



Commissioned Corps Headquarters  
Office of the Surgeon General  
1101 Wootton Parkway, 3rd Floor, Suite 300  
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps

To Whom It May Concern:

The USPHS Commissioned Corps is one of the eight uniformed services of the United States, and our mission is to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our Nation.

In recent years, the USPHS Commissioned Corps has deployed in support of numerous natural disasters (i.e., Hurricanes Sandy, Harvey, Maria, and Irma, etc.) and public health emergencies (i.e., H1N1 pandemic, Ebola Crisis 2014-15, and the COVID-19 pandemic). Public Health Service officers are serving as the strong and steady heartbeat sustaining our Nation during these unprecedented times. Our deployment operational tempo is increasing daily, as the Nation and State officials are reaching out at historic frequency with varied asks for the USPHS Commissioned Corps' assistance and expertise.

The USPHS Commissioned Corps offers student opportunities while attending school and provide opportunities to support the Nation's health as a Public Health Service officer in a uniformed service after graduation.

Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) invites you to meet with a Recruitment Specialist to ascertain your interest in virtual recruitment activity, providing an overview of public health opportunities within the USPHS Commissioned Corps for students at your academic institution. The recruitment activity will include a virtual USPHS Commissioned Corps PowerPoint presentation followed by a short Q&A session.

If you are interested in more information regarding a virtual recruitment activity, don't hesitate to contact the USPHS Commissioned Corps Call to Duty and Recruitment Branch at PHSOS-CADQuestions@hhs.gov. Please include in the Subject Line: USPHS RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY – School Name and Program.

For more information on the USPHS Commissioned Corps, please visit us at [www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov), <https://twitter.com/usphscc>, <https://www.facebook.com/USPHS/>, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/commissioned-corps-of-the-u-s-public-health-service>.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Schobitz, Ph.D., ABPP  
RDML, USPHS  
Commissioned Corps Headquarters Director



# U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONED CORPS



## Who We Are

The USPHS Commissioned Corps is one of the eight uniformed services and is composed of over 6,000 full-time public health professionals.



Americas  
Health  
Responders



Over 800  
Locations  
in the U.S.



11  
Service  
Categories

## What We Do



Provide essential healthcare services to underserved and vulnerable populations.



Serve at the forefront of public health emergencies including natural disasters and disease outbreaks.



Lead public health programs and policy development within the Department of Health and Human Services and throughout the federal government.



Advance innovation and science to address our nation's most challenging public health crises, such as COVID-19, Ebola, cancer, food safety, mental health and more.

## Where We Work

800 locations, all 50 states and numerous foreign assignments with duty stations in over 20 federal departments or agencies across the nation, Public Health Services officers pursue exciting and fulfilling careers as part of the Regular Corps.

## Service Categories



PHYSICIAN



DENTIST



VETERINARIAN



NURSE



THERAPIST



PHARMACIST



HEALTH  
SERVICES



ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH



DIETITIAN



ENGINEER



SCIENTIST



## History

Since 1798, officers have served on the front lines protecting our nation's public health in what is today known as the *Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service*. We trace our origin to the U.S. Marine Hospital Service, implemented to protect against the spread of diseases from sailors who returned from foreign ports, and maintained the health of new immigrants.

## Who We Are

The Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service is one of the eight uniformed services, and is the only one dedicated solely to protecting America's public health:

- Led by the Assistant Secretary for Health and U.S. Surgeon General
- Composed of nearly 6,000 highly qualified public health services officers
- Specialties include: physicians, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, clinical and rehabilitation therapists, dietitians, engineers, environmental health and health services officers, scientists, and veterinarians.



## What We Do

***Protect, Promote and Advance the Health and Safety of our Nation***

- **Provide Essential Healthcare Services** to underserved and vulnerable populations.
- **Deploy for Public Health Emergencies.** As the cornerstone of U.S. crisis response, officers deploy to natural disasters, disease outbreaks, global public health emergencies, and serve on humanitarian assistance missions.
- **Lead Public Health Programs and Policy Development.** Officers leverage their extensive experience, skills, and networks to provide expert leadership within Health and Human Services (HHS) and throughout federal government agencies.
- **Advance Innovation and Science.** Clinicians and research scientists work at the forefront of the battles against the COVID-19 response, Ebola, cancer, food safety, HIV, mental health and more.





# U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONED CORPS

## 8 Steps to Becoming an Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps

The USPHS Commissioned Corps is currently recruiting dedicated clinicians and public health professionals. If you are interested in being part of our service, follow the 8 steps below.

