



Public Health Services Officers Serving the Department of Defense

Dear Fellow Officers,

Congratulations on your recent appointment to the Department of Defense (DoD) and the United States Public Health Service (PHS). We welcome you not only to a team of more than 6,500 public health professionals dedicated to the Nation's health, but also within that team, to a smaller cadre of officers who serve the (DoD).

PHS officers serve the DoD in a variety of capacities. PHS officers are detailed to Health Affairs (HA)/TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) under a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to support the priorities of the Military Health System (MHS). Most notably is the agreement between the DoD and Health and Human Services (HHS)/PHS to increase the number of mental health clinicians available to serve Active-duty and Reserve component Service members, military retirees and their family members. Social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, pharmacists, nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians' assistants, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, and many more professions work to serve DoD in traditional and non-traditional roles.

For those PHS officers that are prior Military Service, the transition to PHS, in many respects, will be seamless. You will find that we use many of the same rules and regulations concerning courtesy and conduct, uniform wear, and rank structure. For those PHS officers that are not prior Military Service, you will receive assistance and support for assimilation by being matched with a mentor. The mentorship program offers a 6-month initial overview and orientation of uniformed services protocol and identification of key points of contact as well as facilitation to your specific professional advisory committee (PAC). We are proud of our uniformed service and are excited you have chosen to serve alongside us.

This document and attachments contains materials you may find useful in preparing for your new assignment. Please use the Table of Contents to guide you through the information. We hope you find this packet helpful.

Welcome to the PHS!

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I. Introduction to the U.S. Public Health Service

The origins of the Public Health Service (PHS) can be traced to the passage of an act in 1798 which provided for the care and relief of sick and injured merchant seamen. Reorganization in 1870 converted the loose network of locally controlled hospitals into a centrally controlled Marine Hospital Service, with its headquarters in Washington, D.C. The position of Supervising Surgeon (later Surgeon General) was created to administer the Service, and John Maynard Woodworth was appointed as the first incumbent in 1871. He moved quickly to reform the system and adopted a military model for his medical staff, instituting examinations for applicants and putting his physicians in uniforms. Woodworth created a cadre of mobile, career service physicians who could be assigned as needed to the various marine hospitals. The uniformed services component of the Marine Hospital Service was formalized as the Commissioned Corps by legislation enacted in 1889.

John Maynard Woodworth's uniformed service began shortly after graduating from the Chicago Medical College in 1862. Upon graduating from medical school, Woodworth was appointed Assistant Surgeon in the Union Army. He was rapidly promoted to Surgeon and served as the Medical Director of the Army of the Tennessee.

Following the end of the Civil War, Woodworth received clinical instruction in the European hospitals. In 1866, he became presenter in anatomy at the Chicago Medical College. Moreover, he was also appointed Surgeon of the Soldier's Home of Chicago and Sanitary Inspector of the Chicago Board of Health in the same year.

As we prepare to enter a new century, the PHS continues to fulfill its mission to "protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of the Nation." It has grown from a small collection of marine hospitals to the largest and most diverse public health program in the world.

II. PHS Core Values

Similar to our sister services, the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (Corps) now has formal, stated Core Values consisting of four elements, each with a supporting statement. Core Values one and two comprise our expectations of the actions of the officers within the service. While these specify public health, they are (as they should be) applicable to officers at any time. Core Values three and four are more general, being indicative of the qualities that we expect in our officers, whether on duty within the realm of public health, or generally in the way officers' conduct themselves in life. Core Values serve to help define the philosophical basis of the corporate culture of an organization, which is then manifested in its mission, goals, and actions. Proudly adopt these core values as an integral part of your duty and life, as you are protecting, promoting, and advancing the health and safety of the Nation. The PHS Core Values are:

Leadership Provides vision and purpose in public health through inspiration, dedication, and loyalty

Service Demonstrates a commitment to public health through compassionate actions and stewardship of time, resources, and talents

Integrity Exemplifies uncompromising ethical conduct and maintains the highest standards of responsibility and accountability

Excellence Exhibits superior performance and continuous improvement in knowledge and expertise

III. HHS Leadership

[Assistant Secretary of Health \(ASH\)](#): Oversees the USPHS and provides the strategic and policy direction.

[Surgeon General \(SG\)](#): Under the supervision of the ASH, the Surgeon General provides daily operational command of the USPHS.

[Deputy Surgeon General \(DSG\)](#): Serves as the principal assistant and advisor to the Surgeon General regarding the development and implementation of programs, priorities, and initiatives for the USPHS.

[Chief of Staff](#): Is responsible for the direction and management of the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), including Science and Communications, Readiness and Deployment, Commissioned Corps Operations, and Reserve Affairs.

