



INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

IHS Corps Officers All-Hands

DECEMBER 2, 2020

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

Agenda

- 2020 Annual COER
- Awards
- Permanent Promotion
 - Non-competitive (O-2/O-3)
 - Grades
 - Failure to Promote
- Miscellaneous Topics



2020 Annual COER

Updated Deadlines



New COER Deadlines

The 2020 COER rating period extends from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020

Updated Due Dates

- Online Annual COER is due to the Rater by 25 November 2020
- Online Annual COER is due to the Reviewing Official (RO) by 23 December 2020
- Online Annual COER is due to the Agency Liaison by 15 January 2021
- Online Annual COER is due to CCHQ (from Agency Liaison) by 31 January 2021

AWARDS



Commissioned Officer Awards

- 300+ awards submitted to CCHQ by 6 November 2020 deadline for promotion boards
 - DSM/MSM 2
 - OSM 29 + 1 w/Valor
 - CM 76
 - AM 141
 - Cit 48
 - OUC 7
 - UC 39
 - Total 343
- Awards processing in CCHQ is significantly delayed due to COVID-19 and the pause associated with the new Awards Program policy ([CCI 511.01](#)) and [POM 821.14](#)
 - Questions may be directed to the Area Awards Board or IHSCorpsAwards@ihs.gov
 - We are not able to provide updates on the status once it leaves IHS
 - Officers should not expect to see the award on the PIR before mid-January



COVID-19 Related Awards

- COVID-19 Campaign Medal
 - CCHQ will generate the list based on active duty status
 - All *eligible* officers on duty Corps-wide during the award period specified in the policy
- Crisis Response Service Award
 - For officers who deploy to an activity meeting the criteria in policy
- Individual and unit honor awards
 - The IHS Awards Board is accepting COVID-19 awards
 - Awards will be approved and submitted on a case-by-case basis
 - Awards covering activities performed by many IHS officers will be returned or held:
 - For incorporation into a larger Area, Region, or IHS-wide unit award
 - Including testing, contact tracing, Incident Command System (ICS) activities
 - Unless there are unique interventions or accomplishments that are distinguishing



General Awards Guidance

- DCPS has awards guidance on our website
- Start planning early (3-6 months) for submission to IHS Awards Board by October 2021
- Lots of awards are returned for rewrite because they lack impact or are unclear
- What was the problem, process, or situation that was resolved or improved?
- Intervention – what specifically did the officer do that is award-worthy?
- Connect the dots between intervention and impact for those unfamiliar with the work
- Specify the impact of the intervention(s)
 - Cost savings
 - Time saved
 - Efficiencies
 - Use metrics wherever possible



PERMANENT PROMOTION TOPICS



Permanent Grades

Permanent grade - the lowest grade to which an officer may be reduced without cause

Assistant Grade	O-2
Senior Assistant Grade	O-3
Full Grade	O-4
Senior Grade	O-5
Director Grade	O-6

Important for understanding the law ([42 U.S.C. §211](#)) and policy ([CCI 331.01](#))



Non-Competitive Permanent Promotions

Why are they reviewed by a board?

42 U.S.C. §211. Promotion of commissioned officers

- Section (a) Permanent or temporary promotions; examination: “Each permanent promotion...shall be made only after examination...”
 - Examination = review by a promotion board
- Section (c) Examinations: “... examinations for promotions to the assistant or senior assistant grade shall in all cases be noncompetitive”
- The only way for promotions to assistant (O-2) and senior assistant (O-3) grades to be reviewed by a board, but also noncompetitive is if the success rates are 100%
- The only way to be unsuccessful for permanent promotion to O-2 and O-3 is:
 - Not Recommended by the promotion board
 - Removal from successful list for lacking one or more administrative requirement



Failure to Promote

42 U.S.C. §211. Promotion of commissioned officers

- Section (f) – an officer who is not promoted in permanent grade and who has not twice been unsuccessful in succession will be reexamined once
- Section (g) - Separation from service upon failure of promotion
 - An officer found unsuccessful for permanent promotion to O-2 will be separated
 - Permanent promotion to O-2 is non-competitive with a 100% success rate
 - It should be very difficult to fail to be promoted to permanent O-2
 - Not Recommended by the promotion board
 - Removal from successful list for lacking one or more administrative requirement
- This has always been in the law. It was not fully implemented previously.



