

## **The Associate Recruiter Program (ARP): A New Vision for 2009 and beyond.**

### **Overview/Background**

This document serves as an outline of how the Associate Recruiter Program (ARP) will be operationalized beginning April 2009. The rationale for these changes is based on an assessment within the Office of Commissioned Corps Operations (OCCO) and the Division of Commissioned Corps Recruitment (DCCR) during the 2008 moratorium placed on new applications. Additional inputs were solicited by key stakeholders (e.g. Associate Recruiters (AR's) and AR Leads, Professional Advisory Committees along with Chief Professional Officers and other senior leadership).

The ARP exists to augment the centralized recruitment efforts of DCCR in identifying qualified candidates for appointment into the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (Corps). As such, DCCR envisions the reorganized ARP to be a more effective program that will meet the targeted recruitment and Corps awareness goals of the organization. While the reorganized program will continue to support the current ARP policy (see attached), it is being operationalized with a defined number of participants to improve its overall effectiveness.

Furthermore, additional business process changes to the ARP include but are not limited to: developing a clearly defined operational process as reflected in a Personnel Operations Memorandum (POM); improved collaboration with Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) Recruitment sub-committees; integration of metrics and measurable outcomes to better evaluate ARP activities; sustainable training programs provided in a variety of modalities (e.g. audio, video, class-room etc); resource allocation to support ARP participant activities (e.g. career fairs/conf., etc.) and a process by which those who demonstrate significant impact can be recognized.

### **Revising the ARP: A paradigm shift to build and sustain the program .**

As previously stated, the ARP for 2009 will follow current ARP policy guidelines set forth in the policy dated April, 2006. Because the operational implementation of the program has changed to support a foundation based on a geographic or regional presence, currently enrolled AR's and Leads will be required to reapply for the defined number of program slots for each PAC along with those officers who are interested in participating in the new program This allocation is based on the established U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Regions (see attached). Essentially, there will be two AR slots for each of the ten regions and two AR Lead slots for each PAC. These changes were made given limited resources (human and capital) to effectively operationalize the current ARP while instituting a framework that supports DCCR's vision of a sustained recruitment presence in all ten regions. While the ARP Coordinator intends to evaluate the effectiveness of the program on a regular basis, a yearly evaluation will be conducted with DCCR and representatives of Office of Commissioned Corps Force Management (OCCFM).

This evaluative process will include inputs provided by PAC Leads and may lead to potential program policy changes in the future. This yearly evaluation will also include an evaluation of the current mix or number of AR's and may result in increasing the number of AR's in a given region or PAC based on available resources, program evaluation and sustainability.

### **Participation in the reorganized ARP**

It is the intent that participants in the reorganized ARP will uphold a Corps-centric perspective in terms of recruitment activities. Although the initial selections for participation will be based on PAC affiliation, the paradigm shift for all participants will be an emphasis on having a volunteer recruiter role that represents the entire Corps as an extension of DCCR. Therefore, in addition to meeting the minimum requirements outlined in the current policy, each participant will be trained to have a working knowledge of general/category specific requirements for all categories in addition to his/her own professional category. Since the ARP is an extension of centralized recruitment within DCCR, participants can expect to participate in a variety of activities to improve his/her recruitment skills and knowledge base. It is the expectation of DCCR and the ARP Coordinator that AR's will embrace some of these activities (e.g., monthly regional teleconference calls, regular training updates as opposed to yearly updates, sustained communication through ARP list serve etc.) to strengthen their effectiveness as an AR in the program.