PHS Leadership at DoD

[TRICARE's Chief Pharmacy Officer](#): Serves as Chief, Pharmaceutical Operations Directorate, responsible for pharmacy operations of the TRICARE Management Activity.

IV. Rights vs. Privileges

It is important for all PHS Officers to be able to understand the distinction between your rights and privileges. A *right* is defined as a legal or moral entitlement to do or to refrain from doing something, or to obtain or refrain from obtaining an action. As a PHS Officer, you have the right to your benefits including healthcare, salary, and retirement.

A *privilege* is a special right granted by a government to a group, on a conditional basis. A privilege can be revoked in some cases. It is a privilege to be able to use the facilities at military installations. As a PHS officer, you represent all PHS officers when you are on a military installation and are required to adhere to all military courtesies and conducts.

V. The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)

The UCMJ, found in Title 10, Subtitle A, Part II, Chapter 47 of the United States Code, is the foundation of military law in the United States. It is was established by the United States Congress in accordance with the authority given by the United States Constitution in Article I, Section 8, which provides that "The Congress shall have Power...To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces." The UCMJ was passed by Congress in 1950, and it became effective in 1951.

The UCMJ applies to all members of the Uniformed Services of the United States: the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy. However, commissioned members of the NOAA and PHS are subject to the UCMJ when attached or detailed to a military unit or are militarized by presidential executive order. The Coast Guard is administered under Title 14 of the United States Code when not operating as part of the U.S. Navy.

The 12 subchapters of the UCMJ outline the definitions, polities, procedures, punishable crimes under the UCMJ, and penalties:

Subchapter	Title	Section	Article
I	General Provisions	§ 801	1
II	Apprehension and Restraint	§ 807	7
III	Non-Judicial Punishment	§ 815	15
IV	Court-Martial Jurisdiction	§ 816	16
V	Composition of Courts-Martial	§ 822	22
VI	Pre-Trial Procedure	§ 830	30
VII	Trial Procedure	§ 836	36

VIII	Sentences	§ 855	55
IX	Post-Trial Procedure and Review of Courts-Martial	§ 859	59
X	Punitive Articles	§ 877	77
XI	Miscellaneous Provisions	§ 935	135
XII	Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces	§ 941	141

The UCMJ can be viewed at the following links: <http://www.ucmj.us/>

VI. Department of Defense

- a. **Army**: The largest and oldest established branch of the U.S. military. If you are on an Army Installation, it is referred to as a Post.

Mission: to fight and win our Nation's wars by providing prompt, sustained land dominance across the full range of military operations and spectrum of conflict in support of combatant commanders.

Core Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage.

Establishment and Population: June 14, 1775/ 675,000 soldiers (active duty and reserve)

Structure: The Army is organized into units because of the large number of soldiers.

Group	Number of Soldiers
Squad	9-10
Platoon	16-44
Company	62-190
Battalion	300-1,000
Brigade	3,000-5,000
Division	10,000-15,000
Corps	20,000-45,000

- b. **Marine Corps**

Mission: To fight and win our Nation's wars by providing prompt, sustained land dominance across the full range of military operations and spectrum of conflict in support of combatant commanders. Motto: Semper Fidelis (Latin for "always faithful").

Core Values: Honor, Courage, Commitment.

Establishment and Population: November 10, 1775/203,000 (active duty), and 40,000 reserve Marines (as of 2010).

Structure: The Marine Corps is organized into four subdivisions: Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), the Operating Forces, the Supporting Establishment, and the Marine Forces Reserve (MARFORRES or USMCR) The Operating Forces are further subdivided into three categories: Marine Corps Forces (MARFOR), Marine Corps Security Forces, and Marine Corps Security Guard.

c. **Navy:** The U.S. Navy is the largest in the world. It operates 287 deployable Battle Force Ships and more than 3,700 operational aircraft.

Mission: To maintain, train and equip combat-read Naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas.

Core Values: Honor, Courage, Commitment.

Establishment and Population: October 13, 1775 is observed as the Navy birthday. (The Navy was disbanded after the War of Independence, and then Congress established the Department of the Navy on April 30, 1798). There are 431,000 personnel (active duty and ready reserve).

Structure: The Department of the Navy comprises two uniformed services, the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps.

Rank and Responsibilities: Below are the various Navy ranks and responsibilities for Enlisted Seaman as well as Warrant officers and Officers.

Enlisted

Grades E-1 to E-9. All enlisted sailors with paygrades E-4 and higher are considered Petty Officers while those at E-7 and higher are named Chief Petty Officers.

Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)

Pay grades range from W-2 to the highest rank of W-5. Navy CWOs are officers whose role is to provide leadership and skills for the most difficult and demanding operations. CWOs are promoted from the senior non-commissioned officer ranks of the enlisted.

