

INFORMATION ON

JUNIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER STUDENT

TRAINING AND EXTERN PROGRAM

(JRCOSTEP)



CCPM Pamphlet No. 64

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**Department of Health and Human Services
Public Health Service Commissioned Corps
Division of Commissioned Personnel**

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INTRODUCTION

Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual (CCPM) Pamphlet No. 64, "Information on Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP)," has been prepared to provide JRCOSTEP officers with up-to-date information concerning the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) and its commissioned corps. From this point on, the term JRCOSTEP refers to participants in the JRCOSTEP. For information on the Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP), see the section titled "Applying for the SRCOSTEP" of this pamphlet.

CCPM Pamphlet No. 64 provides:

- ! JRCOSTEP officers and their dependents with an overview of the PHS Commissioned Corps system;
- ! JRCOSTEP officers with information covering the significant statutes, regulations, and policies affecting them; and
- ! Agencies/Operating Divisions (OPDIVs)/Programs and JRCOSTEP preceptors with a document that can be used for orientation of JRCOSTEP officers, as well as others who need information about the commissioned corps.

This pamphlet is for informational purposes only. Official commissioned corps policies and procedures are set forth in applicable statutes, regulations, CCPM INSTRUCTIONS, and amendments thereto. This pamphlet provides a summary of key topics. However, the content is not exhaustive. More detailed information is available in the CCPM which is maintained by administrative offices throughout the Agencies/OPDIVs/Programs to which PHS commissioned officers are assigned and is available on the Division of Commissioned Personnel's (DCP) Web site—<http://dcp.psc.gov>—click on 'Publications.' Please note that DCP's Web site also contains informational pamphlets, a number of forms, the *Commissioned Corps Bulletin*, and other information and links that JRCOSTEP officers might find useful. Since JRCOSTEP orientations are conducted throughout the year, JRCOSTEP participants are encouraged to access the DCP Web site and click on 'Training' to find out the dates and locations of these orientations.

This pamphlet will be revised periodically to reflect changes in policies, organizations, and missions. If, as a JRCOSTEP officer, you have constructive comments that would help us make this pamphlet more useful, please submit your comments, in writing, along with your JRCOSTEP evaluation form.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (PHS) COMMISSIONED CORPS MISSION

The PHS Commissioned Corps is a component of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and is composed of approximately 5,800 commissioned officers and 62,000 civil service employees.

The mission of the PHS Commissioned Corps is to provide highly-trained and mobile health professionals who carry out programs to promote the health of the Nation, understand and prevent disease and injury, assure safe and effective drugs and medical devices, deliver health services to Federal beneficiaries, and furnish health expertise in time of war or other national or international emergencies. As one of the seven uniformed services (*) of the United States, the PHS Commissioned Corps is a specialized career system designed to attract, develop, and retain health professionals who may be assigned to Federal, State, or local agencies or international organizations to accomplish its mission.

To accomplish this mission, Agencies/OPDIVs/Programs are designed to:

- ! Develop knowledge through biomedical, behavioral, and health services research leading to the prevention and treatment of disease;

- ! Control and prevent disease;
- ! Improve the healthcare system, including development of creative techniques in medical methodology;
- ! Improve the Nation's mental health;
- ! Assure safe and effective drugs and healthful foods;
- ! Expand health resources; and
- ! Shape human resources, medical knowledge, technology, and other resources toward the goal of better health for all.

(*) Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

COMPOSITION OF THE PHS COMMISSIONED CORPS

The PHS Commissioned Corps is an **all officer** personnel system composed of health professionals. Commissioned officers are assigned to positions nationwide and agree to serve wherever needed and in response positions in emergency situations. They may serve outside of their permanent assignments if their particular skills and training are required.

All officers, depending upon their qualifying degrees, are members of one of the 11 professional categories shown below:

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>ABBREVIATION</u>	<u>CODE</u>
Medical	MED	01
Dental	DENT	02
Nurse	NURSE	03
Engineer	ENG	04
Scientist	SCIEN	05
Environmental Health	ENV	06
Veterinary	VET	07
Pharmacy	PHARM	08
Dietetics	DIET	09
Therapy	THER	10
Health Services (*)	HSO	11

The Surgeon General appoints a Chief Professional Officer (CPO) for each of these categories. In addition, Professional Advisory Committees (PACs) have been created to advise the Surgeon General on issues in the respective professional areas.

All COSTEP participants are appointed in the Health Services category while they are in training as a JRCOSTEP or SRCOSTEP, and are appointed at a temporary (pay) grade of Ensign (O-1). After earning a commissionable qualifying degree, applicants may be considered for one of the 11 categories shown above.

(*) The Health Services category encompasses all other commissionable health professionals, e.g., dental hygienists, physician assistants, podiatrists, optometrists, social workers, medical laboratory technologists, hospital/healthcare administrators, medical records administrators, epidemiologists, biostatisticians, computer scientists, and others.

**OPERATIONAL COMPONENTS AND ASSOCIATED PROGRAMS
of the
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)**

Administration on Aging
Administration for Children and Families
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Food and Drug Administration
Health Resources and Services Administration
Indian Health Service
National Institutes of Health
Program Support Center
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

PROGRAMS OUTSIDE OF HHS

Federal Bureau of Prisons
United States Coast Guard
Environmental Protection Agency
District of Columbia Commission on Mental Health Services (formerly Saint Elizabeths Hospital)
Immigration and Naturalization Service
United States Marshals Service
National Park Service

BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES

Commissioned Officers' Identification Card

Many of the benefits for which an officer is eligible are subject to the possession and presentation of a uniformed services identification (ID) card. This is true in obtaining healthcare and in gaining access to commissaries, base and post exchanges, and other military facilities, when not in uniform.