# 1

### Visit [USPHS.GOV](https://www.usphs.gov)

Select [Apply Now](#) to register as a New User for the Applicant Enrollment System (AES).

# 2

### Initiate Your Application

Create a new AES account by registering as a new user at [Applicant Login – Applicant Enrollment System](#). Seek opportunities with federal agencies where Public Health Service officers serve. Failure to obtain a position within 1 year post-appointment board will lead to application closure.

# 3

### Complete Your Pre-Screen

Complete the pre-screen to determine if you meet the eligibility requirements.

# 4

### Submit Required Materials

You will receive an email with next steps and requirements from [aes-notifications@hhs.gov](mailto:aes-notifications@hhs.gov). If a waiver is needed, submit the required supporting documents within the requested timeline for review and processing.

# 5

### Review Process and Board Interview

The Call to Active-Duty team will review documentation and may follow up with additional requests. You will be scheduled for an appointment board interview with senior ranking Public Health Service officers. Failure to obtain a position within 1 year post-appointment board will lead to application closure.

# 6

### Remaining Commissioning Requirements

Once board cleared, the remaining clearances include medical, security, and the presidential nomination. Please prioritize completing all required clearance steps and finding a position. Both processes occur simultaneously during the 6 to 9 months commissioning timeline.

# 7

### Seek Employment

Candidates will be force managed into these agencies: Department of Homeland Security, Indian Health Service, Bureau of Prisons, Veterans Affairs, and Defense Health Agency. Security will be initiated once a position is secured within one of the agencies we serve.

# 8

### Call to Active Duty

Once you secure a position, the hiring agency will submit a PHS 1662 for commissioning in the USPHS Commissioned Corps. Once final requirements are completed and verified, the USPHS Commissioned Corps will extend an offer of commission to you. Once you accept the offer, official orders are issued to call you to active duty.

For additional questions, please visit [USPHS.GOV](https://www.usphs.gov) or contact:

\* Active-Duty Application Process: [phs-cadquestions@hhs.gov](mailto:phs-cadquestions@hhs.gov)

\* Ready Reserve: [usphsreserveaffairs@hhs.gov](mailto:usphsreserveaffairs@hhs.gov)

\* Student Opportunities: [phscostep@hhs.gov](mailto:phscostep@hhs.gov)

\* PHERST: [PHERST Program Manager](#)





# 8 Steps to Become a U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps SRCOSTEP Officer

SRCOSTEP is a highly competitive short-term program for students obtaining their qualifying degrees. Participants serve on active duty while attending their final year of academic study with a service obligation equal to twice the time sponsored upon graduation. If you are interested in becoming part of our service, please follow the 8 steps below.

- 1 Visit [USPHS.GOV](https://www.usphs.gov)**  
Select "Apply Now" to register as a New User in the Applicant Enrollment System (AES).
- 2 Create and Activate Your Account**  
Activate your AES account by clicking on the link you will receive in an email from [AES@HHS.gov](mailto:AES@HHS.gov).
- 3 Start Your Pre-Screen**  
Complete the pre-screen within AES to determine if you meet the eligibility requirements for the SRCOSTEP program.
- 4 Submit Required Materials**  
Check your email for a detailed application checklist and submit application materials through AES. If a waiver is needed, submit the supporting documents.
- 5 Agency Selection Process**  
A hiring agency reviews your application and makes its selections. After selections are made at the end of the year an email notification will be sent regarding selection status.
- 6 Stand Ready to Interview with the Professional Category Board**  
The Call to Active Duty team will schedule a professional appointment board interview with senior ranking Public Health Service officers. After you have successfully cleared the professional board, your name will be submitted for Presidential nomination.
- 7 Complete Remaining Commissioning Requirements**  
The remaining requirements include medical and security clearances. Stand ready to receive an email to initiate the medical and security clearance processes. Please ensure you make completing all steps with clearances a priority.
- 8 Call to Active Duty**  
Once all clearances are completed, you will receive an email with on-boarding instructions and documents. These documents must be notarized. Once on-boarding documents are received, you should receive orders from your hiring agency.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact [PHSCOSTEP@hhs.gov](mailto:PHSCOSTEP@hhs.gov)



# 8 Steps to Become a U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps JRCOSTEP Officer

JRCOSTEP is a highly competitive short-term program for students obtaining their qualifying degrees. Participants serve on active duty for 31-120 days during school breaks. If you are interested in being part of our service, follow the 8 steps below.