### **Suggested AR and ARL(\*) activities**

***In addition to the types of recruitment activities outlined in the current policy, AR/ARL's will be strongly encouraged to participate in additional types of activities to include:***

- Regular participation in monthly regional conference calls.
- Maintain regular communication with category Leads regarding recruitment activities.
- Working collaboratively with respective PAC Recruitment sub-committees and AR's from other categories.
- Participation in outreach activities (e.g., contact follow-up) through a contact management system provided by the ARP Coordinator. (This will be discussed in greater detail when AR selections are made. Essentially it means having responsibility to provide follow up and tracking of a limited and manageable number of contacts who have shown interest in the Corps but have not submitted a PHS-50 to the Division of Commissioned Corps Assignments (DCCA).
- Providing input on the types of recruitment events DCCR should support either regionally or by professional category for the future.
- Speaking in person with potential applicants that may live near an AR.
- Submission of relevant recruitment topics to an ARP Newsletter that will be formally produced in 2009.

- Voluntary participation at centrally funded conferences that DCCR staff may be participating in a given AR's region.
- Participation in a variety of recruitment training activities (e.g., web based, formal classroom etc.). The intent of these additional training is to improve general knowledge base and provide updates
- (\*) Those selected to serve as ARL's will be primarily responsible for managing and tracking the activities of the AR's within his/her respective category. It is also expected that these AR Leads will develop a leadership role as a liaison between the PAC Recruitment sub-committees and the ARP Coordinator. Additional expectations will include but not be limited to program evaluation/development recommendations and AR recognition activities.

### **Expected Outcome**

While DCCR recognizes the ARP as a voluntary program, it is anticipated that participants will not only meet but exceed the minimum requirements of eligibility outlined in the current ARP policy. Secondly, the amount of time an officer dedicates to the ARP will vary but it is expected that those who participate in the ARP are able to volunteer more time than the average officer who may informally recruit for the organization on his/her own time. As the ARP Coordinator it is my goal to provide program participants various opportunities to develop and grow his/her knowledge base.

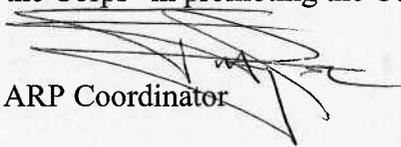
Equally valued by DCCR are the voluntary efforts of all officers (active, inactive or retired) and "Friends of the Corps" who engage in recruitment type activities by "getting the word out on one of the best kept secrets the Nation has to offer-The U.S. Public Health Service!" As such, DCCR/ARP Coordinator is committed to supporting the efforts of all officers and will work collaboratively with the various PACs and advisory committees like JOAG to provide materials to assist any officer interested in supporting Corps awareness. Currently a variety of recruitment tools (e.g. hand outs, power points etc) are available on our current website ([www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov)) and are available to all officers regardless of his/her formal participation in the ARP.

### **Additional Information**

For more information about the reorganized ARP and application process for 2009, you are encouraged to review the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's). For additional information please contact your current PAC's AR Lead and/or PAC Recruitment sub-committee leadership for more information. If you are unable to reach your PAC representative in a timely manner you are welcome to contact the ARP Coordinator-LCDR Thomas Pryor at: [Thomas.pryor@hhs.gov](mailto:Thomas.pryor@hhs.gov)/240-453-6057.

On behalf of DCCR and as the ARP Coordinator, we look forward to working with all officers and "Friends of the Corps" in promoting the Corps through various outreach and recruitment activities.

- LCDR Thomas Pryor, ARP Coordinator



## **Reorganized Associate Recruiter Program (ARP) 2009**

### **FAQ's**

#### **1. If the growth of the Corps is a priority why are you limiting the number of participants in the ARP?**

- 1.1. DCCR recognizes the importance of targeted recruitment and Corps awareness as we grow the officer strength into the foreseeable future. It has also been recognized that the ARP has lacked appropriate oversight and measurable outcomes in the past several years due to limited resources (human and capital). While this awareness by no means reflects adversely on those who have been committed to it in the past, the program requires restructuring to better meet the needs of the organization and those who serve it in the future.
- 1.2. DCCR also recognizes that not every officer is a recruiter or should be expected to participate in a formal recruitment program given all that is required of us in our daily jobs. This is not to say that officers (active, inactive or retired) by virtue of the uniform they wear should not be strongly encouraged to speak about the Corps as part of basic officership.
- 1.3. Given the limited resources, unmanageable expectation that every officer serve in the ARP and the vision to make the ARP a more effective program for the organization it serves, DCCR has instituted the operational changes outlined for 2009. As part of building the program on a sustainable foundation, it is recognized that the program may continue to grow, and flourish in new ways in the future.