ID cards are U.S. Government property and accountable items. Proper controls and procedures for strict accountability and security of the cards are imposed at all ID card issuing sites. Officers are required to maintain proper possession and control of their card, and not allow the card to be used or misused by others.

Obtaining the ID Card - ID cards are issued by designated ID card officials at established HHS issuing offices and at other Federal and military facilities.

An ID card is issued by these designated officials upon presentation of a completed application form, DD Form 1172, "Application for Uniformed Services Identification Card - DEERS Enrollment." A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit A**. Proof of eligibility may be required in the form of a copy of the call to active duty order for new officers. This form is available on the DCP Web site—<http://dcp.psc.gov>—click on 'Services.'

All ID cards require a photograph of the officer and most ID sites have photographic capabilities. If a site does not have photographic facilities, an officer must obtain the photograph at his/her own expense. The photograph should show the full face, head uncovered, and officer in the uniform of the day.

Reissue - Proof of eligibility may be required in the form of a copy of the officer's current order. An ID card will be reissued: (a) when the card is lost or mutilated, or contains an error; (b) upon change of the name of the officer; and (c) when the card expires provided the officer remains eligible.

Identification Cards for Dependents

Dependents and former spouses, under certain conditions, are also eligible for many of the benefits for which an officer is eligible including obtaining healthcare and gaining access to commissaries, base and post exchanges, and other military facilities. The possession and presentation of an ID card is required to use these benefits.

Children under 10 years of age are eligible for benefits on the basis of the ID card in the possession of the officer or his/her spouse. An ID card may be issued to a child under special circumstances; for example, when the parents are divorced.

Application for ID Card - ID cards for dependents/spouses are obtained by completing form DD-1172, "Application for Uniformed Services Identification Card - DEERS Enrollment." A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit A**. This application should include information on all dependents including children under 10 years of age in order to enroll dependents in the Defense Enrollment/Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).

DEERS is the data system which contains essential data on all eligible beneficiaries under the Uniformed Services Health Benefits Program. All initial applications for dependent ID cards must be accompanied by legal documentation of the dependent's relationship to the officer. A dependent may initiate an application for an ID card.

Uniformed Services Benefits

These benefits are provided to officers, often on a space-available basis, as a reciprocal privilege. These are NOT rights or entitlements. Abuse of these benefits means embarrassment for the Service, the officer, and his/her dependents, and may lead to loss of privileges for the officer, and for fellow officers as well. Observe the rules and regulations as well as the customs and courtesies. The use and operation of these facilities are regulated by the Department of Defense with local control. Therefore, while usage is generally the same for all stations, the local commander may limit or restrict access as deemed necessary.

Exchange - the Base Exchanges (BX) of the Navy, Air Force, and Marines and Post Exchanges (PX) of the Army are available to PHS Commissioned Corps officers and their dependents. A copy of the JRCOSTEP officer's official personnel order is required for officers not in uniform and for dependents. A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit C**. These facilities are for personal (family) purchases and for legitimate immediate family members.

Most facilities take credit cards in addition to cash and checks. Most offer limited check cashing.
CHECKS RETURNED FOR NONPAYMENT ARE TAKEN AS A SERIOUS BREACH OF CONDUCT BY THE MILITARY AND THE PHS COMMISSIONED CORPS.

Types of BX/PX Stores:

- a. Main Exchange - clothes, jewelry, cameras, household, and personal items.
- b. Uniform/Military Clothing - uniform articles (most PHS Commissioned Corps articles are patterned after the Navy).
- c. Four Seasons - seasonal items, sporting goods, garden supplies, toys, limited food items.
- d. Auto Services - gasoline, tires, auto repair, and parts.
- e. Miscellaneous - tailor/laundry, barber/beauty shop, optical, thrift shop, fast food restaurant.

Commissary - These are the supermarkets for the military facility. Corps officers and dependents are eligible for this benefit.

Credit Unions - Most military facilities have a Federal Credit Union which is available to any Federal employee. The Federal Credit Union in the Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland, accepts any commissioned officer as a member. The telephone number is 301-881-1870.

Recreation Facilities - Most military installations have a variety of recreational facilities available for the personnel stationed there. These are generally available to officers. Facilities may include theaters, swimming pools, bowling lanes, sport equipment rentals, youth centers, recreational office/ticket offices, etc.

Recreational Sites - There are several military facilities which provide rest and relaxation opportunities for PHS Commissioned Corps officers. These include wilderness camps, waterfront sites, and other vacation-type facilities. These are located in various areas of the country, and are listed in several publications. Use is strictly on a space-available basis. Usually there are limits on reservations and time at the facility.

Service Clubs - The most frequently used club is the Officers' Club. This facility is especially for officers. Enlisted personnel are not usually permitted to use this facility. Likewise, officers are not usually expected in Non-Commissioned Officers' Clubs. This does vary from one installation to another. Small installations may only have one club for all personnel. The Officers' Club is more formal in atmosphere and behavior. Usually dress codes are enforced in the evening and on weekends. These facilities may be "open" or "closed." Open facilities are available for all officers. Closed facilities are accessible only to members, or to members of another Officers' Club.

Military Airlift Command (MAC) Flights - JRCOSTEP OFFICERS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE to travel on a Space-available (Space A) basis on aircraft of the Department of Defense and/or the Department of Transportation.

Temporary Lodging Facilities - JRCOSTEP OFFICERS AND/OR THEIR DEPENDENTS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO STAY AT the Bachelor Officers' Quarters (BOQ), the Visiting Officers' Quarters (VOQ), the Temporary Family Living (TFL) quarters, and the Temporary Military Living (TML) quarters.

Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief (SSCR) Act

Since April 22, 1976, the PHS commissioned Corps has been covered by the SSCR Act. The SSCR Act provides protection to members of the uniformed services. Provisions do not apply to dependents or nonofficial activities conducted in the State of assignment (e.g., outside employment). Some of the more important protections are outlined below:

Domicile Establishment - Domicile is the place regarded as the officer's permanent home. Officers do not lose domicile by taking up temporary residence elsewhere as a result of compliance with official personnel orders. A State (other than a home State) or locality cannot tax a commissioned officer's income merely because the officer resides and/or performs duty in that State. Income other than the officer's pay and allowances may be subject to income tax in the State where assigned. Income sources from the officer's dependents are not covered by the SSCR Act.

Legal domicile is determined by the officer and the State tax authorities concerned. Relevant factors include where the officer votes, auto title, auto registration, drivers license, ownership of property, payment of State income tax, and the Internal Revenue Service office the officer uses to file Federal tax.

Automobile Licenses, Fees or Excises - Corps officers are not subject to auto licensure and related fees of excises of the State assigned, provided that these have been paid to the State of domicile. Although some States elect to apply the exemption to driver licensure requirements, this is not exempted under SSCR Act.

Call to Active Duty Lease Protection - Leases covering dwellings and/or professional space rental may be terminated by the lessee by notice of call to duty by the commissioned corps. This authority does not apply for transfers after entry on duty. Obtain the "transfer under uniformed service orders" provision in any lease agreement.

LEAVE AND WORK SCHEDULES

Background

Commissioned corps officers are subject to duty 24 hours each day, every day of the year. Furthermore, an officer on leave, including station and annual leave, is subject to recall to duty at any time. Because an officer is subject to duty 24 hours a day, an officer is not entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time when he/she works longer than 8 hours a day or more than 40 hours a week.

A JRCOSTEP officer must either be on duty or on approved leave at all times. Except in emergency cases, leave taken by the JRCOSTEP officer *must be approved in advance* by the officer's leave-granting authority. Form PHS-1345, "Request and Authority for Leave of Absence (Commissioned Officers)," is used to request leave. A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit B**. The leave form is signed by the JRCOSTEP officer's immediate supervisor (preceptor). The second line supervisor, or other formally designated official, signs as the leave-granting authority. The original of the form PHS-1345 must be returned to the officer, and a copy given to the JRCOSTEP officer's leave maintenance clerk. The JRCOSTEP officer must carry the original of the form PHS-1345 with him/her while on leave. Immediately upon return to duty, the officer must complete Section 4 of the original copy of the form, obtain the leave-granting authority's verification signature, and return the form to the leave maintenance clerk. The officer should retain a copy of the completed form for his/her records. The program to which the JRCOSTEP officer is assigned is responsible for maintaining leave records.

Work Schedules

An officer's supervisor can establish any duty or work hours for the JRCOSTEP officer necessary to meet the needs of the program. Although most offices have regularly scheduled hours, this is entirely discretionary. Many officers work more than 8½ hours per day, and on nights, on holidays, and during weekends. Any work schedule developed to define "work hours" for a JRCOSTEP officer is for administrative convenience only, and does not establish any rights for the officer or restrictions on management in making adjustments or changes as necessary to meet program needs.

Flexitime - The work hours of an officer can be fixed, or the starting and ending time can be flexible as determined by the JRCOSTEP officer's supervisor. Therefore, the general concept of flexitime applies to commissioned corps officers only in the context of flexible starting and ending times on duty.

Alternate Work Schedule - The work hours of an officer are established by the supervisor (preceptor) and can be any number of hours in any type of pattern consistent with the needs of the program. Therefore, the concept of "normal" work hours and "alternate" work hours does not apply to a JRCOSTEP officer.

Types of Leave

Annual Leave - JRCOSTEP officers earn ½ day of annual leave for every 6 days worked. Form PHS-1345 is used to request and approve all leave. Except in emergencies, annual leave must be approved in advance by the leave-granting authority. Annual leave is approved in whole days only. Annual leave will be charged for non-workdays, including holidays, that fall within days of annual leave. In addition, the leave policy requires that a consecutive period of absence from duty may not be authorized in several parts to avoid being charged annual leave for non-workdays that fall within the period. *JRCOSTEP officers are not authorized lump sum payment for any unused annual leave, and they cannot carry leave over from one tour of duty to another.* JRCOSTEP officers are encouraged to work with their supervisors (preceptors) and to schedule their leave to avoid any loss of unused annual leave. The amount of annual

leave a JRCOSTEP officer will earn for the period of active duty is documented on his/her personnel orders.

Sick Leave - Sick leave is also approved on form PHS-1345, and is authorized as needed. The leave-granting authority may grant sick leave only when supported by administratively acceptable evidence. He/she may consider an officer's certification as to the reason for his/her absence administratively acceptable. However, for an absence in excess of 3 workdays, or for a lesser period when determined necessary, the leave-granting authority or the Medical Affairs Branch, DCP, may also require a physician's statement or copy of actual records of care. An officer who becomes ill while on annual leave must notify the leave-granting authority of his/her illness and request sick leave. He/she must also report the termination of sick leave status. All sick leave must be reported on form PHS-1345 as stated in INSTRUCTION 4, Subchapter CC29.1 of the CCPM. Immediately upon return to duty, the officer must complete Section 1 and/or 4 (as appropriate) of the original copy of the form and obtain the leave-granting authority's verification signature. The leave-granting authority must send the completed original of the form to: Division of Commissioned Personnel, ATTN: Medical Affairs Branch, Room 4C-06, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857-0001.

Sick leave will not be granted to JRCOSTEP officers for elective procedures.

Station Leave - Station leave is any absence from duty for a period of less than 1 full workday. Station leave must be approved in advance (either verbally or in writing, in accordance with locally established practices) by the leave-granting authority. Station leave should be in writing if the officer plans on traveling more than 50 miles from the duty station. Station leave is not a right; it is a privilege which should be requested and granted prudently and only for legitimate reasons.

