



INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

IHS Corps Officers All-Hands

January 6, 2021

Division of Commissioned Personnel Support
Office of Human Resources
Commissioned Corps Liaison
Indian Health Service

Agenda

- PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions
- PHS Officer Position Grades
- Intra-agency deployments for COVID-19 Response Activities: Obtaining Credit
- Family Separation Allowance
- Periodic Health Update: 2021
- CCHQ Town Hall Update
- Follow Up from the Last All Hands Call
- Answering Your Questions



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Considerations for Officers
 - Merit Promotion: The IHS merit promotion plan applies to the filling of all competitive positions within the General Schedule (GS).



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Considerations for Officers
 - Indian Preference: A selecting official may not select a non-Indian preference candidate where at least an Indian preference candidate from any source was considered qualified.



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Considerations for Officers
 - OPM Standards: The qualification standards prescribed by the OPM in "Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions," Operating Manual, or the OPM approved single agency standards, are to be used to determine minimum qualifications.



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Considerations for Officers
 - **If no Indian candidates are identified for the vacancy**, non-Indian officers will have their qualifications evaluated by Human Resources against the qualification requirements of the position and will be referred to the selecting official for consideration.



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Considerations for Officers
 - Suitability Requirements: An employee or an applicant is considered suitable for Federal employment if there is no information available concerning conduct that could reasonably be expected to interfere with the Agency's ability to discharge its responsibilities. Suitability determinations are governed by Part 5 CFR Part 731, HHS and IHS instructions, case law, and other requirements.



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Considerations for Officers
 - Minimum Qualifications
 - Experience for the position
 - Licenses
 - Selective Factors: Selective Factors identify an additional qualifications that are essential for the position/job (e.g. language ability, registrations, certifications)
 - It is up to the officer to submit sufficient information to permit Human Resources to determine whether he or she meets the qualification requirements including selective factors.



PHS Officer Eligibility for Positions

- Process for Applying
 - USAJOBS.gov
 - Submission of a CV to the announcement point of contact
 - Supplying any other required documents



PHS Officer Position Grades



PHS Officer Position Grades

- Position Description
 - Officers apply for civil service (General Schedule) positions
 - General Schedule position descriptions determine the major duties and qualifications of the position
- Determining General Schedule (GS) Grade equivalence
 - In general: GS 14/15 (O-6), GS 13 (O-5), GS-12 (O-4), GS-11 (O-3), GS 9 (O-2)
 - Other considerations: Required Experience, Supervisory Status, Complexity, Impact of Judgement, Direction, Guidelines/Originality, Persons/Purpose of Contacts



PHS Officer Position Grades

- Legacy Billets versus Direct Access Billet System (DABS) Positions
 - DABS Position determines the grade and appears on the Promotion Information Report (PIR). It is aligned with the GS position description
 - Legacy Billet is described in the personnel order and is selected to fit to the DABS Position



PHS Officer Position Grades

- Determining the DABS Position Grade
 - Position Description and GS Grade
 - Supervisory vs. Non-Supervisory
 - Officer Experience and Qualifications (Degrees and Certifications)
- Updating the DABS Position Grade
 - Revision to the Position Description
 - New Position Description

PHS Officer Position Grades

- Updating the DABS Position Grade
 - Officer Factors
 - Years of Experience
 - Post-Commissioning Degree
 - Specialized Certification



Intra-Agency Deployments for COVID-19 Activities: Obtaining Credit



Intra-Agency COVID-19 Activities Deployment Credit

- Eligibility
 - “Officers deployed for agency-specific COVID-19 outbreak response activities”
 - Example Creditable activities: “Due to COVID-19, my duties require that I:”
 - Provide care for patients with COVID-19
 - Participate in duty station COVID-19 response efforts (e.g. ICS Team)
 - Perform Screening/Testing Activities
 - Perform Contact Tracing
 - Administer COVID-19 Vaccines
 - Participate in Infrastructure or Operational Support/Enhancement
 - Construction/Facilities
 - Contracting/Logistics



Intra-Agency COVID-19 Activities Deployment Credit

- Obtaining Credit
 - Area Director or designee provides to DCPS a list of officers that contains the following:
 - Officer Data (SERNO, Rank, Name, Category)
 - Duty Station Data (Area, Duty Station City and State)
 - Deployment Data (Deployment City, State, and Duties)
 - Officer submits a TDY memo, signed by their supervisor, describing the response activities they performed and the duration of time they performed them



Intra-Agency COVID-19 Activities Deployment Credit

- Obtaining Credit

DCPS regularly submits lists of officers considered eligible for deployment credit to the Readiness and Deployment Branch (RDB). RDB has indicated they have 60 days after the end of the Public Health Emergency to assign deployment credit.