#### **2. If I am a current or previous AR or ARL do I need to reapply?**

- 2.1. Yes, because the ARP is being operationalized with a defined number of slots and on a foundation that reflects the ten regions of HHS all previous and/or interested participants must reapply. Since many of the current participants were considering transitioning out this will provide many new opportunities for other Corps officers.

#### **3. How do I apply to the new ARP and what documents will be required?**

- 3.1. Applications will be made available through your respective PAC/Recruitment sub-committee. Applications will be solicited by each respective PAC. More information regarding submission dates will be provided through each PAC list serve.
- 3.2. The application form is similar to the old one with only a few additional information requests (e.g., regional assignment etc.). The application package consists of a general application, two letters of recommendation, and a statement of supervisory support. These documents will be provided as a complete packet to the PAC's prior to solicitation for new applicants. While the roles will be different, this application will be used for those interested in being either an AR or AR Lead.

#### **4. Why do I need supervisory approval and what if they say "no"?**

- 4.1. Supervisory approval is required for all formal PHS volunteer activities. When discussing your potential participation with your supervisor, it is the recommendation of DCCR that you reiterate how your participation will not encumber your regular assigned duties.
- 4.2. Additionally, DCCR recognizes that work obligations and schedules may preclude participation in some of the activities previously outlined (e.g. regular teleconference

calls, events etc). However, this should not preclude you from applying if you have interest and supervisory support. DCCR/ARP Coordinator is committed to supporting your success in this voluntary program and will work with the leads to communicate updates and training requirements that can be met outside of the work environment.

- 4.3. In an effort to gain supervisory support for your participation, applicants are encouraged to discuss with supervisors how participation could be leveraged to improve service unit and agency recruitment efforts for either Commissioned Corps or civil servants as outlined in the supervisor's support letter.
- 4.4. DCCR is sensitive to the needs and expectations of the agency in which you are assigned. Therefore, if you are not able to secure supervisory support you are encouraged to find other ways to participate in Corps related functions and reapply to the ARP at another time in the future.

**5. If I have maintained active participation in the old ARP will I be recognized for my efforts?**

- 5.1. Given the changes outlined, DCCR and the ARP Coordinator are committed to recognizing all current ARP volunteers who have been an active participant in the program regardless of length of service. While only those who have served for three years (per policy) will be eligible for the Recruitment Service Ribbon (RSR), the ARP Coordinator will submit all participants for recognition commensurate with their level of activity.

**6. If I have met the criteria for the RSR do I have to do something to apply for it?**

- 6.1. No. The current AR Leads have maintained a list of active AR's for the past three years and will submit them with CPO approval to DCCR/ARP Coordinator. Those officers recommended for the RSR will be reviewed by OCCO/DCCR which will include a review of his/her ARP file and other criteria outlined in the current policy.
- 6.2. Please note that officers are not authorized to wear the RSR without official authorization and documentation that will be placed in the officer's eOPF once the award process is completed.

**7. If I no longer participate in the ARP can I wear my ARP badge?**

- 7.1. No. Only those officers who are accepted and maintain active eligibility in the ARP are authorized to wear the badge per policy. If you have received a badge in the past but are not formally accepted into the ARP in 2009 you are welcome to keep the badge as a keepsake and reflection of your previous service to the program.
- 7.2. Those officers who are selected for participation in the ARP in 2009 will receive an ARP Badge and a formal letter will be placed in his/her eOPF reflecting their participation.