1

## Visit [USPHS.GOV](https://www.usphs.gov)

Select the "Apply Now" to register as a New User for the Applicant Enrollment System (AES).

2

## Create and Activate Your Account

Activate your AES account by clicking on the link you will receive from [aes@hhs.gov](mailto:aes@hhs.gov).

3

## Start Your Pre-Screen

Complete the pre-screen to determine if you meet the eligibility requirements for JRCOSTEP.

4

## Submit Required Materials

Check your email for a detailed application checklist and submit application materials through AES. If a waiver is needed, submit the required supporting documents.

5

## Agency Selection Process

A hiring agency reviews your application and makes its selections. After selections are made at the end of the year, an email notification will be sent regarding selection status.

6

## Prepare to Interview with the Professional Category Board

The Call to Active Duty team will schedule a professional appointment board interview with senior ranking Public Health Service officers. After you have successfully cleared the professional board, your name will be submitted for Presidential nomination.

7

## Complete Remaining Commissioning Requirements

The remaining requirements include medical and security clearances. Stand ready to receive an email to initiate the medical and security clearance process. Please ensure you make completing all steps with clearances a priority.

8

## Call to Active Duty

Once all clearances are completed, you will receive an email with on-boarding instructions and documents. These documents must be notarized. Once on-boarding documents are received, you should receive orders from your hiring agency. Travel, if necessary, will be arranged through the hiring agency.

For additional question or assistance, please contact [PHSCOSTEP@hhs.gov](mailto:PHSCOSTEP@hhs.gov)





# Ready Reserve Corps Fact Sheet



The U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps is an all-officer uniformed service of public health professionals from various public health and clinical disciplines. The mission of the USPHS Commissioned Corps is to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the nation.

The Ready Reserve Corps supports this mission by providing trained, ready and equipped public health professionals, capable of mobilizing and deploying to augment the active duty Commissioned Corps, under the authorities of the Secretary for Health in response to national emergencies and public health crisis.

The Ready Reserve Corps offers a unique opportunity for officers to lead their own lives in the civilian world and serve their country when needed in under-served communities and during public health emergencies.

**FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA**



## Ready Reserve Officers

- Respond to regional, national, and global health emergencies
- Support active duty Commissioned Corps officers by backfilling in clinical and public health roles
- Deploy alongside active duty Commissioned Corps officers in various public health and humanitarian missions
- Enhance skills through continuous development and learning opportunities unique to Ready Reserve officers
- Are assigned to a region based on their geographical location
- Are structured using the same ranks as active duty officers
- Are protected by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act

## Requirements Needed to Serve

- You must be a U.S. citizen
- You must be able to meet the mental, moral, physical, and security standards for service
- You must possess a qualifying degree
- You must be age 40 or under at time of commissioning (must complete 20 years of total credible service by age 60)
- You must medically qualify (must pass a physical exam for commissioning)

## Service Obligations

- Officers must complete a six-year service obligation
- Officers must train one weekend per month and two weeks per year
- Officers must maintain physical readiness
- Officers must be prepared to mobilize and deploy for urgent or emergent public health needs
- Officers must commit to displaying respect for country and service, in and out of uniform

## Benefits

- Officers are paid for drill weekends, two weeks of Annual Training, and any other time spent on active duty
- Officers will receive retirement pay after 20 qualifying years of satisfactory service with pay based on time
- Medical Insurance: officers are eligible for Tricare Prime when on active duty for at least 30 days
- Retirement Planning: officers are eligible to participate in Thrift Savings Plan and Service Member's Life Insurance

**Are you ready for the public health journey of a lifetime?**





U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
COMMISSIONED CORPS

# Opportunities to Serve in the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps

Public Health Service officers make a crucial impact in rural, urban, Tribal, and international communities across all 50 states, Washington D.C., U.S. territory, or commonwealth and numerous foreign duty stations. They enjoy rewarding and diverse career assignments across 11 categories.

Learn about the different ways you can serve within the USPHS Commissioned Corps, either in the Active Duty Corps or with the Ready Reserve Corps.

## Active Duty Corps

**Provide essential healthcare** to the nation's most vulnerable populations.

**Advance practice, policy, and innovative research** by working within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or other federal agencies.

**Take on leadership roles and serve at the forefront of national and global public health emergencies** including natural disasters and disease outbreaks.

**Receive excellent benefits**, including competitive compensation packages and comprehensive health benefits at no or low cost.