Absence Without Leave (AWOL) - An officer will be considered AWOL when he/she is absent from the duty station, unless the period of absence is approved by the leave-granting authority. An officer receives no pay or other benefits (i.e., healthcare for themselves or dependents) while in AWOL status. Disciplinary action will be taken against any officer found to be in AWOL status.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Healthcare Entitlements for JRCOSTEP Officers

Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 55, Section 1074, entitles officers to healthcare from any Military Treatment Facility (MTF). Presentation of the Uniformed Service Identification Card allows the officer access to these services. HHS considers JRCOSTEP officers under the same regulations as military reservists. JRCOSTEP officers have a limited healthcare entitlement restricted to emergencies and space-available military care. All routine healthcare must be provided at an MTF. The Medical Affairs Branch, (MAB) will **NOT** authorize routine care from civilian providers. MAB will authorize emergency care at the closest emergency room.

Medical and surgical care for *conditions existing prior to* JRCOSTEP commissioning is not authorized. Elective procedures are not covered and absence from duty for elective surgical procedures is not authorized. Additionally, *dental care for JRCOSTEP officers is limited to acute care*. Only emergency dental care will be authorized from civilian sources. All other dental care must be obtained from an MTF or on a space available basis. Always call a Patient Care Coordinator (PCC) at 1-800-368-2777 before you seek health or dental care from a civilian source. Except in an emergency, payment for nonauthorized care is the JRCOSTEP officer's responsibility.

Sources of Healthcare Services

Usual Sources of Care by Duty Station: Officers whose duty station lies within the catchment area of an MTF must use that facility as their source of routine care. If stationed at an Indian Health Service facility

which provides healthcare services to officers, that facility may serve as the source of routine care. MAB **will not** authorize routine care from civilian providers.

Emergency Care: A bonafide medical or dental emergency requires immediate care and, therefore, does not require prior authorization. However, *all emergencies must be reported to a PCC on toll free 1-800-368-2777 (option #2) as soon as possible, but not later than 72 hours after care has been received. MAB should be notified immediately if an officer is being admitted as an inpatient from the emergency room.* Data required when calling in the emergency services includes: the officer's name; social security number; date of the emergency; the name of the civilian facility and/or physician whom a PCC can contact; and the name of the nearest MTF that had been contacted. Call MAB at 1-800-368-2777 for billing instructions for emergency care.

Third Party Liability

If an officer is injured as a result of an action involving a third party, a report must be filed with a PCC by the officer to protect the Government's interest and permit the recovery of any costs due to the Government.

Healthcare for Dependents

JRCOSTEP officers' family members are not eligible for the active-duty family member dental plan. A family member of a JRCOSTEP on duty for a period of more than 30 days is eligible for TRICARE. They are also eligible for direct care at an MTF on a space available basis only.

PAY AND ALLOWANCES

Background

A commissioned officer's compensation comprises two basic elements, pay and allowances. Basic pay and allowances are paid by the Compensation Branch (CB) and are paid on the basis of an officer's personnel orders issued by DCP which define his/her rank and duty station. An officer should contact CB regarding any questions or problems concerning pay and allowances at the following address:

Division of Commissioned Personnel
ATTN: Compensation Branch
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4-50
Rockville, MD 20857-0001
Phone: 301-594-2963 (or toll free 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, and dial the last 5 digits of the phone number—42963)

Basic Pay

Basic Pay is considered to be the officer's actual salary. It is subject to Federal income tax and, in most cases, State income tax, and in some cases county income tax. For officers called to extended active duty, the rate of basic pay is based upon the officer's temporary grade and by the Base Pay Entry Date (BPED) printed on the officer's call to active duty personnel order. This date is usually the call to active duty date; however, it may be adjusted for prior service in the PHS Commissioned Corps and other uniformed services. *All JRCOSTEP Officers are appointed at the Ensign (O-1) grade.*

Deductions

Deductions from pay include County, State, and Federal taxes and Social Security (FICA). Officers must submit form W-4, "Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate," to CB, to determine the rate of withholding of Federal and State income tax. Officers claim withholding allowances based on their marital

status, number of dependents, and other adjustments to income, utilizing the worksheets provided with the W-4.

State income taxes are based on the officer's State of legal residence. Officers notify CB of their State of legal residence by completing DD Form 2058, "State of Legal Residence Certificate," and if appropriate, State taxes are withheld. State tax laws vary, so JRCOSTEP officers are advised to contact their respective State Department of Revenue for assistance.

Social Security (FICA) is also deducted from an officer's base pay. The Social Security deduction comprises two parts, Old Age Survivor's and Disability Insurance (OASDI) and Hospital Insurance (HI). The current rates of deduction are available from CB.

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) fees will automatically be deducted to insure the officer for the maximum \$250,000 of life insurance unless the officer prefers a lesser amount (in increments of \$10,000), or no coverage. To decline the insurance, the officer must submit form SGLV-8286 on or before his/her first day of active duty. For officers who do not decline, or do not elect a lesser amount, a monthly deduction from their pay check will be made. The rates are available from CB at 301-594-2963 (or toll free 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, and dial the last 5 digits of the phone number—42963).

Allowances

Allowances are non-taxable income for officers and include Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) and Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH). BAS is a monthly allowance payable to all officers unless meals are provided by the Service. BAH is a monthly allowance payable to officers unless Government quarters, such as base housing, are occupied. The amount is based upon the rank of the officer, the length of the officer's tour, the officer's dependency status, and the officer's official duty station. Special provisions apply when both spouses are members of a uniformed service. **Note: Due to short tour lengths, JRCOSTEP officers are normally authorized BAH II when nonavailability of Government quarters exists.**

Officer Responsibilities

OFFICERS MUST NOTIFY THE COMPENSATION BRANCH (CB) OF CHANGES IN THEIR ADDRESSES. This is important for proper receipt of the monthly earnings statement. Officers should also notify CB of changes in dependency. CB must be notified in writing of all changes no later than the 10th of the month in order for the changes to be processed in the current month. Submitting changes as early in the month as possible will assure processing can be completed in time. Officers should pay particular attention when submitting various forms to CB. Remember that these forms affect your pay and the information should be clearly typed or printed.

