



PPM 811.78  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 22 December 2023

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**By Order of the Assistant Secretary for Health:**

**ADM Rachel M. Levine, M.D.**

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SUBJECT: Appointment Grades

1. This Personnel Policy Memorandum (PPM) amends Commissioned Corps Instruction (CCI) [231.01](#), "General Appointment Standards," dated 13 January 2021 by:

- a. Authorizing a temporary promotion on appointment (that will transition to become an officer's permanent grade, if qualified) for newly appointed officers:
- b. Authorizing entry permanent grades (that are equivalent to entry grades for similar Regular Corps officers) for officers appointed to the Ready Reserve Corps; and
- c. Authorizing the Surgeon General (SG) to approve the permanent promotion of members of the Ready Reserve Corps to a higher grade if their original entry grade was not equivalent to entry grades for similar Regular Corps officers.

Note: This PPM does not apply to officers appointed through an inter-service transfer in accordance with [CCI 374.01](#), "Inter-Service Transfer."

2. Regular Corps Appointments.

- a. The USPHS Commissioned Corps will promote, except as outlined in Section 2.a.(4), a candidate for the Regular Corps to a temporary grade on their appointment provided the candidate has sufficient training and experience (TED) credit to be promoted to a temporary grade as follows:
  - (1) O-2 Grade. A candidate must receive credit for at least 4 years of TED.
  - (2) O-3 Grade. A candidate must receive credit for at least 8 years of TED.
  - (3) O-4 Grade. A candidate must receive credit for at least 12 years of TED.
  - (4) O-5 Grade and Above. The USPHS Commissioned Corps does not normally approve temporary promotions on a call to active duty at the temporary O-5 grade

and above. However, the SG may approve the promotion of a candidate to a temporary grade as follows:

- (a) O-5 Grade. A candidate must receive credit for at least 17 years of TED and have a special-circumstance temporary grade promotion approved as outlined in [CCI 231.01](#), “General Appointment Standards.”
  - (b) O-6 Grade. A candidate must have the TED limitations outlined in [CCI 231.01](#), “General Appointment Standards,” and Personnel Operations Memorandum (POM) [821.29](#), “Entry Grade on Appointment,” waived and receive credit for at least 24 years of TED and have a special-circumstance temporary grade promotion approved as outlined in [CCI 231.01](#), “General Appointment Standards.”
- b. The Director, Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ), will grant TED credit in accordance with [CCI 231.01](#), “General Appointment Standards,” and [POM 821.29](#), “Entry Grade on Appointment.” The Director, CCHQ, will ensure that personnel orders reflect the temporary promotions as outlined in this Section.
  - c. After a new officer’s appointment, call to active duty, and temporary promotion, the Director, CCHQ, will submit a recommendation to promote the officer to an equivalent permanent grade.
    - (1) The Director, CCHQ, will submit this recommendation through the SG, Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH), and Secretary to the President within six months of the officer’s appointment.
    - (2) CCHQ will issue a personnel order that changes a qualified officer’s temporary grade to an equivalent permanent grade to be effective on the first day of the month following the President’s approval of the permanent grade (see Section 4 for determination of Seniority Credit). For the purpose of this Subsection, an officer is qualified if they meet the USPHS Commissioned Corps conditions of service (see Commissioned Corps Directive (CCD) [111.03](#), “Conditions of Service”).
  - d. The USPHS Commissioned Corps may not promote a candidate on their appointment to a temporary grade if this promotion will result in the USPHS Commissioned Corps exceeding the authorized strength for that grade (see [CCD 122.02](#), “Force Management”).
3. Ready Reserve Corps Promotions on Appointment.
- a. Subject to availability of funds, the Director, CCHQ, may submit, through the SG, ASH, and Secretary, to the President, the nomination of a candidate (who qualifies for an appointment at the permanent O-2 grade or higher) for an appointment to the Ready Reserve Corps at a higher permanent grade provided:
    - (1) The candidate has the same TED credit that would allow a promotion to that temporary grade (as outlined in Section 2) for a Regular Corps candidate (see [42 C.F.R. § 21.55](#), [CCI 231.01](#), “General Appointment Standards,” and [POM 821.29](#), “Entry Grade on Appointment”); and
    - (2) The appointment of the candidate will not result in the USPHS Commissioned Corps exceeding the authorized strength for that grade (see [CCD 122.02](#), “Force Management”).
  - b. Subject to availability of funds and irrespective of the promotion eligibility criteria outlined in [CCI 331.01](#), “Permanent Promotions,” the SG may approve the promotion of a member

of the Ready Reserve Corps to a higher permanent grade if the officer was appointed prior to the effective date of this PPM at a grade that is lower than the grade authorized in Section 3.a.

- (1) Such promotions must not be higher than the grade authorized in Section 3.a., must not be retroactive, and must be effective no earlier than the first day of the month following the SG's approval of the promotion; and
- (2) The promotion will not result in the USPHS Commissioned Corps exceeding the authorized strength for that grade (see [CCD 122.02](#), "Force Management").

4. Seniority Credit.

- a. Appointment. See [CCI 331.01](#), "Permanent Promotions," for policy regarding how CCHQ grants credit towards the officers' seniority credit date on their appointment to the USPHS Commissioned Corps for professional experience within the field that qualifies them for a commission.
  - b. Conversion. CCHQ will adjust the officers' seniority credit date to be the date that the officers were appointed to the temporary grade that becomes their permanent grade.
  - c. In implementing Sections 4.a. and b., CCHQ will grant the officer the seniority credit that is most advantageous for the officer.
5. This is the first issuance of this PPM, which is effective immediately and will remain in effect until this PPM is amended or rescinded.