

# Be a Dental Officer

## in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps



### › About the Commissioned Corps

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps protects, promotes, and advances the health and safety of the Nation. With more than 6,000 officers, the Commissioned Corps is one of the Nation's seven uniformed services and resides in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As the world's foremost public health service, it is composed entirely of officers who have been commissioned on the basis of their health-related training.

Commissioned officers deliver ongoing health promotion and disease prevention programs and are called on to provide onsite clinical and public health expertise in times of national emergencies and disasters. A career in the Commissioned Corps offers unlimited opportunities to serve your country while improving the quality of people's lives and making a real difference in public health.

### › What It Means To Be a Dental Officer in the Commissioned Corps

Dental officers in the Commissioned Corps work throughout the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and in other Federal agencies and programs, including the following:

- Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Indian Health Service
- National Institutes of Health
- U.S. Coast Guard

Dental officers in the Corps:

- Perform clinical dentistry
- Use dental forensics to identify disaster victims
- Educate individuals and communities about oral health

Dental officers join the Commissioned Corps at many different levels. Some join as beginning clinicians while others are experienced dentists who also may have had training in public health, management, or research methodology.

The focus is on improving oral health for entire populations. While there is plenty of direct patient care, there are opportunities to become involved in organized community disease prevention and treatment programs that can make an impact on overall community disease rates.

### › Pay

Starting base pay and potential bonuses vary depending on the number of years of training and experience, specialty training received, credentials and certifications, geographic location of duty station, and number of dependents, if any. Base pay increases with promotions and years of service. Tax-free compensation is provided for housing and meals. The U.S. Public Health Service also understands the financial burden of dental school and, in coordination with certain Federal agencies, may offer loan repayment and other educational and family support programs. More information comparing compensation in the Corps to pay in the private sector is available at [www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov).

## > Benefits

As an officer in the Commissioned Corps, you will enjoy a camaraderie and sense of common purpose unlike anything you will experience in the private sector, and Commissioned Corps benefits are generous. They include:

- Health care and dental care at no cost
- Thirty days of paid vacation per year
- Paid sick leave
- Paid maternity leave
- Malpractice insurance coverage
- A retirement plan with benefits eligibility beginning after 20 years of service

**Many additional benefits are listed at [www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov).** Officers in the Commissioned Corps have opportunities for mobility among government agencies and career advancement in diverse work settings. The Corps encourages you to expand your knowledge base and grow professionally so that you can effectively deal with the challenges of improving public health. Tuition and long-term training opportunities may be available.

## > Special Degree and License Requirements

All Commissioned Corps officers must meet several basic qualifications: You must be a U.S. citizen, be less than 44 years of age, and pass a physical examination. To be a dental officer, you also need the following:

- D.D.S. or D.M.D. degree from a program that is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association
- Current, unrestricted, and valid dental license to practice in one of the 50 States; Washington, DC; Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; U.S. Virgin Islands; or Guam

If you have recently graduated from dental school and do not yet have a State dental license, you may still apply to the Commissioned Corps. In certain

circumstances, you may be appointed for a limited tour of duty while you pursue a State dental license.

## > Join America's Public Health Team

If you are a dentist or dental student interested in joining the fight for public health, or if you have questions about what we do and how you can make a difference with the Commissioned Corps, we would like to talk to you. For more information, call us at 800-279-1605 or visit our Web site at [www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov).