Commissioned Officer

Pay grades ranging from O-1 to O-10. Pay grades between O-1 through O-4 are considered junior officers and O-5 and O-6 as senior officers. Officers in the grades of O-7 to O-10 range are called flag officers. Commissioned officers can generally be divided into line officers and staff corps; line officers can be further split into unrestricted and restricted communities. Unrestricted Line Officers are the war fighting command element and are authorized to command ships, aviation squadrons, and special operations units. Restricted Line Officers concentrate on non-combat related fields, such as engineering and maintenance; they are not qualified to command combat units. Staff Corps officers are specialists in fields that are themselves professional careers and not exclusive to the military, for example: medicine, science, law, and civil engineering.

d. Air Force: The USAF is the world's most technologically sophisticated air force. In 2009, the USAF operates 5,573 manned aircraft in service, approximately 180 unmanned combat air vehicles, 2,130 air-launched cruise missiles, and 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Mission: To fly, fight and win...in air, space and cyberspace.

Core Values: 1) Integrity first, 2) Service before self, and 3) Excellence in all we do.

Establishment and Population: September 18, 1947/ about 400,000 Airmen (active duty and reserve)

Structure: The basic elements of the Air Force command are shown in the table below.

Group	Description
Flight	The Flight is the lowest level unit. A Flight usually ranges from a dozen people to over a hundred, or typically four aircraft. The typical flight leader is a Captain. Letter designations can be used, such as Alpha Flight, Bravo Flight, etc.
Squadron	A Squadron is considered to be the basic unit in the USAF. Squadrons are usually made up of several flights (typically four), a few hundred people, and eight to 24 aircraft. A squadron is usually commanded by a Captain to Lieutenant Colonel. Number digits apply; 1 -100, 301 - 999 series for Air Force and Air Force Reserve squadrons (i.e. 10th Fighter Squadron), and 101 - 299 series for Air National Guard (i.e. 188th Fighter Squadron).
Group	Made up of several squadrons and commanded by a Colonel/O-6. There are two general types of groups: Dependent (operations, logistics, support, medical, or large functional unit); and Independent (a group with wing-like functions and responsibilities whose scope and size does not warrant wing-level designation).
Wing	Wings have a distinct mission with a specific scope. Wings are made up of one or more groups, consisting of several squadrons, and usually commanded by a Colonel, but high visibility wings can have Brigadier Generals/O-7s in command.
Numbered Air Force	The Numbered Air Force (NAF) is a tactical echelon directly under an operational MAJCOM that provide operational leadership and supervision. NAFs are structured to perform an operational or warfighting mission, often oriented to a specific geographic region. A NAF is directly assigned operational units, such as wings, groups, and squadrons.
Major Command	A major subdivision of the Air Force, the Major Command (MAJCOM) is directly subordinate to HQ USAF or the Air Staff. MAJCOM headquarters are management headquarters for a major segment of the AF and thus have the full range of functional staff.
Field Operating Agency	The Field Operating Agency (FOA) is a subdivision of the Air Force, directly subordinate to an HQ USAF functional manager. An FOA performs field activities beyond the scope of any of the major commands. The activities are specialized or associated with an Air Force-wide mission, and do not include functions performed in management headquarters, unless specifically directed by a DoD authority.

Direct Reporting Unit	A subdivision of the Air Force, the Direct Reporting Unit (DRU) is subordinate to the Chief of Staff, USAF. A DRU performs a specialized or restricted mission that does not fit into any of the MAJCOMs. A DRU has many of the same administrative and organizational responsibilities as a MAJCOM

e. **Coast Guard:** The U.S. Coast Guard is one of the five armed forces of the United States and the only military organization within the Department of Homeland Security. The Coast Guard protects the maritime economy and the environment, defends our maritime borders, and saves those in peril. Its role includes enforcement of U.S. law, coastal defense, and search and rescue.

During peacetime, the USCG falls under the administration of the United States Department of Homeland Security. During wartime, the USCG may, at the direction of the President, report to the Secretary of the Navy, its resources; however, are integrated into U.S. military operations.

f. **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):** NOAA is an agency that enriches life through science. From daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings and climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal restoration and supporting marine commerce, NOAA’s products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America’s gross domestic product. NOAA’s dedicated scientists use cutting-edge research and high-tech instrumentation to provide citizens, planners, emergency managers and other decision makers with reliable information they need when they need it.

NOAA's roots date back to 1807 when the Nation’s first scientific agency, the Survey of the Coast, was established. Since then, NOAA has evolved to meet the needs of a changing country. NOAA maintains a presence in every state and has emerged as an international leader on scientific and environmental matters.