Payday

Payday is usually the first day of the month. If the first day of the month is a non-workday, officers may expect to receive their pay on the previous workday.

Annual Earnings Statement

Annual earnings statements (Form W-2) are mailed to all officers at the end of January. Please be sure to notify CB in writing if you have changed your address. Otherwise, the statements will be mailed to the same address as your monthly earnings statement.

Monthly Pay Statement

Review your monthly pay statement. Each month, approximately 5 workdays before the end of the month, the Statement of Earnings and Deductions is mailed to each officer. This statement provides a detailed breakdown of your earnings, both taxable and non-taxable, and deductions which include Federal Tax Withholdings, State and County Tax Withholding (if appropriate), FICA, and SGLI. The net check to bank is the amount of pay you receive in the form of funds transferred to your bank account. In addition, a year to date summary is provided. The statement is sent to the address which you provide to CB which does **not** change unless notification is received in writing. Usually this is your personal address rather than duty station address.

You should pay particular attention to the **MESSAGE** area on the monthly pay statement. In addition to a general information message, CB prints specific information messages to notify you of changes (corrections, adjustments, etc.) in your pay, or to alert you to potential changes.

Designation of Address

The commissioned officer payroll system allows an officer to receive his/her paycheck and all other payroll documents at an address of his/her choice. This method increases the officer's privacy and provides for prompt, reliable, and secure delivery of important and confidential documents. The net salary must be credited directly to an account at a financial institution, and you will receive the statement of earnings, bonds, and other payroll documents at a separate address of choice. The payroll address does not change when you return to school. Officers must notify CB in writing when there is a change in the address. For further information, contact the CB at phone number 301-594-2963 (or toll-free at 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, and dial the last 5 digits of the phone number—42963). Remember all changes must be received by the 10th of the month in order to provide time for the changes to be processed for the current month.

Final Paycheck and Form W-2

The final electronic funds transfer for officers **will** be directly deposited into a bank account. ***The JRCOSTEP officer must contact CB at least 30 days before his/her separation date and inform CB of the final address designated to send the Form W-2.***

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCES

Authorization

Official personnel orders (PO) are always needed by an officer to initiate any form of travel to or from the duty assignment. A sample of the PO is shown as **Exhibit C**. The orders contain a series of dates which include:

- ! Effective Date;
- ! Call to Active Duty (CAD) Date;
- ! Report to Duty Station Date;
- ! Release of Duty Assignment Date; and
- ! Relieved from Active Duty Date.

The **Effective Date (A)** is the starting date that an officer is authorized to travel to their duty assignment. It corresponds directly to the **CAD (B)**. The **Report to Duty Station Date (C)** is the date which an officer is to report to the designated duty assignment location. The **Release of Duty Assignment Date (D)** is the date which corresponds to the last day an officer is at the duty assignment. An officer is authorized to begin return travel on this date to the place from which he/she was called to active duty or the home of record, after completing the daily work assignment. The **Relieved from Active Duty Date (E)** is the absolute last day an officer can be considered for any entitlements, e.g., medical and other uniformed services benefits within HHS.

Traveling prior to the effective date and after the relieved from active duty date on the PO will be at the risk of the officer. No consideration will be given to the officer's uniformed services benefits or other claims, e.g., accident or medical, made by the traveler prior to the effective date or after relieved from active duty date shown on the orders.

Official personnel orders are to be used exclusively for the JRCOSTEP officer. No travel and transportation entitlements are authorized for the dependents of a JRCOSTEP officer.

If an officer elects to travel by Privately Owned Conveyance (POC), the officer should be aware that **NO PER DIEM IS AUTHORIZED** by the Agency/OPDIV/Program to or from which the officer is traveling.

Mileage Chart

Orders allow travel time to the duty station by the date and hour specified for reporting. This time is computed from the place stated on the orders as the city/State from which an officer will proceed. If a JRCOSTEP officer indicates that travel will be made by POC, the officer is granted only the amount of travel time authorized by surface common carrier as shown in **Exhibit D**.

Due to distance involved, orders may include a specific directive for air travel. If such directive is included in an officer's orders, that officer should use air travel. If the officer elects to utilize a different means of transportation, reimbursement will not exceed the cost to the Government had travel been performed by the directed mode of travel.

Reimbursement

JRCOSTEP officers will be reimbursed for travel by POC at the current approved rate per mile. The total reimbursement will not exceed what it would cost the Government on a common carrier, e.g., bus, train, or airplane, to perform travel of a comparable distance. Only the owner/operator of the POC will be reimbursed for mileage. Other JRCOSTEP officers accompanying the owner/operator of the POC will not be reimbursed. JRCOSTEP officers that utilize commercial carriers will be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed the cost of a Government contract carrier.

JRCOSTEP officers should obtain form SF-1012, "Travel Voucher," from their Agency/OPDIV/ Program upon arrival to their duty assignment and prior to departure for travel reimbursement when returning to the location from which they were called to active duty. This form is also located on the DCP Web site—<http://dcp.psc.gov>—under 'Services'. A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit E**. ***DCP does not process JRCOSTEP officers' travel vouchers; travel vouchers must be submitted to the Agency/OPDIV/Program.***

Transporting of Household Goods

JRCOSTEP officers are authorized to transport up to 600 pounds of household goods (HHG) to their place of residence in the vicinity of their duty station. HHG may be shipped from and to the officer's home of record or to the location at which they were called to duty. The transporting of HHG can be by any commercial means, e.g., bus, train, or airplane. The officer needs a weight certificate to accompany form SF-1012, "Travel Voucher." All reimbursement forms should be submitted in a timely fashion to the Agency/OPDIV/Program to which the officer is assigned.