Intra-Agency COVID-19 Activities Deployment Credit

- Request for Officer Response Activities
 - DCPS will be releasing a survey request to officers requesting information on COVID-19 response activities
 - Officers participating in periodic response activities should denote activity in # days
 - After the survey is closed and the results compiled, responses will be provided to leadership for validation
 - Validated information will be provided to CCHQ for consideration for deployment credit



Family Separation Allowance



Family Separation Allowance

Family Separation Allowance: FSA provides compensation for added expenses incurred because of an enforced family separation

- Types of Family Separation Allowance
 - FSA-Restricted (FSA-R)/FSA I or II-P): The transportation of dependents is not authorized at government expense and dependents do not live in the area of the Officer's permanent duty station, transportation of dependents is authorized but a dependent cannot accompany the Officer due to certified medical reasons and the Officer elects an unaccompanied tour of duty, adequate Government quarters or housing facilities are not available for assignment.



Family Separation Allowance

Family Separation Allowance: FSA provides compensation for added expenses incurred because of an enforced family separation

- Types of Family Separation Allowance
 - FSA-Ship (FSA-S/FSA-II-S): Officer is on duty aboard a ship, and the ship is away from the homeport continuously for more than 30 days.
 - FSA-Temporary (FSA-T/FSA-II-T): Officer is on temporary duty (TDY) (or temporary additional duty) away from the permanent station continuously for more than 30 days, and your dependents are not residing at or near the TDY station.



Family Separation Allowance

- Eligibility
 - Officer must have dependents
 - Separation must be for 31 days or more
 - Officer was assigned to a location more than 50 miles from their duty station
 - Submit documentation within 90 days of the separation

Family Separation Allowance

- Process for submitting a request for FSA
 - Officer prepares a memo to their Regional Liaison through their supervisor, stating the following:
 - FSA Type Requested
 - Dates of separation and temporary duty/assignment location
 - Name, address, age, and relationship of dependents during the separation
 - Indication of whether the separation was directed by the Agency or PHS
 - Signature of the officer and their supervisor



Family Separation Allowance

- Process for submitting a request for FSA
 - Officer provides the memo and documentation supporting the separation to their [regional liaison team](#) (e.g. TDY memo, personnel orders, travel orders)
 - Liaison reviews the memo and supporting documentation
 - Liaison makes eligibility concurrence determination
 - Liaison submits the package to CCHQ Financial Services Branch (FSB)

Periodic Health Update: 2021



Periodic Health Update: 2021

- For 2020: Officers who did not submit a PHU in 2020 were not required to do so unless your PHU was due before 3/1/20 (deadline was to submit a PHU by 2/29/20).
- For 2021 (an updated checklist and guidance from CCHQ is planned):
 - PHU requirements will resume in January 2021. For a January birth month, you will have until March 31,2021 to submit your PHU. Otherwise PHU are due by the end of the month following your birth month.



Periodic Health Update: 2021

- For 2021 (an updated checklist and guidance is now available on [CCMIS](#)):
 - After making reasonable attempts to obtain in person PHU appointments, Medical Affairs Branch (MAB) will accept a PHU that:
 - Contains a “virtual” physical examination
 - Contains a report of a dental exam done within 12 months or no dental exam
 - Includes an attestation that the officer had difficulties in completing their PHU



Periodic Health Update: 2021

- For 2021 (an updated checklist and guidance is now available on [CCMIS](#)):
 - PHU Availability
 - Since 12/1, WRNMMC allows PHS Officers to schedule a PHU for the first part of the month before an officer's birthday month.
 - MAB has been engaging Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) and IHS sites to ensure awareness of PHU requirements and officer access to appointments.



