

2019 FACT SHEET FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS SPECIAL PAYS (HPSP)

This document provides critical information, requirements, and instructions to apply for Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (Corps) Health Professions Special Pays (HPSP). Corps officers are authorized Special, Incentive and Bonus Pays under Title 37 of the US Code (USC).

On November 15, 2018, the Secretary issued Commissioned Corps Directive ([CCD](#)) [151.05](#), “Health Professions Special Pays,” which authorizes the Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) to establish the new rates for HPSP, as well as, establish additional criteria for HPSP and methods of payment. On November 16, 2018, the ASH issued Commissioned Corps Instruction ([CCI](#)) [633.01](#) “Special Pays,” which provides additional clarification and updates HPSP eligibility. HPSP 2019 pay tables are provided in CCI 633.01 for eligible disciplines and specialties.

HPSP is designed to incentivize officers to remain on active duty and to compensate officers for training or skills, which required additional education, and are necessary to accomplish the mission of the service. Offering incentives such as HPSP helps to retain professionals with critical experience and training.

Before completing any HPSP agreement, carefully read the following information and instructions. Failure to complete the agreement in accordance with these instructions may result in late payment or nonpayment of HPSP.

It is an officer’s responsibility to determine which compensation package is best suited for his or her particular situation. No one from the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR), Compensation, the Commissioned Corps Agency Liaisons (CC Liaisons), Chief Professional Officers (CPOs), etc., can tell you what is best for you, so please review this information carefully.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF HPSP AGREEMENTS - 2019

The effective date of a 2019 HPSP agreement may be as early as January 1, 2019. The effective date is the date the HPSP service obligation begins. The effective date of the initial agreement will be determined as follows:

1. The date the officer attains eligibility for HPSP, provided the completed agreement is received by DCCPR within 60 days after the officer is initially eligible and the agreement is signed within 30 days after the officer is initially eligible for HPSP;
2. The date the completed agreement is signed, if received by DCCPR within 60 days of the date of eligibility but has not been signed within 30 days of the date of initial eligibility;
3. The date the completed agreement is received by DCCPR, if not received within 60 days of date of the officer’s eligibility; or
4. A later date, as specified by the officer in the HPSP agreement.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. PHS directive for HPSP - [CCD 151.05](#) and PHS instruction for HPSP [CCI 633.01](#) are published in the Commissioned Corps Issuance System ([CCIS](#)). It is the officer's responsibility to be familiar with the Corps' published policies and maintain awareness of updates to policies to include periodic changes to the HPSP policy, pay rates, and/or eligibility requirements.
2. To be eligible for HPSP, an officer must:
 - a. Be entitled to basic pay under 37 U.S.C. §204.
 - b. Be under a call to active duty in the Regular Corps for a period of not less than 1 year.
 - c. Be serving in a designated health profession specialty or skill and:
 - i. Have a performance rating of satisfactory on the most recent annual COER
 - ii. Must not have any active or pending administrative or disciplinary actions
 - iii. Maintain Conditions of Service ([CCD 111.03](#))
 - iv. Have a Current Unrestricted License ([CCI 251.01](#)).
 - v. Agree to a period of Obligated Active Duty Service (as defined in the HPSP Agreement)
 - vi. Starting January 1, 2020:
 - For Incentive Pay (IP) submit annual proof of 80 clinical hours in the previous year.
 - To initiate a Retention Bonus (RB) submit proof of 80 clinical hours in the previous year.
3. Officers must sign and submit an HPSP agreement for each of the HPSP authorities for which the officer is applying. Digital signatures must be with the officer's DoD issued Common Access Card (CAC) or a Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card that is issued by the OPDIV/STAFFDIV/non-HHS Federal organization to which the officer is assigned.
4. Officers applying for RB and IP, will have the obligation (RB/IP combination) for 2, 3, or 4 years, run concurrently. Although the IP is a 1-year agreement with the initial submission, the rate of IP is locked-in for the duration of the RB agreement.
5. If applying for RB and/or IP in a specialty based on a qualifying degree, documentation of the specialty is not required when submitting the agreement. Any specialty, which requires additional criteria that is obtained after the qualifying degree, such as an accredited residency program or professional board, must be submitted with the agreement. DCCPR will not process incorrect agreements or agreements missing required documents until correct and complete. Submitting incomplete agreements may will delay processing and might impact the effective date of an agreement.
6. By signing the HPSP agreements and accepting the payment of HPSP, officers are voluntarily agreeing to remain on active duty as a PHS Commissioned Corps officer, beginning with the effective date of the agreement, for the number of years indicated on the agreement. The effective date of the HPSP agreement cannot be changed once it is in effect.
7. Officers cannot request a voluntary retirement that is effective prior to the end of the obligation.

INFORMATION ON HEALTH PROFESSIONS SPECIAL PAYS AUTHORITIES

The following HPSP agreements are currently authorized for Corps officers. A separate agreement is required for each of the pays.

