SUBJECT: Assignment Pay

1. PURPOSE: This Directive establishes policy and procedures establishing Assignment Pay (AP) for officers in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (Corps).

2. APPLICABILITY: This Directive applies to Regular Corps officers in specified specialties who are serving on extended active duty and are assigned to designated locations.

3. AUTHORITY:

   3-1. 42 U.S.C. §216, “Regulations”

   3-2. 37 U.S.C. §352, "Assignment pay or special duty pay"

   3-2. 37 U.S.C. §373, “Repayment of unearned portion of bonus, incentive pay, or similar benefit, and termination of remaining payments, when conditions of payment not met”

4. PROPOSENENT: The proponent of this Directive is the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS or Department).

5. SUMMARY OF REVISIONS AND UPDATES: This is the first issuance of this Directive in the electronic Commissioned Corps Issuance System (eCCIS).
6. **POLICY:** AP may be paid to officers in accordance with this Directive to ensure that the Corps continues to meet its ongoing mission to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the Nation. AP is intended to provide an incentive to officers who are assigned to specific duty locations in order to maintain continuity of the clinical missions at these locations. To receive AP an officer must be in a specialty specified by the Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) and assigned to a specific duty location specified by the ASH.

6-1. **Assignment Pay (AP).** AP may be paid to eligible officers on a monthly basis in addition to any other pay and allowances to which the officer is entitled. Payment of AP is pro-rated for partial months served in a designated location. AP shall not be paid as a lump sum payment or in installments. The total amount of AP paid to an officer shall not exceed the limitations specified in 37 U.S.C. §352, as amended. The ASH will determine the amount of AP, subject to the limitations of this Section, for specific specialties and locations.

6-2. **Eligible Specialties and Locations.** Payment of AP is specialty and location specific as determined by the ASH (i.e., a specialty approved at one location may or may not be approved at another location).

   a. **Eligible Specialties.** Specialties are limited to those that provide clinical patient care and are in specific critical need specialties (e.g., medical, dental, optometrist, nurse practitioner).

   b. **Eligible Locations.** The ASH will consider, at a minimum, the following factors in designating a location:

      1. The geographic remoteness of the location;
      2. Health Professional Shortage Area designation and score;
      3. Availability of adequate secondary level of medical care and other services; and
      4. The historic vacancy rates for clinical positions in the specified specialties.

6-3. **Eligibility Criteria.** In addition to criteria specified by the ASH pursuant to Sections 6-1 and 6-2, in order to be paid AP an officer must meet the following criteria:

   a. Entitled to basic pay under 37 U.S.C. §204;

   b. Be in pay grade O-6 or below;

   c. Continually meet the Corps’ conditions of service (see CCI 111.03, “Conditions of Service”) and hold a current license and/or credential in the designated specialty;

   d. Encumber a clinical billet with direct hands-on patient care or oversee the provision of direct hands-on patient care;

   e. Received a satisfactory performance rating on the most recent annual Commissioned Officers’ Effectiveness Reports (COER) as required by the ASH (see CCI 351.01 “Commissioned Officers’ Effectiveness Report”); and

   f. Must not be under investigation for allegations of unacceptable performance or misconduct, or must not have any current or pending administrative and/or disciplinary actions.
6-4. Payment. An officer in a specified specialty who is serving on extended active duty at a designated location and meets the criteria in Section 6-3 shall be paid AP as follows:

a. A Regular Corps officer who is permanently assigned (i.e., on call to active duty or permanent change of station personnel orders) to a designated location will be paid AP beginning on the effective date of the assignment.

b. An officer on a temporary duty assignment must serve on active duty at a designated location(s) for 180 or more consecutive days. Payment of AP will begin effective on the 180th day.

c. Effective Dates. The ASH will specify the date(s) on which a specialty and/or location is designated as eligible for AP. The ASH will also specify the date on which a change in the amount of AP is effective.

6-5. Termination and Repayment.

a. An officer who receives AP who fails to meet the eligibility requirements in Section 6-3 or who permanently transfers to a different duty location shall have AP terminated and is subject to the repayment provisions of 37 U.S.C. §373.

b. The ASH may grant an exception to the termination and repayment requirements of this Section if the ASH determines that the imposition of the termination and repayment requirements would be contrary to a personnel policy or management objective, against equity and good conscience, or would be contrary to the best interests of the United States.

c. In the circumstance that the ASH removes a specialty and/or location from the approved list, payment of AP will terminate on the date specified by the ASH.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES:

7-1. The ASH may promulgate policies and make delegations as necessary to implement this Directive. Payment of AP shall commence and terminate on the dates specified by the ASH. The authority to designate eligible specialties and locations as well as the amounts of AP authorized to be paid to officers may not be redelegated.

7-2. All officers are responsible for adhering to the guidelines and procedures listed in this Directive.

8. HISTORICAL NOTES: This is the first issuance of this Directive in the eCCIS and creates a standalone Directive within the eCCIS.