE

Date:

From:

Subject: Request for Uniform Allowance

To: Division of Commissioned Personnel/HRS/PSC
ATTN: Chief, Compensation Branch
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4-50
Rockville, Maryland 20857-0001

In a memorandum dated April 6, 1987, the Surgeon General has directed me to own and wear the appropriate Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps uniform. Under the provision in INSTRUCTION 3, "Uniform Allowance," Subchapter CC22.4, of the Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual (CCPM), I hereby apply for the uniform and equipment allowance in the amount of \$250.00.

I certify that I have not at any time, previously received a PHS Commissioned Corps uniform allowance under the provisions of 37 U.S.C. 415(c). Further, I understand that making a false statement or claim against the U.S. Government is punishable by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than five years or both (Act of June 25, 1948, 18 U.S.C. 287, 1001).

(Signature)

(Temporary Grade)

(Social Security Number)