Uniformed Service Rank Chart

	Department of Health & Human Services				Department of Defense			
	Department of Commerce		Department of Homeland Security		Department of Defense			
	Sea Services				Land Services			
	 U.S. Public Health Service	 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	 Coast Guard	 Navy	 Army	 Air Force	 Marine Corps	
GRADE	01	 Ensign	 Ensign	 Ensign	 Ensign	 Second Lieutenant	 Second Lieutenant	 Second Lieutenant
	02	 Lieutenant (junior grade)	 Lieutenant (junior grade)	 Lieutenant (junior grade)	 Lieutenant (junior grade)	 First Lieutenant	 First Lieutenant	 First Lieutenant
	03	 Lieutenant	 Lieutenant	 Lieutenant	 Lieutenant	 Captain	 Captain	 Captain
	04	 Lieutenant Commander	 Lieutenant Commander	 Lieutenant Commander	 Lieutenant Commander	 Major	 Major	 Major
	05	 Commander	 Commander	 Commander	 Commander	 Lieutenant Colonel	 Lieutenant Colonel	 Lieutenant Colonel
	06	 Captain	 Captain	 Captain	 Captain	 Colonel	 Colonel	 Colonel
	07	 Rear Admiral (lower half)	 Rear Admiral (lower half)	 Rear Admiral (lower half)	 Rear Admiral (lower half)	 Brigadier General	 Brigadier General	 Brigadier General
	08	 Rear Admiral	 Rear Admiral	 Rear Admiral (upper half)	 Rear Admiral (upper half)	 Major General	 Major General	 Major General
	09	 Vice Admiral	 Vice Admiral	 Vice Admiral	 Vice Admiral	 Lieutenant General	 Lieutenant General	 Lieutenant General
	10	 Admiral		 Admiral	 Admiral	 General	 General	 General

VII. Proper Uniform Wear

The U.S. PHS Commissioned Corps is one of the seven uniformed services of the United States (Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, PHS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association-NOAA). At times the rules and regulations of proper uniform wear can be daunting; however, there is guidance for what the uniforms are and how to wear them in the PHS Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual - Electronic Commissioned Corps Issuance System (eCCIS) at: <http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/CCISToc.aspx?ShowTOC=Y>.

The appropriate uniform(s) to be worn for your locality is decided by your local uniform authority. To find out what uniforms are authorized for different times of the year, contact your Agency Liaison at the following website: http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/sgpac.pdf

Uniforms can be purchased via several routes: at your local installation's military clothing store, by calling the Navy Exchange Uniform support center at 800-368-4088, or online at:

Navy Exchange: <https://www.navy-nex.com>

Lighthouse: <http://www.lighthouseuniform.com/>

Marlow White: <http://www.marlowwhite.com/public-health-service-uniforms.html>

You can purchase uniform devices, replacement award devices, and other officer uniform accessories online through the Public Health Service Officers Device Supply Center at:

http://bphc.hrsa.gov/nhdp/PHS_Officers_Device_Supply_Center_Main_Page.htm.

If you are in the National Capital area, you may call the uniform store at the Navy Exchange in Bethesda, MD at 301-295-1489 or via email: nexbethesda-unc@nexweb.org with ordering questions.

You are authorized a one-time uniform allowance of \$250. To receive this allowance, you need to complete and mail the uniform allowance memorandum, which can be downloaded at:

http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/uniform_allowance.pdf. You will see a uniform credit on your pay stub once the memo has been processed.

Upon assignment to any unit within the Department of Defense, you are authorized to wear the U.S. Flag patch on the Battle Dress Uniform (BDU). It should be worn over the right shoulder of the BDU utility coat and field jacket centered horizontally on your right sleeve, ½-inch below the shoulder seam.

To learn more about uniform requirements visit: <http://dcp.psc.gov/CCMIS/COTA/documents.aspx>.

VIII. Uniformed Service Courtesies: The Salute

Uniformed service courtesy is an extension of the civilian courtesy system. The courtesies are based on societal principles and imply politeness and considerate behavior. The courtesies may be even more strictly followed on DoD installations identified as training bases, than on those bases with other primary missions.

The Salute

The most basic act of military courtesy used at a meeting of two military persons is the salute. The salute is an exchange of greetings between military and/or uniformed service personnel.

Salute Form

Proper salute form is performed by raising the right hand until the tip of the forefinger touches the lower part of the forehead, thumb and fingers extended and joined, palm to the left, upper arm horizontal, forearm inclined at 45 degrees, hand and wrist straight while turning the head toward the person being saluted. To complete the salute, drop the arm to its normal position, by the side in one motion, while turning the head and eyes to the front.