RETURNING AS A JRCOSTEP PARTICIPANT

Background

JRCOSTEP allows participating students to gain valuable experience with assignments of 31 to 120 days duration. The experience gained can translate into possible career decisions for the student. JRCOSTEP also allows Agencies/OPDIVs/Programs to view potential new health professionals in a work-related environment.

Occasionally, during their academic year, students have sufficient time to participate in more than one opportunity in JRCOSTEP. As long as there are no scheduling conflicts for the student and the hiring Agency/OPDIV/Program, a student can participate in more than one JRCOSTEP experience, provided the total number of days in assignments does not exceed 120 in a fiscal year. (The fiscal year is from October 1 through September 30.) All assignments must be for at least the minimum of 31 days.

Student's Responsibilities

There are two ways for a student to initiate the process of reapplying as a JRCOSTEP:

1. Near the end of each tour of duty an evaluation packet is sent to the JRCOSTEP officer. In this packet is form PHS-4772, "JRCOSTEP Status Report," which must be completed and returned by the student. A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit F**. The student should mark the appropriate box to be considered for JRCOSTEP and indicate his/her expected dates of availability. There is also a preceptor's evaluation, form PHS-4469-1, "JRCOSTEP Evaluation Questionnaire," which is completed by the preceptor. A sample of the form is shown as **Exhibit G**.
- Or -
2. A letter should be sent to the JRCOSTEP Coordinator asking that the Official Personnel Folder (OPF) be reopened as a JRCOSTEP applicant. The letter should be sent to:

Division of Commissioned Personnel
ATTN: JRCOSTEP Coordinator
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4A-18
Rockville, MD 20857-0001

The letter should include the following information:

- ! Name
- ! Social Security Number and/or PHS Serial Number
- ! Current Mailing Address and Phone Number
- ! Dates Available (Start and End)
- ! Expected Graduation Date
- ! Any Agency/OPDIV/Program and/or Geographic Preferences

JRCOSTEP Coordinator Role

When DCP is notified of a student's desire to repeat or return to JRCOSTEP, and if the student is found qualified, the JRCOSTEP Coordinator will initiate the process of reopening the student's application. The student will be sent a letter explaining the requirements for reapplying. **All students need to provide current college transcripts**. The following additional forms will be sent to the student for completion:

- ! DD Form 2807-1, "Report of Medical History," and
- ! Form PHS-1813, "Reference Request for Applicants to the U.S. Public Health Service" (2 copies)

All of the above information is necessary to complete the reopening of the application. Agencies/OPDIVs/Programs select applicants on a continuous basis. Even though there are no deadlines for DCP receiving applications, those applicants whose applications are received by the following dates will be ensured timely processing:

Please submit your application by:

September 30, for assignment opportunities from January 1 - April 30;
December 31, for assignment opportunities from May 1 - August 31; and
April 30, for assignment opportunities from September 1 - December 31.

It is suggested that students keep in contact with previous supervisors or preceptors, especially if they want to return to that location. The supervisor must have the position ceiling and all the necessary funds for the assignment.

APPLYING FOR THE SENIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER STUDENT TRAINING AND EXTERN PROGRAM

Background

The Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP) is a program of the PHS Commissioned Corps. It is managed by the Division of Commissioned Personnel, and was established to attract qualified students in accredited programs leading to a commissionable professional degree. Through SRCOSTEP, students may be appointed and placed on active duty as PHS commissioned officers in long-term training during their senior year (or last year) of their college program. Students receive pay and allowances as Ensign officers (pay grade O-1) and must agree that, upon completion of training, they will serve on active duty as a PHS commissioned officer for twice the period of training supported by HHS.

Eligibility

To qualify for SRCOSTEP, a student must be a United States citizen and be under the age of 44, or have offsetting military or PHS service. The medical fitness standards prescribed for a general duty appointment (not a JRCOSTEP appointment) are applicable. A successful suitability review is also required. The SRCOSTEP applicant must be able to serve a **minimum of 8 months** as a SRCOSTEP and 16 months in payback status.

In addition to the PHS Commissioned Corps personnel requirements, the student must be enrolled in good standing at an accredited school in a commissionable discipline; be eligible to enroll in the senior (last) year of such school; and begin or be in formal studies required as part of the curriculum for the senior (last) year on the date of entry on active duty.

Students **must** be free of any obligation or commitment that would conflict with extended active duty as a commissioned officer in the PHS, such as Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) or any other military reserve program, or other educational financial assistance (stipend or scholarship), public or private, whose terms would result in there being a conflict.

Commitment

SRCOSTEP applicants **must** agree, in writing, to serve on extended active duty as a PHS commissioned officer for twice the period of training sponsored by HHS. The applicant must be able to serve a **minimum of 8 months** as a SRCOSTEP and serve a **minimum** of 16 months in payback status. If applicable to the category or discipline, the SRCOSTEP applicant must obtain a professional license, certification, or registration within 12 months of graduation.

Financial Assistance

As an active-duty officer, the student receives the pay and allowances of an Ensign (pay grade O-1) officer. Tuition and fees may also be paid depending upon the supporting program.

Upon graduation, assignments are made to the Agency/OPDIV/Program that provided the financial support during the school year. The Agencies/OPDIVs/ Programs currently supporting SRCOSTEP include: Federal Bureau of Prisons, Food and Drug Administration, Indian Health Service, and National Institutes of Health.