**8. What if I want to participate but am currently assigned to a remote location and cannot participate in formal recruitment conference events?**

- 8.1. Participation in the ARP does not require attendance at formal recruitment events/career fairs. DCCR recognizes this as a voluntary program and is sensitive to the locations/expectations of the agencies we serve. The ARP Coordinator is committed to providing all AR participants a variety of ways they can serve the program successfully.

**9. What if I am relatively new to the Corps but am committed and enthusiastic to serving in the ARP, can I apply?**

- 9.1. Although current ARP policy recommends three years of service as a PHS officer before participating, a waiver is possible. DCCR/ARP Coordinator recognizes many officers who have demonstrated an impact in recruitment efforts regardless of years of service to the Corps.
- 9.2. The PAC's have been encouraged to consider the use of junior officers who may have more time and flexibility to participate in this program and utilize the waiver in selecting AR's/ARL's for 2009. As part of a commitment to improving the program, various aspects of the program will be evaluated and recommendations/changes to the ARP will be considered in the future.

**10. Are there any other requirements for participation in the ARP?**

- 10.1.1 DCCR adheres to a standard that all recruiters within OCCO/DCCR wear the Service Dress Blue (SDB) to recruiting events as representatives of the Corps. Therefore, those officers who participate in the ARP, as an extension of DCCR, are expected to wear the SDB at centrally funded recruitment events as well. Although the SDB is a required uniform for officers, it is recognized that new officers to the Corps may not have purchased the SDB at the time of application. It is recommended that these officers, if selected by their PAC, not volunteer to participate at centrally funded events in their region until they are able to obtain this uniform.
- 10.1.2 Applicants are expected to read the current ARP policy for additional information on the general requirements to meet the criteria for application.
- 10.1.3 In addition to the basic requirements outlined in the policy and application, each PAC Recruitment sub-committee will be responsible for making the initial selections to represent their respective Category. Initial selections will be reviewed by DCCR to make sure the additional requirements (e.g. CPO support, basic readiness etc) outlined in the current policy are met. Please contact your respective PAC Recruitment sub-committee and/or current ARP Lead for further information.

**11. What if I am not accepted into the ARP for 2009, can I still recruit for the Corps?**

- 11.1.1 Absolutely! Formal participation in the ARP is only one way in which you can participate in Corps awareness activities. Those officers who are not selected or do not have the time to commit to a formal program are encouraged to seek participation on their PAC Recruitment sub-committee or JOAG and reapply in the future. DCCR clearly recognizes that the ARP is only one way an officer can support the recruitment mission of the Corps and will continue to work collaboratively with all key stakeholders in supporting and recognizing all Corps outreach activities. Remember, all Corps activities demonstrating officer participation may be annotated in your CVs for placement in your eOPF.

**12. What if I take a new position and/or change duty assignments/regions, can I still participate?**

- 12.1.1 If you take a new assignment it is imperative that you obtain supervisory approval to continue to serve in the program. This means you may not be able to continue if the supervisor isn't comfortable with supporting your participation.

12.1.2 At this time, if you change regions, your continued participation will be considered on a case by case basis with the understanding that it may require you to discontinue formal participation.

12.1.3 Any officer who has met the criteria and due to a change in supervisory support and duty location will be recognized for his/her participation and will be encouraged to continue to promote the Corps as an officer.