Salute Timing

Salutes are usually rendered between 6 and 30 paces while walking under cover (wearing your headgear); however, saluting is more effective between 6 and 10 paces. If running, you should slow down to a walk prior to saluting. If standing you should face the senior officer, come to attention, and then render the salute. Salutes should be rendered when officers meet and just prior to departure if a conversation is held. It is the junior officer's responsibility to initiate the salutes prior to departure. Salutes should be rendered and returned to all members of uniformed services. Some services salute in uncovered situations, the proper response is to greet the service member saluting you with "Good Morning, Sir/Ma'am" "Good Afternoon, Sir/Ma'am" or "Good Evening, Sir/Ma'am" depending on the time of day. When approaching a group of officers of different ranks, the salute should be directed toward the senior officer. Likewise, if a senior officer approaches a group of officers, the officers should all stop what they are doing and render a proper salute to the senior officer.

Salute Protocol

- Enlisted personnel salute officers.
- Junior officers salute senior officers when meeting or passing.
- When several officers are being saluted, all shall return the salute.
- When overtaking a senior officer (passing), salute when abreast, while saying "By your leave, sir or ma'am." The senior officer should return your salute and say, "carry-on," "very well," or "permission granted." You may then drop the salute and proceed.

Salute and Greeting

A salute should be accompanied with a greeting such as "Good Morning Sir or Ma'am." Officers below the rank of Commander (CDR 0-5) may be addressed as "Mister" or "Miss," while officers at or above the rank of CDR are usually addressed by their rank – "Good Evening CDR Smith." You can never go wrong using "Sir" or "Ma'am," but it is a nice touch to properly address a senior officer.

Salute and "Honors," Playing of National or PHS Anthem When an officer is covered during "Honors," he/she salutes. When an officer is not covered during "Honors," he/she is to stand at attention facing the American flag for the playing of the National Anthem or facing the PHS flag for the playing of the PHS Anthem.

Do NOT Salute:

- When uncovered (not wearing your "cover" /hat); indoors
- When carrying articles in both hands

- When in public conveyances or when obviously inappropriate
- When in public places and where inappropriate (theaters, hotels, restaurants, etc.)

Posting of Colors

Uncovered officers, not in uniform, should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over their heart. Officers in uniform should never place their hand over their heart. Officers in uniform and covered (wearing hat) should salute; officers in uniform and uncovered (not wearing hat) should stand at attention.

Pledge of Allegiance

Officers in uniform uncovered (not wearing hat) should face the flag, stand at attention, and recite the pledge.

Covered vs. Uncovered

You can never go wrong if you are outdoors and wearing your cover (headgear). Outdoors includes covered walks, theater marquees and overhangs that extend over the sidewalk. Officers should be uncovered (not wearing headgear) when indoors.

Riding in a Car

The place of honor is always on the right, so the senior officer should sit on the right (curbside). This also holds true when walking with a senior officer. It is the junior officer's responsibility to line up on the correct side of the senior officer. When entering a vehicle, the junior officer should enter first and the senior officer last, so the senior officer will be in position to exit the vehicle first followed by the next in rank and so on.

Man or Woman First

If a male officer is with a female officer, the woman goes first except when (1) assistance is needed, (2) there is no one to escort the female officer to the appropriate seat in a public area, (3) there is a large crowd where the man will clear the way, (4) at official military occasions when rank takes precedence over gender.

Standing

When seated and uncovered, a junior officer should stand and come to attention when approached by a senior officer. At this point, the senior officer should say "At ease," "Carry on," or "Be seated." All junior officers should stand immediately when a flag rank officer enters the room. The flag rank officer should then give one of the above commands.

Meals

During meals, junior officers should begin eating only after the highest ranking officer begins to eat. The highest-ranking officer at a table should begin eating after the highest-ranking officer in the room begins his/her meal, then other officers at the table may begin. It is the junior officer's responsibility to perform this act of courtesy; however, the senior officers should also be aware others are waiting for their lead.

IX. Uniformed Service Identification (ID) Card or Common Access Card (CAC)

The ID card is your CAC. It may be obtained by accessing the Uniformed Service ID Card Appointment

Last Updated: August 23, 2012

Scheduler. Use the Appointment Scheduler in concert with the RAPIDS Site Locator to locate an ID card office in your area and to schedule an appointment. Please note that appointments are required at the PHS Rockville ID Card Office.

Appointment Scheduler – <http://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil>

RAPIDS Site Locator – <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil>

You must be enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), which can take several weeks up to a month or two to be processed, and you must have a copy of your orders to be able to get an ID card. It is also imperative that you register your dependents in the DEERS system as well. This will aid in the smooth transition for the provision of your dependents' health care needs. Dependents are also required to be registered in DEERS in order to obtain a dependent ID card.