Failure to Promote

42 U.S.C. §211. Promotion of commissioned officers

- Section (g) - Separation from service upon failure of promotion (continued)
 - If an officer after having been twice examined for promotion (other than promotion to a restricted grade), fails to be promoted:
 - if in the assistant grade (O-2, eligible for permanent O-3), he shall be separated from the Service and paid six months' basic pay and allowances;
 - if in the senior assistant grade (O-3, eligible for P O-4), he shall be separated from the Service and paid one year's basic pay and allowances;
 - if in the full grade (O-4, eligible for P O-5), he shall be considered as not in line for promotion and shall, *at such time thereafter as the Surgeon General may determine*, be retired from the Service with retired pay.
- This has also been in the law, but not fully implemented previously.



Failure to Promote

42 U.S.C. §211. Promotion of commissioned officers

- Section (g) - Separation from service upon failure of promotion, continued
 - If an officer after having been twice examined for promotion (other than promotion to a restricted grade), fails to be promoted...

- Restricted grade is defined in Section (b):

The President may by regulation provide that in a specified professional category permanent promotions to the senior grade, or to both the full grade and the senior grade, shall be made only if there are vacancies in such grade. A grade in any category with respect to which such regulations have been issued is referred to in this section as a "restricted grade".

- Restricted grades then are P O-4 and P O-5 in the restricted categories
- Restricted categories – all categories, except medical and dental



Failure to Promote

To Summarize:

- Permanent promotion to O-2 and O-3 have a 100% success rate
- As long as an officer submits documents and meets the administrative requirements, there is little/no risk of separation for failure to promote to P O-2 and P O-3
- Restricted grades are P O-4 and P O-5 in the restricted categories so they are excepted from the failure to promote provision in section (g) of 42 U.S.C. § 211
- Making almost all categories restricted minimizes the potential number of separations
- CCHQ shifted engineer, scientist, and vet categories to restricted to decrease risk
- 42 U.S.C. §211 section (c) and CCI 331.01 section 6-6 minimize risk to unrestricted (medical and dental) categories with 80% or more success rates to P O-4 and P O-5



ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS



Your Questions

Q: Are there any opportunities geared towards IHS officers or advice for how to go about applying to one of the fellowships advertised for Corps officers, in a world of pandemic budget shortfalls and chronic understaffing?



Your Questions

Q. I have been deemed an essential employee by my organization and have been performing contact tracing since March 2020. How do I go about submitting my “deployment at home” activities in order to get deployment credit and possible service award eligibility?



Your Questions

Q. It was mentioned on today's All-Hands call that to update a billet would first require an update of the PD. This makes sense to align the two, but in the past I understood HR to say that if the update is substantial enough to warrant a billet adjustment, then it would require PD reclassification and subsequently require re-advertisement of the position. How can this be accomplished without re-advertising the position and the incumbent officer having to re-compete for their own position?

Your Questions

Q. If tribal sites are phasing out officers and posting positions not open to Corps officers, are we reaching out to that leadership to see why, or is there anything we can do to expand Corps "friendliness" in tribal duty stations?



Your Questions

Q. I have heard on several occasions that HQ is trying to make our service ranks follow a pyramid type structure as seen in the other uniform services. This situation seems to mean very limited higher lever ranks and more people in the lower ranks. The USPHS CC is not like the other services as we do not operate as one contiguous service as the other Services do...Therefore, it makes sense to have our structure follow what the agencies want our positions to be defined as, which defines the billets and thereby ranks and not some basically arbitrary pyramid structure that works in the other Uniformed Services because these services can control their own structure and operate as one contiguous service.

So, why are we trying to follow this pyramid structure that clearly does not follow the request of the various agencies that actually pay our salaries and set our billets by default? Has there been any effort to work with those agencies to get their input into what they want, as they are the ones we work for 95% plus of the time?



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.ihhs.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
6 January 2021 at 3:30 PM EST**

Thank you!

