U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONED CORPS
DIRECT ACCESS (DA) MIGRATION PROJECT UPDATE

NEW ABSENCE REQUEST (LEAVE) AND
IMPROVED SELF-SERVICE FUNCTIONS
EFFECTIVE: 1/5/2016

DATE: 12/28/2015

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (Corps) is migrating leave and other Absence Request functions to the U.S. Coast Guard's Direct Access (DA) system on January 1, 2016. Please take a moment to read about the enhanced flexibility and functionality that DA will provide to you beginning in January!

On December 18, 2015 the Commissioned Officer Leave Tracking System (COLTS) was shut down permanently in order to prepare for the transition of Leave functionality to DA. Following the transition on January 5, 2016 all officers will enter leave requests into DA. Requests will be electronically routed directly to an Absence Request Approving Official (ARAO).   ARAOs can be any Agency supervisor, Reviewing Official (RO), or any individual serving as a proxy to an official supervisor or RO, such as another Corps officer, or civilian Leave Maintenance Clerk (LMC).

It is important to note that following the January 1, 2016 transition to DA **all officers will need to know their Employee Identification (EMPLID) number to access DA**. If you forget or need to locate your EMPLID, you can login to the "Officer Secure Area" of CCMIS.
Once in the "Officer Secure Area" at the very top of the page, your name will appear followed by your SERNO and EMPLID.

The following types of absences must be submitted via Direct Access:

- Leave Inside Continental U.S.
- Leave Outside Continental U.S.
- Sick Leave
- Adoption Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Maternity Leave
- Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence (PDMRA)
  Note: PDMRA is the same as PHS Post-Deployment Respite Absence (PDRA).

Detailed, step-by-step user guides and tutorial videos for officers and ARAOs can be found at: http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/phs/. Instructions for navigating the webpage are as follows:

➢ **For Officers:**
Please select the tab labeled "User Guides", and then select "PHS Officer Self Service". Once there you will find a procedure guide and video tutorials.

➢ **For Approving Officials:**
Please select the tab labeled "User Guides", and then select "PHS Liaisons and Absence Request Approving Officials". Once there you will find a procedure guide and video tutorials

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What exactly is an "Absence Request" and how does it work?
In essence, an Absence Request is an electronic means of documenting requested leave using the Direct Access "Action Request" functionality. The member enters an Absence Request in Direct Access and routes the request for approval documentation. Once the member's request is documented to be approved, DA will hold the request until the end date (return date) of the Absence Request. DA will then automatically charge the absence and update the member's Leave and Earnings Statement (LES). In short, the DA Absence Request simplifies the overall Absence Request process.

2. Do I still need to submit Absence Requests in COLTS?
No, COLTS was shut down on December 18, 2016. All absences mentioned on the previous page will be requested, approved, and managed in Direct Access beginning on January 5, 2016.

3. Who can approve my absence request?
Consistent with the current policy on leave, only supervisors or Leave Approving Officials (LAO) are delegated the authority to approve an officer's absence request. In DA the individual who documents the leave approval is called the Absence Request Approving Official (ARAO). The ARAO may also be an officer's supervisor but all supervisors may not be an ARAO in DA. ARAOs were determined by each Agency in preparation for the transition on January 1, 2016.

4. What if I don't know who my Absence Request Approving Official is?
Each Agency with a Corps officer attached is required to have at least one individual designated as an Absence Request Approving Official. Contact your local Agency supervisor or your Commissioned corps Agency Liaison for information on ARAOs.

5. Where will I be able to view my leave balance?
You can view your leave balance as part of the DA Absence Request submittal process by using the "Get Details" button.

For more FAQs, please visit the Officer Leave and Absence Request FAQs webpage on CCMIS at: http://ccmis.usphs.gov/ccmis/DCCPR_officer_leave_FAQ_m.aspx

If you have questions about the DA Migration project, please email us at: DAMigration@HHS.gov