

The United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps

America's Health Responders



LCDR Andrew O'Carroll

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Topics of Discussion

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USPHS Commissioned Corps

INTRODUCTION

In Officio Salutis



- Established in 1889, the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps is solely committed to protecting the public's health.
- The Commissioned Corps is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is overseen by the Assistant Secretary for Health.
- The U.S. Surgeon General and the Deputy Surgeon General provide operational command of the USPHS Commissioned Corps.



USPHS Commissioned Corps

ABBREVIATED HISTORY



- 1798** Act for the Relief of Sick and Disabled Seamen
- 1870** Marine Hospital Service
- 1871** First Supervising Surgeon (later Surgeon General)
Dr. John Maynard Woodworth
- 1878** National Quarantine Act
- 1889** Legislation created the Commissioned Corps
- 1912** Public Health Service (with broadened powers)
- 1930** Parker Act: Expanded Public Health Service to Non-Physicians
- 1955** Establishment of the Indian Health Service
- 1979** Department of Health and Human Services established
- 1999** First Dedicated Disaster Response Mission for the
USPHS Commissioned Corps (20,000 Kosovo refugees)



Who We Are

The USPHS Commissioned Corps is one of the eight uniformed services, and is the only one dedicated solely to protecting America's public health

- Approximately 6,000 public health professionals dedicated to addressing public health and providing clinical care



Our Mission and Values

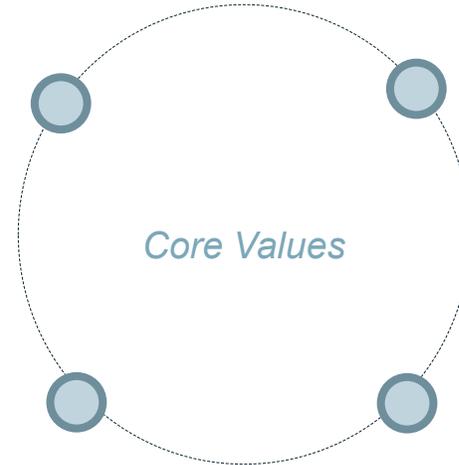
Protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the nation

Leadership

We provide vision and purpose in public health through inspiration, dedication and loyalty.

Integrity

We exemplify uncompromising ethical conduct and maintain the highest standards of responsibility and accountability.



Service

We are committed to public health through compassionate actions and stewardship of time, resources, and talents.

Excellence

We exhibit superior performance and continuous improvement in knowledge and expertise.



What We Do

- **Provide essential health services**
We go where most do not go to provide care for vulnerable and underserved populations.
- **Serve on the frontlines of public health emergencies**
We respond quickly to natural disasters, disease outbreaks and global public health emergencies as well as serve on humanitarian missions.
- **Lead public health programs and policy development**
We utilize our experience, skills, and networks to provide leadership within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and throughout the federal government.
- **Advance innovation and science**
We work at the forefront of medical challenges like COVID-19, cancer, and the opioid crisis.

Protect, promote and advance
the health and safety of our
nation.



USPHS Commissioned Corps

WHERE WE WORK

Approximately 6,000 officers in 800 locations, all 50 states and numerous foreign assignments including the World Health Organization

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Defense
- Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Agriculture
- State Governments and Local Agencies



Professional Categories



| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
|  MEDICAL |  DENTIST |  VETERINARIAN |  NURSE |
|  THERAPIST |  PHARMACIST |  DIETITIAN |  HEALTH SERVICES |
|  ENGINEER |  ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH |  SCIENTIST |  |



We Offer

- Uniformed service [benefits](#) featuring comprehensive, low-cost medical, dental, and vision care for officers and their dependents, [retirement](#), and the [Post-9/11 GI Bill](#) education benefit, which can be transferred to dependents after 10 years of service
- Diverse career opportunities and professional growth
- Potential ability to transfer from civil service or other uniformed services
- Opportunities for involvement in the response to disasters and epidemics

CANDIDATES MUST

- Meet [basic requirements](#) and basic education and training requirements
- Meet [height and weight standards](#), maintain physical fitness, and be [medically qualified](#) (if you have specific concerns about medical eligibility, please email PHSCADMedical@hhs.gov)
- Commit to displaying respect for our country and service by wearing the USPHS Commissioned Corps [uniform](#)

To become a Public Health Service officer, an interested applicant must complete the commissioning process and secure a position in an agency where Public Health Service officers serve. Applicants pursue both processes simultaneously during the 6 to 9 months commissioning process.



Ready Reserve Corps

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, provides both the authority and funding for the establishment of the Ready Reserve Corps, the reserve component of the USPHS Commissioned Corps. Applicants must meet same appointment requirements as Regular Corps.



- **The Ready Reserve Corps provides trained and ready personnel to fill critical public health needs and:**
 - Supports the USPHS Commissioned Corps' capacity to respond to regional, national, and global health emergencies and improve access to health services
 - Preserves clinical care positions by maintaining a surge capacity of health professionals available for deployment without jeopardizing the service of clinicians in hard to fill roles
 - Offers an opportunity to serve for mission-driven clinical and public health professionals who cannot commit to a full-time active duty position in the USPHS Commissioned Corps
 - Enables access to highly specialized skill sets that would be impractical in full-time active duty positions



Veterinary Category





USPHS Veterinary Category



Who We Are and What We Do

- Approximately 69 veterinary officers in the Corps as of 2024
- Employed in a variety of roles and capacities:
 - Epidemiologists, laboratory animal clinicians, regulatory science and policy experts, food safety inspectors, and the National Veterinary Response Team (NVRT)
- Most have training beyond the DVM degree
 - But not a requirement for commission