Graduates in disciplines other than nursing are promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade (pay grade O-2), with the monthly pay and allowances plus benefits. Nurses who do not obtain licensure at the time of graduation will be placed into a supervised intramural trainee billet, that does not accrue further obligation, at the temporary rank of Ensign (pay grade O-1) until licensure is obtained. This transfer into training will allow the graduate nurse 6 months to achieve licensure. Once licensure is obtained, the nurse officer will be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade. If the nurse officer has not achieved licensure by the end of the initial 6-month period, the officer will be inactivated for up to an additional 6-month period during which time his/her training obligation debt is deferred. If the nurse achieves licensure, then he/she may be recalled to active duty. Otherwise, at the end of the additional 6-month period of inactive status, if the nurse officer fails to obtain licensure, DCP will terminate the officer's commission and initiate default repayment procedures. SRCOSTEP is available for all commissionable categories based upon HHS needs.

Reference and Contact

Additional information about SRCOSTEP may be obtained from:

Division of Commissioned Personnel
ATTN: SRCOSTEP
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4A-18
Rockville, MD 20857-0001
Phone: 301-594-3360 (or toll-free 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, and dial the last 5 digits of the phone number—43360)

APPLYING FOR EXTENDED ACTIVE DUTY

When to Apply

After completing an assignment, a JRCOSTEP officer returns to his/her respective college or institution to advance in or complete his/her education and training. To be eligible for extended active duty, all required education and training must be completed. A JRCOSTEP officer can inform DCP of his/her desire for extended active duty when completing form PHS-4772, "JRCOSTEP Status Report." A sample of this form is shown as **Exhibit F**.

The personnel file of the officer is retained in the Inactive Reserve Corps and is kept 4 years after his/her graduation date. An officer who has not applied for extended active duty within the time allotted will have his/her Inactive Reserve Corps commission terminated.

How to Receive Information

A new application packet for extended active duty must be completed. This application packet is similar to the JRCOSTEP application packet, but more information is required with the new application. Previously submitted information, while helpful, cannot be substituted for the needed new information. Active-duty applications can be obtained by accessing the PHS Commissioned Corps Web site—<http://www.usphs.gov>—or from the recruitment activity within DCP. Please call 301-594-3360 (or toll-free 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, and dial the last 5 digits of the phone number—43360) or write to the following address:

Division of Commissioned Personnel
ATTN: Recruitment and Assignment Branch
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4A-18
Rockville, MD 20857-0001

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Question 1: If I am going to an area for the first time, how do I find out about housing and transportation, etc.?
- Answer: Once a JRCOSTEP officer has been assigned to a site, a preceptor is assigned to assist in orientation, supervision, and meeting of the student's objectives.
- Question 2: As a JRCOSTEP officer, may I receive an advance for travel?
- Answer: No. A JRCOSTEP officer is not eligible for a travel advance. Once the officer arrives at the institution, he/she should complete and submit form SF-1012, "Travel Voucher," to his/her Agency/OPDIV/Program to receive reimbursement for authorized travel.
- Question 3: How much travel time is the JRCOSTEP officer allowed to report to his/her duty station?
- Answer: If traveling by Privately Own Conveyance (POC), the JRCOSTEP officer will be granted only the amount of time authorized by a surface common carrier to report to his/her duty station. No travel time is authorized for distances of 25 miles and under. For distances greater than 26 miles, but less than 400 miles, 1 travel day is granted. For each additional increment of up to 350 miles, another travel day will be granted. See the mileage chart in **Exhibit D** of this pamphlet.
- Question 4: If a JRCOSTEP officer would like to leave for his/her duty assignment earlier or later than the date indicated on his/her orders, may he/she do so?
- Answer: **NO. DO NOT TRAVEL PRIOR TO THE DATE INDICATED ON THE CALL TO ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL ORDER!!** If a JRCOSTEP officer travels prior to the date indicated on the orders he/she will travel at his/her own risk and expense. If the officer arrives at the site after the deadline, he/she will be considered Absent Without Leave (AWOL).
- Question 5: Is a JRCOSTEP officer permitted to take household goods?
- Answer: Regardless of the mode of travel, he/she may ship up to 600 pounds of household goods or personal belongings at the expense of the U.S. Government.

- Question 6: Can a JRCOSTEP officer be placed on extended active duty while serving on a rotation?
- Answer: No. A JRCOSTEP officer cannot be placed on extended active duty because as a JRCOSTEP officer he/she does not meet the commissioning standards for extended active duty.
- Question 7: Can an applicant for the JRCOSTEP program maintain his/her reserve commission with another branch of the uniformed services?
- Answer: No. A JRCOSTEP applicant must resign from any other branch of the Service before he/she may serve in the PHS Commissioned Corps.
- Question 8: What happens if I lose my ID card?
- Answer: If you lose your ID, you will be issued another ID card. It is necessary to resubmit new forms.
- Question 9: Are my dependents eligible for the same benefits that I receive?
- Answer: Yes. Dependents are eligible to receive ID cards. Like the JRCOSTEP officer, dependents may utilize commissaries, exchanges, and other military facilities. To obtain an ID card, form DD-1172 must be completed and submitted. See **Exhibit A**.
- Question 10: Do I receive any annual or sick leave? If so, how do I request leave?
- Answer: JRCOSTEP officers accrue ½ day of annual leave per 6 days of service, for example: 31 day rotation would allow 2.5 days of annual leave. Annual leave must be requested in advance on form PHS-1345 and submitted to the officer's leave-granting authority. Sick leave is authorized as needed.
- Question 11: As a JRCOSTEP officer, am I medically covered if I need emergency medical or dental care?
- Answer: Yes. Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 55, Section 1074, entitles officers to healthcare from any Military Treatment Facility (MTF). **Elective procedures are not covered**. Dental care for the JRCOSTEP officer is limited to acute care.
- Question 12: Are my dependents covered for medical and dental care?
- Answer: Dependents are entitled to healthcare from an MTF on a space-available basis.
- Question 13: If there is a problem with my pay, who do I contact to remedy the problem?
- Answer: If an individual has a problem with pay, contact the Compensation Branch, DCP, at 301-594-2963 (or toll-free at 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, and dial the last 5 digits of the phone number—42963).

