

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES

PERSONNEL OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM



POM 821.73  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 17 October 2019

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By Order of the Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service:

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TO: All Officers on Extended Active Duty

SUBJECT: 2019 Annual COER

1. This Personnel Operations Memorandum (POM) establishes the guidelines for the 2019 Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report (COER) in accordance with Commissioned Corps Instruction [CCI 351.01](#), "Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report," and Personnel Policy Memorandum (PPM) [CCI 811.44](#) "Annual COER." The purpose of the COER is to evaluate an officer's annual performance. The evaluation should reflect conduct of duties within the respective assignment and demonstrated contributions to the mission of the department, agency, and Commissioned Corps. The elements of the COER include leadership; initiative and growth; communication skills; interpersonal skills; planning and organization; professional competencies; analysis, judgment and decision-making.
2. The 2019 Annual COER rating period extends from 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019. The following deadlines are in effect, unless otherwise posted on the [Commissioned Corps Management Information](#) (CCMIS) website:
  - a. Online Annual COER is available to officers on 18 October 2019.
  - b. Online Annual COER is due to the Rater by 01 November 2019.
  - c. Online Annual COER is due to the Reviewing Official (RO) by 15 November 2019.
  - d. The Annual COER is due to the Agency Liaison by 13 December 2019.
  - e. The Annual COER is due to Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) by 31 December 2019.
  - f. The online COER will be disabled on 4 January 2020.
3. The Annual COER is a web-based performance evaluation process accessed from the CCMIS website at: [https://dcp.psc.gov/osa/osa\\_security\\_statement.aspx](https://dcp.psc.gov/osa/osa_security_statement.aspx).

4. Officers on extended active duty prior to 1 July 2019 are required to complete the 2019 Annual COER.
  - a. Those listed in CCI 351.01, Section 6-2, are not required to have an Annual COER (e.g., officers called to extended active duty on or after 1 July 2019 and officers who have separated or retired prior to 1 July 2019 are not required to have a 2019 Annual COER).
  - b. An evaluation that covers any period starting prior to 1 July 2019 and ending 30 September 2019 may serve as the officer's Annual COER. In some circumstances a paper or electronic PDF version of the COER may be used. Contact the Agency Liaison for guidance.
  - c. If an officer or Rater transfers or retires on or after 1 July 2019 but before 1 October 2019, the officer must complete a prescribed paper or electronic PDF version of the COER form that covers the period through the transfer/retirement. The paper or electronic PDF version will serve as the officer's 2019 Annual COER.
5. Each officer is responsible for:
  - a. Ensuring that his or her Annual COER is assigned and transmitted to the Rater and RO by the prescribed deadlines. In addition, the officer is responsible for ensuring the overall completion and submission of the COER to CCHQ. If the COER is not submitted to CCHQ in accordance with the above dates, it may nullify or delay promotions, awards, details, or special pays.
    - (1) In the event the officer is unable to submit the COER by the prescribed deadlines, the officer is responsible to arrange an alternative deadline with the Rater and RO which complies with the above final completion deadline.
    - (2) In the event the COER cannot be completed online because the system is no longer available, the COER must be submitted to CCHQ through the officer's Commissioned Corps Agency Liaison on the prescribed paper or electronic PDF version of the COER PHS-838 form.
      1. When using the electronic PDF COER form, all digital signatures must legibly display the signer's name and date, both online and when printed.
      2. Only electronic or digital signatures registered with a recognized certificate authority containing a distinguished name (DN) are accepted. The DN must be legible on both the electronically submitted version and a printed version.
      3. The liaison will submit the finalized document to CCHQ. The liaison should ensure all signatures are valid, legible, signed, and dated in succession beginning with the rater and ending with the liaison before submission.
  - b. Reviewing the ratings and comments and discussing them with the Rater or RO, as applicable, if there are any questions or concerns.
  - c. Ensuring that the completed COER is visible in the eOPF by opening and reviewing each individual page of the archived COER.

- d. Ensuring the COER scores are available in the officer's Promotion Information Report (PIR).
6. In the event an officer fails to release the COER to the Rater with sufficient time to allow completion of the COER by 11 December 2019, the Rater shall initiate the 2019 Annual COER on the prescribed paper or electronic PDF version COER PHS-838 form.
  7. Rebuttals and Other Rights.
    - a. If an officer does not agree with a rating or comment on the COER, the officer may submit a rebuttal in accordance with guidance issued by CCHQ.
      - (1) A rebuttal must be submitted to CCHQ within 90 days of the Archive Date of the corresponding COER in the eOPF. Rebuttals received more than 90 days after the Archive Date of the corresponding COER will not be accepted by CCHQ.
      - (2) A rebuttal does not substitute as a remedy for a formal complaint or other rights of due process.
      - (3) CCHQ will not act on a rebuttal to adjudicate the statements made or pursue remedy. CCHQ will review the rebuttal to ensure it meets the guidance issued by CCHQ. If guidelines are met, CCHQ will include the rebuttal in the eOPF adjacent to the associated COER.
      - (4) The Rater and RO may respond to an officer's rebuttal separately or through one combined response. The Rater and RO have 60 days from the Archive Date of the officer's rebuttal to submit their response.
    - b. The officer may seek redress if informal attempts are unsuccessful by filing a formal complaint in accordance with [CCI 211.04](#), "Complaints and Redress."
    - c. If the officer believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination, an Equal Opportunity (EO) complaint may be filed in accordance with [CCI 211.03](#), "Equal Opportunity: Discrimination Complaints Processing."
    - d. If the officer is not satisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint filed in compliance with CCI 211.04 or CCI 211.03, the officer may apply for relief through the Board for Correction of Public Health Service Records in accordance with [CCD 129.01](#). Failure to initiate a complaint for redress or failure to complete/initiate other available administrative remedies shall be construed as the officer relinquishing their right to proceed with an application to the Board for Correction.
  8. Performance Management Appraisal Program (PMAP). PMAPs are utilized Department-wide for civilian employees in accordance with the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA), the President's Management Agenda, and other Federal performance initiatives. The Corps does not require its officers to have a PMAP. However, if an organization to which an officer is assigned requires the officer to have a PMAP or a similar performance evaluation document completed, such documents are for that Operating/Staff Division or non-HHS organization's internal use only and are not placed in the eOPF. The Annual COER remains the required performance evaluation instrument for the officer.

Note: A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is distinct from a PMAP and is authorized for use in cases of unsatisfactory or marginal performance.

9. The Director, CCHQ, or designee, may issue additional guidance and instructions to implement the COER program.
10. Overall performance noted in Part II of the COER PHS-838 form must align with the average of elements 1 through 8, which is calculated as follows:

1 to 1.99	Unsatisfactory
2.0 to 3.99	Marginal
4.0 to 7.0	Satisfactory

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