For questions regarding ID cards for you or your dependents, contact the PHS DEERS Project Office at (240)453-6131. You will need to complete a DD Form 1172, Application for Uniformed Services Identification Card DEERS Enrollment, which may be downloaded at:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/efoms/dd1172-2.pdf>

X. Access to Military Installations

At most military installations, you will need to register your vehicle with the installation at the time of your first visit. To register your vehicle, you will need a copy of your orders, a valid driver's license, vehicle registration, proof of insurance, and your Uniformed Service ID card. You will receive a vehicle decal, which you will need to attach to your vehicle (per the installation's instructions) in order to freely access the military installation or base thereafter.

If you choose not to register your vehicle, you may obtain a visitor's pass each time you require access to the installation. However, after September 11, 2001, security at all Department of Defense (DoD) installations was modified to require a 100% ID check for all drivers accessing the installation gates, even if a decal is on the vehicle.

According to Air Force officials, the use of vehicle decals is redundant because ID card checks are more effective in verifying the authority of a driver to enter the base. Thus, most if not all Air Force bases no longer issue vehicle decals and the DoD or Uniformed Service ID card will be the primary proof of authorization to enter Air Force installations. Gate sentries will use, but are not limited to, driver's license, insurance and vehicle registration for ID verification.

XI. Training Readiness and Deployments

You must meet readiness standards as defined by the Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness.

Current Commissioned Corps Readiness Standards – Information on Readiness Standards can be found on the Commissioned Corps Management Information System (CCMIS) website at:

http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/Man_circ_377.pdf, which was later extended:

http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/documents/PPM07_001.pdf.

Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness (DCCPR) – The readiness website may be accessed at <http://ccrf.hhs.gov/ccrf>. There are a number of excellent training courses at the following website: <http://oep.osophs.dhhs.gov/ccrf/training.htm> (many free to the officer and his/her agency). It is highly encouraged that you continue to acquire new knowledge that will make you even more valuable to the Corps.

XII. Other Benefits

Servicemember’s Group Life Insurance (SGLI) – This is a program of low cost group life insurance for service members on active duty, ready reservists, members of the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Public Health Service, cadets and midshipmen of the four service academies, and members of the Reserve Officer Training Corps. Service members with SGLI coverage have two options available to them upon release from service. They can convert their full-time SGLI coverage to term insurance under the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program or convert to a permanent plan of insurance with one of the participating commercial insurance companies. For more information, please visit: <http://www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/SGLI/SGLI.htm>.

Navy Mutual Aid Association’s (NMAA) Career Assistance Loan and Insurance Program – New officers coming into the uniformed services are eligible to receive a one-time “career assistance loan” during the first 6 months of commission. The loan is \$5,000 and is paid back at a 1% interest rate. Generally, a loan is paid back over 2.5 years, which means a service member pays only about \$103 in interest (GREAT deal!). The loan is intended to help new officers get settled in their new job by providing money for personal expenses that may arise shortly after commissioning. It is directly withdrawn out of the service member’s paycheck.

To receive the loan, you must also purchase life insurance through the NMAA. This is a competitive and lower cost option than the SGLI. For example, this year, the SGLI lowered its rates to become competitive with the NMAA’s rates. The NMAA responded by cutting their low rates even lower. Also, it is important to remember that the SGLI benefits end when an officer separates from service. That is not the case with NMAA.

Note: You can carry both SGLI and NMAA policies.

The NMAA also allows riders for spouses and children that are competitively priced. For information concerning the NMAA's Career Assistance Loan Program for newly commissioned officers, request an application packet at cap@navymutual.org.

You can compare the two life insurances at: <http://www.navymutual.org/Military-Benefits/> and review the SGLI plan by visiting: <http://dcp.psc.gov>, click on “Payroll Issues” then “SGLI Family Coverage Information”. New officers have to make this decision while filling out the initial paperwork, so decide fast!!

Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Civil Relief Act (SSCRA) – In 1940, Congress passed the SSCRA to provide protections for uniformed service members. The PHS has been covered by the SSCRA since 22 April 1976. The Service member's Civil Relief Act (SCRA), which was signed into law by President Bush on 19 December 2003, expanded and improved the SSCRA. Some key provisions of the Act are listed in this section. If you are on active duty, the SCRA guarantees that your state residency will not change just because of your PHS orders, regardless of your decision to register a car, obtain a driver’s license or buy a house in the state of your new duty station. This means that you will continue to pay state taxes ONLY to your home state, UNLESS you

change state residency voluntarily. The primary means of changing state residency voluntarily are by voting in a new state or changing tax withholding to a new state.

