



Presidential Unit Citation (PUC)

Commissioned Corps Headquarters

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

October 1, 2015



Q. What is the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC)?

The Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) is the highest unit award issued to a uniformed service. The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps PUC was established September 24, 2015 by Presidential Citation to recognize the Commissioned Corps for “extraordinary courage and the highest level of performance in action throughout the United States Government’s response to the Ebola outbreak.”

Q. Who is authorized to wear the PUC?

President Obama awarded the PUC to all Commissioned Corps (Corps) officers of the U.S. Public Health Service on active duty between September 9, 2014 and May 1, 2015. All Regular and Ready Reserve officers (such as COSTEP and EIS officers) who served on active duty at any time during these dates are eligible to wear the PUC. Officers must be compliant with the provisions of Commissioned Corps Instruction (CCI) CCI 511.01, “Awards Program” subsection 6-9 (i.e. no current or pending disciplinary or adverse actions during the award period). Officers who retired or separated during the above time period but were on duty and otherwise eligible are authorized to wear the PUC.

Q. When will I be authorized to wear the PUC ribbon?

The PUC is authorized as of the signing of the Citation by the President on September 24, 2015. However, it must be in your eOPF [displayed on your Personnel Information Record (PIR)] before it can be worn, per CCI 512.01, 6-1.

Q. What is the order of precedence for wearing the ribbon?

The PUC is worn above all other unit citations, including any DoD unit awards, but below any individual honor awards, i.e. PHS Citation. Policy: CCI 26.3.3, 6-5b

[The Commissioned Officer Awards Program \(COAP\)](#) webpage on the Commissioned Corps Management Information System (CCMIS) website will display the PUC in order of precedence before the ribbon becomes available for purchase.

Q. How do I get the ribbon?

You are responsible for purchasing the ribbon. The primary source of obtaining awards and devices is the Navy Exchange (NEX). The earliest possible availability of the PUC ribbon will be January 2016. The ribbons seen at the ceremony were only a sample specially prepared for that event. Please note, the PUC must be displayed on your PIR before you are authorized to wear the ribbon.

Q. When will I see the PUC posted in my Direct Access file and my eOPF?

Every effort will be made to get this recognition entered into your Direct Access file and eOPF as soon as reasonably possible. However, the PUC is official as of September 24, 2015 and may be included in your official curriculum vitae (CV). The priority is getting the backlog of individual and honor awards processed in time for promotion eligibility. The PUC **will NOT** factor into promotions, as it is being awarded to all eligible officers.

Q. Will I receive a certificate and ribbon?

A certificate will be produced for distribution. However, due to Direct Access implementation, there is no timeframe for completion. Officers will be responsible for obtaining their own ribbon.

Q. What about ordering “thin ribbons” with the PUC?

There are a few commercial companies that sell “thin ribbons.” As the companies are third party commercial entities, they determine availability of items based on demand. In our experience with the Global Health ribbons, it may take up to 18 months for the PUC to be added. The major commercial vendors have been notified and are working to make the PUC available as soon as possible.

Q. What are the official Institute of Heraldry colors of our PUC?

- Golden Yellow (Pantone 67104)
- Navy Blue (Pantone 67180)
- Brick Red (Pantone 67113)
- White (Pantone 67101)

Q. What is the symbolism of the colors and stripes of our PUC?

- Golden Yellow: Generosity and elevation of the spirit.
 - Symbolizes our roots in quarantine medical service (“quarantine yellow”) and willingness to put Service before self, to protect, promote and advance the health and safety of the Nation.
- Navy Blue: Truth and loyalty
 - Symbolizes our maritime and ‘Sea Service’ history.
 - Symbolizes our unwavering allegiance to the Nation through our Commissioning process and oath of office.
- Brick Red: Perseverance in battle. Victorious.
 - Symbolizes our silent war on disease - steadfast and resolute. In this case, Ebola was contained in West Africa.
 - Four red stripes represent our four core values exemplified in response: Leadership, Service, Integrity and Excellence
- White: Purity, freedom from disease, peace and sincerity
 - Symbolizes our diplomacy, partnerships, and outcomes with our missions both domestically and internationally.

Q. Will officers who deployed during the Ebola Response be eligible for other Commissioned Corps Unit and Individual Award nominations during the same timeframe?

Yes. This does not preclude additional exceptional achievement of Corps officers from being recognized.

Q. I still have questions, where can I get more information?

Please contact your Commissioned Corps Agency Liaison or visit the [COAP website](#).