###

EXHIBIT A

SAMPLE – Form DD-1172, “Application for Uniformed Services
Identification Card - DEERS Enrollment”

<http://dcp.psc.gov/DCPForms.asp>

EXHIBIT B

Form PHS-1345, "Request and Authority for Leave of Absence (Commissioned Officers)"

This form is available from your
administrative/personnel office.

EXHIBIT C

SAMPLE - PERSONNEL ORDER

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
5600 FISHERS LANE, ROCKVILLE, MD 20857

PERSONNEL ORDER NUMBER 1129
APPT--CALL TO DUTY FOR TRAINING

(A) EFF: 05-27-01 NOA: 1011

SAMPLE

PHS#:
SSAN:
DOB:
SEX:

PERM GRADE: O-1 (ENSIGN) JR. ASSISTANT HEALTH SERVICES OFFICER
CATEGORY: HEALTH SERVICES OFFICER CORPS: RESERVE ACTIVE-NTE 120 DAYS

COSTEP TRNG: ENGINEER OFFICER COSTEP GRAD DATE: 05-15-02
TRNG STAT: IN-SERVICE JR COSTEP

APPT DATE: 05-27-01 CALL TO ACTIVE DUTY: 05-27-01 (B)

HOME OF RECORD: SAN ANTONIO TX
CN CAD DATE WILL PROCEED FROM: SAN ANTONIO TX 78210
REPORT TO NEW DUTY STATION NOT LATER THAN 0900 HOURS CN 05-29-01 (C)

NEW ORGANIZATION:
IHS, ALBUQUERQUE AREA OFFICE, OPC ENVRMNT HLTH
& ENGNRG, DIV SANTAN FACLS CONSTRUCTION
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE: HGF033
STATION: SANITATION FACLS. CONSTRUCTION
1700 CERRILLOS ROAD, SANTA FE, NM 87501

GEOGRAPHIC CODE: 350710049
RELIEVED DUTY ASSIGNMENT NOT EARLIER THAN 1600 HOURS ON 08-17-01 (D)
AUTHORIZED TRAVEL TO: SAN ANTONIO TX

RELIEVED ACTIVE DUTY: 08-19-01 (E)
BDN: 04CC001 TITLE: ENGINEER COSTEP
BPEM: 05-27-01
DIEMS: 05-27-01

YEARS OF SERVICE FOR PAY: UNDER 2 YEARS

CAN(PAY): ACCT FT(PAY): D/A#:
CAN(TVL): ACCT FT(TVL):

JOINT FEDERAL TRAVEL REGULATIONS; TRAVEL DIRECTED AS NECESSARY
TRAVEL/RELOCATION INFORMATION AT: [HTTP://DCP.PSC.GOV/TRAVEL/TRAVELL.ASP](http://dcp.psc.gov/travel/travell.asp)
AUTHORIZED TRANSPORTATION OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS NOT TO EXCEED 600 LBS.

PURSUANT TO P.L. 97-60, OFFICER IS ENTITLED TO ALLOWANCES FOR HIS/HER
PERSONAL TRAVEL UPON TERMINATION, INACTIVATION OR RETIREMENT ONLY FOR
TRAVEL ACTUALLY PERFORMED.

YOU WILL EARN DAY(S) OF USE-OR-LOSE ANNUAL LEAVE IN THIS TOUR.
ALL RESERVE CORPS OFFICERS ARE IN PROBATIONARY STATUS FOR THREE YEARS
FOLLOWING EACH CALL TO DUTY (CCPM 23.7, INST. 2),
WITH THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATION(S) AS SHOWN BELOW.
TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION ENTITLEMENTS NOT AUTHORIZED FOR DEPENDENTS.
JR. COSTEP LIMITED TOUR OF DUTY NOT TO EXCEED
REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL BY PRIVATELY OWNED CONVEYANCE IS \$.345/MILE
NOT TO EXCEED COST OF COMMON/CONTRACT CARRIER. PERDIEM NOT AUTHORIZED.
YOUR SUPERVISOR IS PHONE
FOR MEDICAL CARE ACCESS PLEASE CALL (800) 368-2777

OFFICIAL *Michael Davidson* BY DIRECTION OF THE SURGEON GENERAL
DIRECTOR

DIVISION OF COMMISSIONED PERSONNEL

EXHIBIT D

Mileage Chart

Official Distance (Miles)		Time (Days)
Start	End	
0	25	0
26	400	1
401	750	2
751	1100	3
1101	1450	4
1451	1800	5
1801	2150	6
2151	2500	7
2501	2850	8
2851	3200	9
3201	3550	10

EXHIBIT E

SAMPLE – Form SF-1012, “Travel Voucher”

<http://dcp.psc.gov/DCPForms.asp>

EXHIBIT E *(Continued)*

Form SF-1012, "Travel Voucher"

EXHIBIT F

Form PHS-4772, "JRCOSTEP Status Report"

<http://dcp.psc.gov/DCPForms.asp>

EXHIBIT G

Form PHS-4469-1, "JRCOSTEP Evaluation Questionnaire"

<http://dcp.psc.gov/DCPForms.asp>

EXHIBIT G *(Continued)*

Form PHS-4469-1, "JRCOSTEP Evaluation Questionnaire"

<http://dcp.psc.gov/DCPForms.asp>