- **Home of Record vs. Legal Residence** – In the PHS, there is a difference between the terms "Home of Record," and "Legal Residence." A service member's "Home of Record" and "Legal Residence" may or may not be the same address. One's "Home of Record" is the place an officer was living when they entered the Uniformed Service. The "Home of Record" is used to determine travel entitlements when one separates from service. It has nothing to do with voting or paying taxes, registering vehicles, nor any of the other privileges of state residency. The "Home of Record" can only be changed if there is a break in service of more than one day, or to correct an error. "Legal Residence" (or domicile), on the other hand, refers to the place where a service member intends to return to and live after discharge or retirement, and which they consider their permanent home. "Legal Residence" determines what local (state) tax laws a service member is subject to, and in which local (city, county, state) elections they may vote in.

Because Uniformed Service members may have legal residence in one state, but be stationed in a different state, the SCRA allows service members to pay taxes, register vehicles, vote, etc., in their "state of legal residence," rather than the state they are stationed in. This can sometimes result in a tax advantage because some states exempt uniformed service pay from state taxes. Please be aware that some states may exempt military pay, but not uniformed service pay, from state taxes, (e.g., Michigan), and some states do not have a state income tax (Florida and Tennessee for example). That does not mean a service member may select their legal residence based on whether the state has income taxes and therefore avoid paying state taxes. You may need to file an affidavit in your new state to avoid state tax or yearly personal property tax. The SCRA does not protect you against paying local real estate taxes or state income taxes on non-military income (e.g., a second job). It also does not protect your spouse who will be subject to all the normal state residency and tax rules.

The Uniformed Service is required by regulation to ensure that Service members are not selecting their legal residence for the sole purpose of obtaining a tax advantage. Therefore, when selecting a legal residence, officials at the Compensation Branch may require some degree of proof that the officer considers the selected state to be their permanent home. This proof can come in the form of being registered to vote in the state, by having cars titled and registered in the state, by having a valid driver's license in the state, or by preparing a new last will and testament that indicates the state of legal residence.

- **Automobile Ad Valorem Taxes** – It is wonderful to be able to keep the benefits of home. Each year, when your tag is renewed on your car, you can use the Service member's Civil Relief Act (SCRA) to protect you from paying ad valorem taxes in your duty station state, but only if it is not your home of legal residence.

- **6% Interest Rate Protection** – The SCRA allows you to request that the interest rate you pay on a debt incurred before you joined the Uniformed Service be reduced to 6% annually. To be eligible for the 6% cap, you must have incurred the debt before joining the service and your ability to pay must have been materially affected by Uniformed Service. "Material effect" is a vague term that is often interpreted to involve mobilization for war or an extended deployment overseas. However, since the burden is on the creditor to prove a lack of "material effect", many creditors will grant the cap as a courtesy if properly requested.

It is up to the service member to request the 6% cap. Below is a sample letter to use in writing your creditor. You should include a copy of your PHS orders and may be asked to include financial information in your request. If a creditor refuses to lower the interest rate on a qualified pre-service debt, you should see a Legal Assistance Attorney at the Naval Legal Service Office (NLSO) on base. This protection does not apply to government-backed college loans or to any debt acquired after joining the Uniformed Service.

Sample 6% Request Letter

Date _____
(Your name & address)
(Company's name & address)
Dear _____,

This is a letter requesting a reduction of the interest rate on my (account name & number), under the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act (SSCRA) (50 U.S.C. App. 526). As an active duty member of the Uniformed Service, I am entitled to the maximum interest rate protection of 6% per annum on pre-service debt obligation. This interest rate protection applies during peacetime as well as time of war. There is no requirement of overseas service and the difference between the old rate and the 6% maximum is forgiven. Attached you will find a copy of my enlistment contract and/or orders to active duty.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

LTJG John Doe

Read more about the SSCRA and the SCRA at:

<http://www.military.com/benefits/legal-matters/scra/overview>
http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/Relief_Act_Revision/
<http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,31042,00.html>

If you have any questions and/or need further clarification concerning the SCRA, you can call or visit the legal assistance office of any military installation.

United Services Automobile Association (USAA) – The USAA is a financial institution created specifically to serve Uniformed Service members and their families. They have competitive rates for car insurance, homeowner's and renter's insurance, and mortgage loans. You may also invest through the USAA and open 'no-cost' checking and savings accounts through them. An attractive loan option for many junior officers (especially first-time buyers) is the VA loan, which is a type of mortgage option through the USAA (exclusive to uniformed service officers and their families). There is no private mortgage insurance (PMI), no required down payment (for loans < \$240,000), and has lower closing costs than some mortgage plans (however, the loan amount is limited to under \$300,000). You have to become a member first to access their website, purchase insurance, acquire a home loan, or open a bank account.