BOARD CERTIFICATION INCENTIVE PAY (BCIP) is authorized for an officer in the Regular Corps who is board certified in a designated health profession specialty. Please refer to the list of [specialty boards and the certifications](#) offered by each. Officers who are board certified must submit a certificate or congratulatory letter from the specified specialty board with the BCIP agreement. The certificate or letter should indicate that the officer satisfied all board certification requirements and is considered by the specialty board as fully board certified.

Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirements: Officers must also submit their current MOC status and certification documents if their professional certifying board requires a periodic MOC process, to maintain active certification. This will allow verification of both the start date of certification, as well as current certification status.

INCENTIVE PAY (IP) is a 1-year agreement for officers who are health professionals in a specialty listed under the [HPSP Rate Schedule](#) as determined by the ASH. The 2019 IP payment is authorized on a pro-rated daily basis paid monthly. Documentation of the specialty training or board certification must be submitted with the IP agreement if the specialty is not a qualifying degree.

RETENTION BONUS (RB) is a multi-year agreement with an active duty service obligation for 2, 3, or 4 years for officers who are health professionals in a specialty listed under the [HPSP Rate Schedule](#), as determined by the ASH. The RB payment is authorized as an annual lump sum amount paid at the beginning of each of the installment years. Documentation of the specialty training or board certification must be submitted with the RB agreement if the specialty is not a qualifying degree. If submitting both the RB and the IP together, only one set of documentation should be included.

ACCESSION BONUS (AB) OR CRITICAL WAR-TIME SKILLS ACCESSION BONUS (CWS-AB)
The AB and CWS-AB are bonus agreements with an active duty service obligation of 4 years for select health professionals listed under the [HPSP Pay Schedule](#) to incentivize those eligible candidates to accept an appointment in the Corps and fill direct hands-on patient care assignments. AB is paid in a one-time lump sum payment and CWS-AB is paid in equal annual installments. An officer cannot receive RB concurrently with AB or CWS-AB. An officer can receive IP and BCIP with AB or CWS-AB.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE HPSP AGREEMENT

1. Read the agreement carefully, including the Privacy Act Statement on the reverse side of the form.
2. The HPSP agreement consists of:
 - a. IDENTIFICATION – Fill in full name, grade and PHS serial number on the front of the agreement. Fill in the name of the PHS component or other Federal agency to which assigned or detailed, duty station phone number, and email address.
 - b. LENGTH OF AGREEMENT/SPECIAL PAY REQUESTED – Check the appropriate box for the length of active duty service you agreeing to serve (i.e., 12 months; or 2, 3, or 4 years).
 - c. CONDITIONS OF AGREEMENT – The agreement must include the following information to be specified by the officer:
 - i. Date that you are requesting the service obligation to begin
 - ii. The officer’s category and specialty (which must be in the category the officer is appointed)
 - d. CERTIFICATION - If you agree to the terms and conditions of the HPSP agreement, digitally sign and date the agreement.
3. Submit the agreement to the immediate supervisor. Retain a copy of the agreement to verify, if necessary, that the agreement was completed on a certain date. Failure to submit the agreement in accordance with these procedures will delay payment or result in nonpayment.
4. The immediate supervisor will sign and return the agreement to the officer who forwards the agreement to the Commissioned Corps Agency Liaison (CC Liaison) in accordance with guidance provided by the CC Liaison.

If the agreement is approved, personnel orders will be issued authorizing BCIP, IP, and/or RB. If the personnel order is processed on or before the 17th of the month, the HPSP will usually be included in the next month's paycheck. If personnel orders are dated after the 17th of the month, HPSP will usually be included in the second paycheck (i.e. orders dated May 17, payment in July paycheck).

Payment of an HPSP will normally commence within 90 days after receipt of the completed agreement in DCCPR or within 90 days after DCCPR receives all necessary supporting documentation.

Please note that all special pays are taxable income.

OFFICERS IN AN EXISTING CONTRACT UNDER THE LEGACY PAYS

An officer serving a legacy contract will continue to be paid under that contract until the obligation is completed. However, an officer who chooses to take advantage of a higher rate HPSP agreement, may request to renegotiate into an HPSP agreement provided the new HPSP obligation ends after the legacy contract's obligation.

RENEGOTIATION INTO HPSP – Officers who have received money under a legacy contract and who wish to renegotiate into the HPSP agreement(s), must repay any unearned portion of the contract. If the amount of the repayment is less than the first payment of the new HPSP agreement, the total amount of the repayment will be collected from the initial HPSP payment. If the repayment is more than the first payment the full amount of the first payment will be applied to the repayment amount. Thereafter, each subsequent payment of the HPSP will be applied to the repayment balance until it is paid in full. Once the previous contract repayment is collected, the HPSP installment payments will be available. This will be reflected on the personnel orders and on the monthly payroll advice.

PAYMENT OF HPSP - Payment of an HPSP will normally commence within 90 days after receipt of the completed agreement in DCCPR or within 90 days after DCCPR receives all necessary supporting documentation. Agreements that are missing documentation, signatures, or are not submitted to DCCPR in accordance with this guidance are not considered complete and will not be processed without all required documentation.

If you have any additional HPSP related questions, contact your regional or primary [Commissioned Corps Agency Liaison](#).