Commissioned Corps Town Hall Updates



Commissioned Corps Town Hall Updates

- COVID-19 Vaccine: Officers are not required at this time to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine. Obtaining the vaccine is encouraged.
- Ready Reserve: “Reservists will be a cadre of part time civilian health professionals available to provide direct clinical care”
 - Applications opened in October of 2020
 - Application process and commissioning requirements are the same as Active Duty
 - Retirement, Medical Benefits and Training points will be available
 - Active duty officers can transfer if they have no more than 10 years of service
 - Will augment the Active Component. Will not replace officers for deployments although some may deploy based upon specialty or as surge capacity.
 - Commissioning is planned to commence in the spring of 2021



Follow Up from the Last All Hands Call



HPSP Agreements and the Suspension of Retirements

Are there any updates from CCHQ on what can be done for officers who were receiving HPSP agreements that expired during the suspension of retirements?

- Not at this time.

HPSP Agreements and the Suspension of Retirements

Are there any updates from CCHQ on what can be done for officers who were receiving HPSP agreements that expired during the suspension of retirements?

- Transitional HPSP (T-HPSP) was implemented in 2018 for medical and dental officers to allow them to align their special pay end dates with a planned retirement. The recent suspension of retirements may result in the expiration of a T-HPSP agreement before an officer can retire. CCHQ has acknowledged the need to provide an extension of T-HPSP for officers under this program until 12/31/21 or the officer's retirement date, whichever comes first.
- If your T-HPSP pay has been impacted by the suspension in retirements, please contact your [regional liaison team](#) for assistance in coordinating with CCHQ to extend the T-HPSP pay in accordance with the limits described above.



Pharmacy Resident Eligibility for an Accession Bonus

Are former or current pharmacy residents eligible to receive an Accession Bonus?

- DCPS has engaged stakeholders within IHS Pharmacy Leadership as well as the Pharmacy Chief Professional Officer.
- DCPS will continue to work to obtain a final determination regarding Access Bonus eligibility for former and current pharmacy residents.



Ways in Which Position Grades Can be Re-Evaluated?

What are ways in which position grades can be re-evaluated?

- In some instances, an officer may qualify for a higher position grade due to changes in their training and/or experience (such as earning a post commissioning degree or achieving a certain number of years of experience).
- In other cases, your supervisor can request that your position be reevaluated by human resources through the completion of a desk audit. A desk audit allows for the officer and the supervisor to highlight how the nature and difficulty of the work may be different from the PD. This can result in an increase (or in some cases a decrease) in the grade of the PD, potentially qualifying the officer for a different position grade.



Making the Details of High Level Awards Available

Can information about DSM, MSM, and OSM with Valor awards be shared?

- Yes: We will be working on a quarterly update to highlight officers who have received high level awards, as well as increasing the overall visibility of awards that are earned by IHS officers.

Answering Your Questions



Your Questions

1. Will hazardous duty pay (HDP) be authorized for officers in direct response to COVID-19 pandemic?

A. If HDP is authorized, how will officer's supervisors certify that the officer has met the designated criterion before forwarding the Hazardous Duty Award (HDA) through appropriate channels for submission to CCHQ? Since Hazardous Duty Pay/Imminent Danger Pay qualify officer for HDA.



Your Questions

2. Will Hazardous Duty Award (HDA) be submitted by the Agency for officers who served in a position requiring frequent and significant risk to his/her safety (a minimum 180 consecutive days exposure to the risk factor) due to COVID-19 pandemic?
3. Does it matter if officers are assigned to a Tribal P.L. 638 facility under an MOA or they are assigned to a federal site?

Your Questions



The DCPS Website

Division of Commissioned Personnel Support (DCPS)

Training Webinars

Announcements

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Regional Offices

Officer Resources

Contact Us

Division of Commissioned Personnel Support (DCPS) (www.ihs.gov/dcps)



The Division of Commissioned Personnel Support (DCPS) is a division within the Indian Health Service (IHS) Office of Human Resources (OHR). DCPS is responsible for the administration of the Commissioned Corps programs for approximately 2,000 commissioned officers assigned to IHS/Tribal/Urban facilities throughout the United States. DCPS staff serve as subject-matter experts and consultants to IHS leadership, program officials, commissioned officers, and their dependents and survivors, on all Commissioned Corps matters, including personnel actions, recruitment and retention, career development, leave of absence, performance management, honor and service awards, discipline, standards of conduct, promotions, training, travel, assignments to Tribal and Urban programs through memoranda of agreement.

Contact Us

Find contact information for Regional or HQ DCPS representatives on the DCPS website at <https://www.ihs.gov/dcps/regionaloffices/full-list-by-region/>

Or contact us at IHSCorpsInquiries@ihs.gov

**The next IHS Corps Officers All-Hands will be
3 February 2021 at 3:30 PM EST**

Thank you!