For more information  
visit [usphs.gov](https://usphs.gov)



## Ready Reserve Corps

**Complete 12 drills and 15 days** active duty training per year.

**Deploy for up to 30 days** to provide support to underserved communities and backfill the USPHS Commissioned Corps' capacity to rapidly respond to critical missions and public health crises.

**Work alongside the Active Duty Corps** to provide direct clinical care or advance practice, policy, or research within HHS or other federal agencies.

**Provide highly specialized skill sets** to support missions and USPHS Commissioned Corps activities.



# PHERS+ || Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team >

The **Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS)** is one of the nation's eight uniformed services which is committed to the service of health and is comprised of two main components: full-time active duty officers and reservists.

The **Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team (PHERST)** is a newly-created subset of active duty Public Health Service officers who rapidly deploy as first responders to regional, national, and global public health emergencies.

## What We Do

PHERST officers work alongside active duty Regular Corps officers, rapidly responding to regional, national and global health emergencies and improving access to health services. When not deployed, PHERST officers train, maintain skills, and fill short-term staffing gaps in priority agencies, providing public health and direct clinical care to underserved and vulnerable populations.

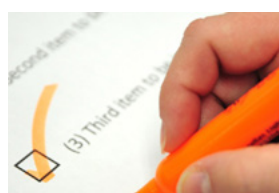


## How We Train & Deploy

PHERST officers are required to complete all Readiness and Deployment and specialized Department of Defense training. PHERST officers are "first on the ground" to respond; available to deploy immediately (within 8 hours) at the request of the President, the Secretary of Health, the Assistant Secretary for Health, or the Surgeon General.

## Who We Need

We are seeking mission-driven individuals with advanced clinical skills who desire to serve in public health programs and clinical settings. High-demand specialties include physicians and PAs, registered nurses and nurse practitioners, behavioral health providers, pharmacists, and environmental health officers.



## Why Join?

Become a part of an elite group – "America's Health Responders" – serving through rapid deployment. Competitive benefits are offered, including comprehensive health care, continuing education credits, paid maternity leave, and housing allowance. Select bonuses are also offered.





## Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP) Overview

In the SRCOSTEP, full-time students entering their final year of graduate school or professional training get paid while in school in exchange for committing to enroll in the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps upon graduation. Students receive the basic pay and allowances of an O-1, Ensign, while in the program and are guaranteed a spot in the USPHS Commissioned Corps upon graduation. The service obligation is equal to twice the time.

### Eligibility

- **Students within one year of receiving a degree** in medicine, nursing, advanced nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, optometry, veterinary medicine, environmental health, engineering, speech-language pathology, audiology, research science, or occupational, physical, or respiratory therapy, dietetics, and a physician assistant program.
- **Participants** must be enrolled full-time in an academic or professional training program which upon completion will qualify them to receive a commission in the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
- **Participants** must also meet certain physical, medical, and security background requirements.



### Benefits

- **Financial assistance.** Up to 12 months of pay equivalent to an Ensign while you finish your coursework (more for those with prior service).
- **Job upon graduation.** A full-time position as a Public Health Service officer immediately upon graduation.
- **Housing.** A tax-free allowance for your rent or mortgage calculated based on your rank, duty station, and dependent status.
- **Free health care.** Coverage through TRICARE.
- **The same privileges and benefits** given to Public Health Service officers.





## Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) Overview

Students in health-related undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs can train alongside active duty officers during their school breaks as part of the JRCOSTEP. Participants are paid, and receive health benefits, housing and travel allowances. Programs last between 30 and 120 days. Participants become inactive Public Health Service officers upon completing the program and can activate upon graduation. There is no obligation to join the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

### Eligibility

- **Undergraduates** with at least two years of study toward a baccalaureate degree in environmental health, engineering, nursing, pharmacy, physician assistant, dental hygiene, dietetics, medical laboratory technology, medical record administration, or occupational, physical, or respiratory therapy.
- **Master's students** who have completed at least one year of graduate study in nursing, a physician assistant program, environmental health, engineering, social work, public health, dietetics, healthcare administration, audiology, speech pathology, or occupational, physical, or respiratory therapy.
- **Doctoral students** who have completed at least one year of study in a doctoral program for medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, veterinary medicine, speech-language pathology, audiology, research science, or occupational, physical, or respiratory therapy.



### Benefits

- **Pay.** Participants receive the pay and allowances of an O-1, Ensign (or more for those with prior service).
- **Housing.** A tax-free allowance for your rent or mortgage calculated based on your duty station and dependent status.
- **Health care** for emergencies and space-available care at military medical treatment facilities.
- **Travel** costs are covered between your home and program location.