

United States Public Health Service Inactive Reserve Corps



The Inactive Reserve Corps (IRC) provides back fill assistance to the USPHS Commissioned Corps during emergent situations and staff shortages. IRC officers are commissioned into one of 11 professional categories.

The 3 ways individuals are commissioned into the IRC are:

- 1). Active duty officers with greater than 2 years of service, but less than 20 years of service;
- 2). Officers commissioned and completed a Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (COSTEP) assignment;
- 3). Individuals directly commissioned into the IRC (no previous Commissions)

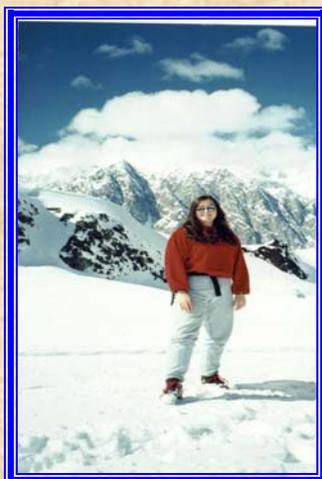


IRC officers are deployed for short, intermittent, or permissive tours in urgent and emergent situations.

- 1). Short Tour – These orders range from 1 to 120 consecutive days (although the usual minimum is 2 weeks). An officer can do a maximum of 240 days per fiscal year, which could be achieved on at least 2 short tour orders.
- 2). Intermittent Tour – Tours in which the IRC officer and facility set up the days in which the officer reports. Officers can do up to a maximum of 100 days per fiscal year in any combination. The officer is paid for the days on duty. (i.e. An officer can report once weekly, on weekends, once monthly, 5 consecutive days, etc.)
- 3). Permissive – Non-paid orders that activates an officer to attend conferences or to give presentations as a USPHS officer. Officers are medically covered for emergencies while on permissive orders and can wear the uniform.

A majority of IRC officer activations are for short tours or intermittent tours in various PHS agencies or Army Medical Commands. Recent notable activations of IRC officers were during Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. IRC officers may also be activated on permissive orders to give presentations at universities or attend conferences.

IRC Officers have a wide variety of opportunities in many metropolitan areas and some of the most beautiful rural areas in the U.S.



Requirements of IRC Officers

The only requirement of IRC officers is to keep their contact information updated. This can be done online – [click here](#).

Unlike the Department of Defense reserves, *there are no obligatory drills*. Activations to do short tours are *completely voluntary*. Only an Executive Order from the President of the United States can involuntarily activate an IRC officer. This last happened in World War II and the Korean War.

Benefits for IRC Officers

- 🌐 Retain Commission as a USPHS Officer.
- 🌐 The ability to do diverse short tour assignments.
- 🌐 IRC time counts toward longevity pay if an officer decides to activate as an extended duty (full-time) officer.
- 🌐 Provide leadership to the Corps through the Commissioned Officers Association (COA) – IRC Branch.
- 🌐 Ability to become a PHS Associate Recruiter



Benefits for Activated IRC Officers

Healthcare benefits:

Officers on short tours of 31 days or greater receive full healthcare benefits for themselves and dependents.

Officers on tours of 30 days or less are covered for emergent health needs while on active duty.

Officers on permissive or intermittent orders are covered for emergent health needs on days of active duty.

Commissary and Base Exchange Shopping Privileges:

Officers on active duty days have access to tax-free shopping at commissaries and exchanges worldwide.



-  Because the USPHS IRC is voluntary, there is NO retirement. Time served as an IRC officer counts toward Social Security.
-  Short tours allow professionals to provide services in unique locations. Officers are covered by Title 38 of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). This provides protections for initial hiring and adverse employment actions by an employer if the actions relate, even in part, to the employee's uniformed service. This ensures IRC officers to retain their civilian jobs.
-  Officers on orders are expected to wear the USPHS uniform while on duty.
-  IRC officers are entitled to disability and death benefits while on active duty.

IRC Officer Pay

IRC officers are paid the same as their full-time active duty counterparts. The pay consists of:

- 🌐 Base Pay ([Click here](#) for Military Base Pay Table). Base pay is determined by Temporary Rank and the number of years of service.
- 🌐 Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) – There are 2 different tax-free rates – BAH and BAH 2. BAH ([click here](#)) is used for tours 31 days or greater. This is based on the officer's home zip code. The BAH2 ([click here](#)) is used for tours 30 days or less. The BAH2 is a standard rate based on rank and dependents.
- 🌐 Basic Allowance Subsistence (BAS) – Officers receive \$202.76 per month tax free for food and personal care.
- 🌐 Per diem. Per diem rates paid for travel beyond the officer's duty station depend on region and season. Lodging accommodations are sometimes provided by duty stations, which would reduce per diem rates.
- 🌐 Special pay. Medical officers receive \$450/month and dental officers receive \$350/month.
- 🌐 IRC officers will receive pay commensurate with their rank and category. Further information related to pay can be obtained from the IRC Short Tour Coordinator.

Pay is pro-rated for tours less than 30 days. All rates are based on current rates (August 2008).



How to Apply

- 🌐 Individuals must have a qualifying degree within one of 11 professional categories. [Click here](#) for the list of categories and qualifying degrees required for being commissioned.
- 🌐 Contact the Office of Reserve Affairs at (301) 443-4000 to obtain the application links or for additional information.
- 🌐 Completed applications take anywhere from 4 to 8 months to process.
- 🌐 Applicants should be in good health, 44 years or younger, and have a qualifying degree/professional license.

The Inactive Reserve Corps is a great way for civilians in private practice, academic faculty, and non-traditional roles to provide professional services to high need populations within the Public Health Service. IRC officers can elect to activate to become full-time PHS officers, if they choose.

The opportunities range in geographical locations and the type of professional services needed. When opportunities arise, announcements are sent to the appropriate category listserv. Interested IRC officers can contact the individual(s) listed in the announcement to arrange a short tour. The receiving facility will initiate orders to activate the IRC officer.

Come join over 4,000 officers that are currently serving the nation and their fellow citizens in the USPHS Inactive Reserve Corps!



Commission Corps of the USPHS – “Protecting, promoting, and advancing the health and safety of the Nation.”