USPHS Veterinary Category

AVMA Statement on Veterinarians and Public Health

***Veterinarians protect people from disease.** First and best line of defense against animal diseases that could threaten public health and our national security. We prevent and treat zoonotic diseases ranging from rabies to avian flu and play a key role in responding to bioterrorism threats such as the anthrax attacks that followed 9/11.*

***Veterinarians safeguard our food.** Protect the health and welfare of livestock and oversee meatpacking plants to ensure all meat is safe for human consumption.*

***Veterinarians make medical discoveries.** Crucial to the development of new drugs for both people and animals. As researchers, veterinarians are finding new ways to diagnose, treat, and prevent health disorders in all species*





USPHS Veterinary Category

Veterinarians and Public Health Engage In:

- Diagnosis, Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Control
- Prevention and Elimination of Zoonotic Diseases
- Management of Health Aspect of Laboratory Animal Medicine
- Biomedical Research
- Health Education and Extension
- Production and Control of Biologics, Medical Devices and Pharmaceuticals
- Government and Legislative Activity
- Population Health Initiatives
- Emergency Preparedness
- Policy





USPHS Veterinary Category

Where We Work

- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - National Institute of Health (NIH)
- Growing presence outside of DHHS
 - United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA FSIS)
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
 - National Park Service (NPS)
 - Department of Defense (DoD)
 - Defense Health Agency (DHA)



Emergency Response Deployments



Readiness and Deployment

The Office of the Surgeon General, through Commissioned Corps Headquarters, is responsible for the coordination of readiness and deployment for:



- Domestic and international operations
- Teams and individuals
- Humanitarian assistance
- Disaster relief
- Emergency response
- Global training



Veterinarian Deployment Missions

| COVID-19 (2020-22) | Hurricanes | Other Natural Disasters |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Command Center Cruise Ship Mission Phoenix Indian Med. Ctr. Mission Health Screener Quarantine Station Medical Procurement Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura ('20) Maria ('17-'18) Harvey-Irma ('17) Matthew ('16) * Sandy ('12) Gustav-Ike ('08) Katrina-Rita ('06) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Fires ('20, '19, '18 '17) Oregon Fires ('20) Hawaii Volcano ('18) Louisiana Flooding ('16) Minot, ND Flood ('11) |
| Native American/Alaska Missions | International Missions | Other Missions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navajo Water Access ('20) Gallup Indian Medical Center ('16) Crow Flooding ('12) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typhoon Yutu ('18-'19) Ebola – West Africa ('14,'15,'19) American Samoa Tsunami ('09-'10) Haiti Earthquake ('10) USS Mercy Humanitarian ('06) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unaccompanied Minor ('14, '16, '18) Child Reunification ('18) Oil Spill Responses National Security Special Events (yearly) |



Student Opportunities

What You Can Do



JRCOSTEP

- No obligation after graduation
- **Eligibility**
 - 1+ year of graduate study in veterinary
- **Benefits**
 - Paid salary during externship (work 1 to 4 months during school breaks)
 - Tax-free housing allowance
 - Learn more at: [JRCOSTEP - https://www.usphs.gov/students/](https://www.usphs.gov/students/)



SRCOSTEP

- PHS service obligation equal to twice time sponsored
- **Eligibility**
 - Veterinary students within 1 year of receiving a degree
- **Benefits**
 - Up to 12 months of full pay and benefits while finishing coursework
 - Full-time position as a PHS officer immediately upon graduation
 - Tax-free housing allowance
 - Free health care coverage through TRICARE
 - Learn more at: [SRCOSTEP - https://www.usphs.gov/students/](https://www.usphs.gov/students/)



ARE YOU READY?

HERE IS HOW YOU GET STARTED...

Visit
www.usphs.gov

Review:
1. Medical standards
2. Applicant checklist

Apply!



Apply to USPHS Commissioned Corps

START APPLICATION



Veterinary Officer Required Qualifications

- U.S. native or naturalized citizen
- Mandatory four-year commissioned service obligation
- Less than 44 years of age (may be adjusted based on eligible federal PHS civil service and uniform service active-duty time)
- Less than 8 years of age for Ready Reserve (may be adjusted based on eligible federal PHS civil service and uniform service active-duty time)
- Less than 8 years of prior active-duty service in any uniformed service other than the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
- Meet security, professional, and medical requirements.
- Current, unrestricted, and valid license to practice in one of the 50 States; Washington, DC; Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; U.S. Virgin Islands; or Guam



8 Steps to Become a USPHS Commissioned Corps Public Health Service Officer

1. Visit the [USPHS.GOV](https://www.usphs.gov)
2. Create & Activate Your Account
3. Start Your Pre-Screen
4. Submit Required Materials
5. Stand Ready to Interview for Veterinary Category Board
6. Complete remaining Three Commissioning Requirements (Medical, Security, & Nomination Clearances)
7. Seek Employment Opportunities with Federal Agencies (if search not started/secured already)
8. Call to Active Duty



Join Our Noble Effort

The **USPHS Commissioned Corps** offers rewarding careers for public health professionals who desire to protect and promote our nation's health and treat those most in need.

We are recruiting service-driven clinicians and public health professionals in 11 professional categories, including physicians, dentists and veterinarians.

Learn more by visiting USPHS.gov.

Career Growth

- Professional Development
- Leadership Training
- Mentorship
- Assignment Mobility
- Continuing Education Credits
- Post-9/11 GI Bill

Financial Incentives

- Competitive Compensation Package
- Housing Allowance
- Comprehensive Health Care
- Student Loan Repayment Programs
- 401-Style Retirement Plan
- Life Insurance & Survivor Benefits

Work/Life Balance

- 30 Days of Paid Vacation
- Paid Sick Leave
- Paid Maternity Leave
- Paid Federal Holidays

