



POM 821.29
ISSUE DATE: 23 March 2021
EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 May 2021

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

RADM Susan M. Orsega

SUBJECT: Entry Grade on Appointment

1. In accordance with Commissioned Corps Instruction (CCI) [231.01](#), "General Appointment Standards," this Personnel Operations Memorandum (POM) establishes the guidelines for determining a candidate's grade upon appointment to the Regular Corps and Ready Reserve Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps, including maximum entry grade credit. This POM does not apply to candidates who are transferred to the USPHS Commissioned Corps under [CCI 374.01](#), "Inter-Service Transfer."
2. Maximum Entry Grade Credit for appointments to the Regular Corps.
 - a. Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) will credit a candidate for the Medical, Dental, and Veterinary categories with no more than 17 years of training and experience.
 - b. CCHQ will credit a candidate for all other professional categories with no more than 9 years of training and experience.
 - c. CCHQ will not make any changes to a candidate's entry grade credit after CCHQ issues an official personnel order that appoints the candidate to the Regular Corps. However, CCHQ may correct errors that it makes, but will not accept nor review additional information provided after an individual's appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
3. Maximum Entry Grade Credit for appointments to the Ready Reserve Corps. The USPHS Commissioned Corps will credit a candidate for the Ready Reserve Corps with no more than the maximum credit allowed in Section 2., except in the following circumstances:
 - a. For a Public Health Service (PHS) officer who separates from the Regular Corps and is subsequently appointed to the Ready Reserve Corps, CCHQ will credit the individual with the amount of credit that the officer had on the day of the last separation from active duty in the Regular Corps.
 - b. For a candidate who has prior commissioned service in another uniformed service, if it results in a higher amount of entry grade credit than the method listed above, the CCHQ will credit the candidate with the years of service the candidate served in the uniformed service after obtaining the candidate's degree that qualifies the

- candidate for an appointment to the Ready Reserve Corps provided that the credited service is in the field of the candidate's qualifying degree.
- c. For a candidate who possesses unique and/or extraordinary specialized training, experience, and leadership capabilities that the USPHS Commissioned Corps is having difficulty recruiting for the Ready Reserve Corps, the Surgeon General (SG) may grant such credit as the SG deems is warranted.
 - d. CCHQ will not make any changes to a candidate's entry grade credit after an official personnel order is issued that appoints the candidate to the Ready Reserve Corps. However, CCHQ may correct errors that it makes, but will not accept nor review additional information provided after an individual's appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
4. Permanent Grade on Appointment. The USPHS Commissioned Corps nominates candidates for appointment to the permanent grades in accordance with the Appendix in CCI 231.01, "General Appointment Standards," based on the training and experience credited to the candidate in accordance with Sections 2. and 3. (as applicable), unless a candidate for the Ready Reserve Corps is eligible for a higher grade in the following circumstances:
- a. For a PHS officer who separates from the Regular Corps and is subsequently appointed to the Ready Reserve Corps within 24 months of the officer's separation from the Regular Corps, the Director, CCHQ, will nominate the individual for appointment in the Ready Reserve Corps at the highest temporary or permanent grade the officer held in the Regular Corps when separated from the Regular Corps.
 - b. For a candidate who has prior commissioned service in another uniformed service, the Director, CCHQ, will nominate the candidate at the grade the officer held in the uniformed service provided that the candidate applied to the USPHS Commissioned Corps within 24 months of the officer's separation from the uniformed service.
5. Temporary Promotion on Appointment.
- a. The Director, CCHQ, may promote a candidate for the Regular Corps who has at least 8 years of training and experience to the temporary O-3 grade on the candidate's appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
 - b. The Director, CCHQ, may promote a candidate for the Regular Corps who has at least 12 years of training and experience to the temporary O-4 grade on the candidate's appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
 - c. Candidates for the Ready Reserve Corps are not eligible for a temporary grade promotion on their appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
6. This POM replaces POM 821.29, "Entry Grade on Appointment to the Corps," dated 29 September 2020 and will remain in effect until updated or rescinded. The provisions of this POM may not be applied retroactively to officers appointed to the USPHS Commissioned Corps prior to this POM's effective date.

Susan M. Orsega
RADM, USPHS
Acting Surgeon General