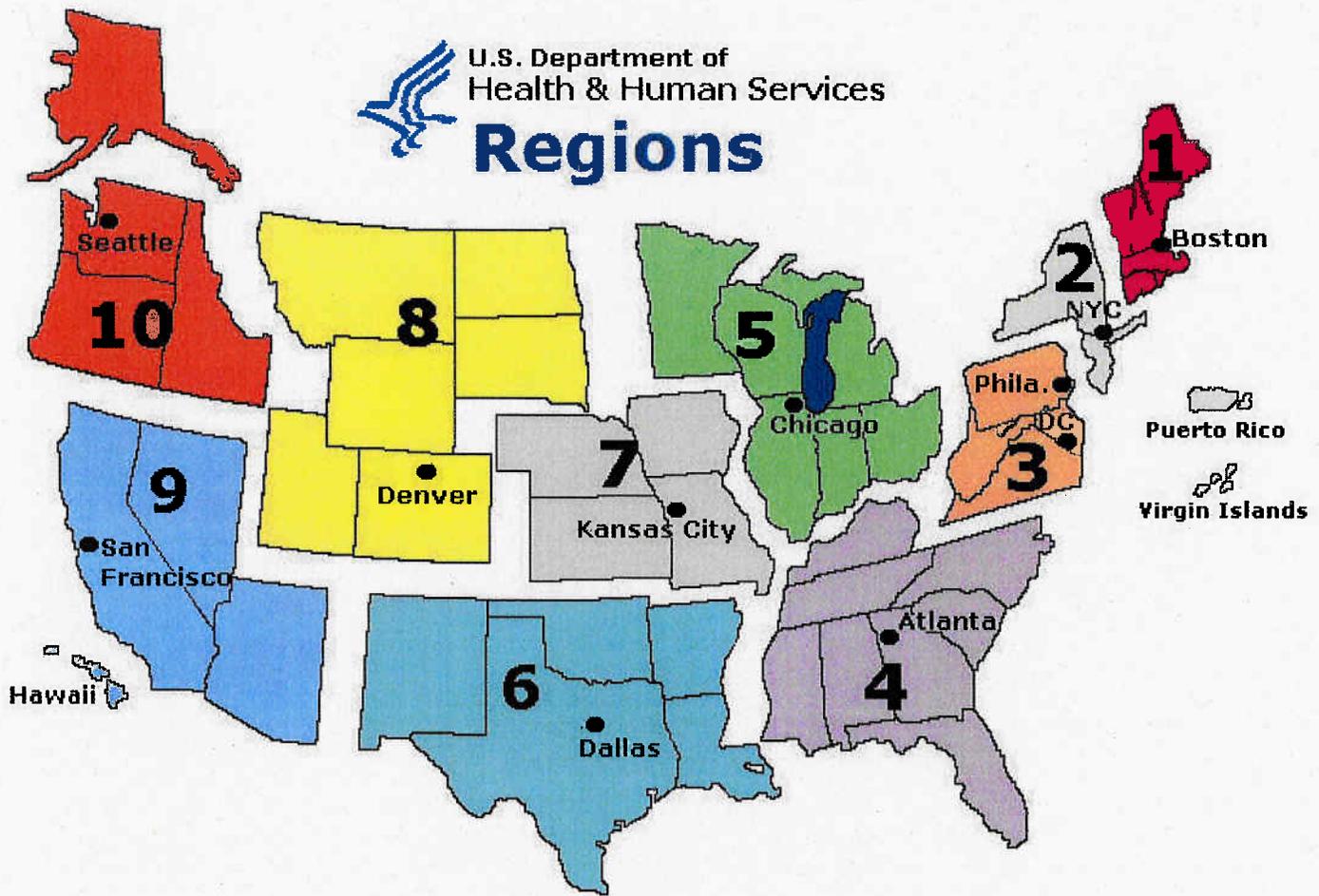
**13. How long am I required to serve in the ARP if selected?**

13.1 Participation is not defined by a required period of time of service at this time. Current policy does stipulate defined terms of participation for a lead.



U.S. Department of  
Health & Human Services

# Regions



**Region 1 - Boston**

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont

**Region 2 - New York**

New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands

**Region 3 - Philadelphia**

Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia

**Region 4 - Atlanta**

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee

**Region 5 - Chicago**

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin

**Region 6 - Dallas**

Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

**Region 7 - Kansas City**

Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska

**Region 8 - Denver**

Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming

**Region 9 - San Francisco**

Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau

**Region 10 - Seattle**

Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington

# Application process for revised Associate Recruiter Program (ARP)