Contact information for one of the USAA's many services include:

Banking services (investing, checking, and savings), insurance, and mortgage Services. Please visit: www.usaa.com or call 1-800-531-8722 for more information.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) – The Thrift Savings Plan is a tax-deferred savings plan, meaning it is taken from your salary before it is taxed (which lowers your taxable income) and you pay taxes when you eventually draw the money. There is a TSP for civilian as well as Uniformed Service officers, but the plans are very different.

The civilian account is more like a 401K, where a percentage of contributions are matched by the employing agency. In the Uniformed Services account, the contributions are not matched but they are tax deferred. This is not the sole retirement option for officers. The Uniformed Services also have the military retirement plan, but it provides a method of adding to the 'nest egg' that a person builds over their career. Also, you can borrow from your TSP account under certain conditions. To find out more about how to sign up and to get more information, visit the TSP website at: <http://www.tsp.gov/>.

Tax Benefits – For more information see the Service member's Civil Relief Act (SCRA) at: <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,31042,00.html>.

XIII. Military Benefits

There are many military benefits available to PHS Commissioned Corps officers. A brief listing of some of the more common benefits are listed below. Details of the benefits are available at the following website: <http://www.usphs.gov/AboutUs/>.

The Base and Post Exchanges (BX/PX) – A valid identification card is required to purchase merchandise and may be required for entry when not in uniform. There are several types of stores in this system, including Main Exchanges (similar to department stores), auto services, uniform shops, and miscellaneous stores including tailor/laundry, optical, flower, and fast food. You may also access the exchanges online at the following websites: <https://www.navy-nex.com>, www.aafes.com, or www.cg-exchange.com.

Commissary – Commissaries are the supermarkets at military installations. At many commissaries, a valid ID card is required for entry. Both active duty officers and their dependents may shop at the commissary. Typically, commissaries are crowded on military paydays, the 1st and 15th of every month, and weekends. In this system, baggers work for tips only. For more information visit: <http://www.commissaries.com>.

Health/Medical Care – Medical care is one of the most important benefits that PHS officers and their dependents will use during their careers. When using a Uniformed Services Military Treatment Facility (USMTF), it is expected that the officer be in uniform. If you are stationed close to a military hospital/clinic, you are required to use that facility. The Medical Affairs Branch (MAB) may authorize to pay for civilian medical services if an officer is not near a USMTF or if the USMTF does not provide the services needed. You may contact the MAB directly for further information on Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM EST at 1-800-368-2777, select option #2. You may also contact one of TRICARE Service Centers (TSC).

The TSCs are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You must contact the TSC within the region in which you are located. The regions are as follows:

North Region (1-877-874-2273)
South Region (1-800-444-5445)
West Region (1-888-874-9378)

TRICARE – The military health system is the primary source of health care for active duty PHS officers. There are different TRICARE options for active-duty dependents, retirees, and their eligible family members. More information may be obtained at: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>.

Dental Care – Dental care is one of the benefits that are available to PHS officers and their dependents. Active

duty officers may enroll through the PHS. Dependents may enroll through the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP). The TDP is administered by MetLife while active duty dental program is covered under United Concordia. For more information on dependent eligibility and enrollment, contact MetLife at 1-855-638-8371 or on the web at: http://www.tricare.mil/dental/TDP_Eligibility.cfm and for officers' coverage contact United Concordia at 1-877-261-2379 or <http://www.ucci.com/tuctcc/clients.jsp?id=90>.

Service Clubs – The most frequently used club at military installations is the Officers' Club. You are also eligible to visit United Service Organization (USO) locations. USO is a charitable corporation providing morale, welfare, and recreation services to uniformed military personnel. Many have "officer clubs" in airports that provide free services to officers on work related or personal travel see: <http://www.uso.org>.

Air Mobility Command (AMC) Flights – PHS officers may travel on military flights on a space available (Space-A) basis through the AMC flights. These flights are typically extremely inexpensive (\$15-30 each way, both domestically and abroad), and usually fly in and out of military installations. Officers must be on official leave to be eligible for a space on the flight. Information on Space-A travel can be found online or at commissaries/uniform stores on base. For more information, visit: <http://www.baseops.net/spaceatravel/>.

Lodging Facilities – Almost all military installations have some form of temporary lodging on base, which is available as space allows and is extremely inexpensive. Bachelor Officers' Quarters (BOQ) and Visiting Officers' Quarters (VOQ) vary widely, ranging from simple rooms with a shared bathroom to multi-room suites. Temporary military lodging (TML) quarters are designed for the military family. These facilities may be located by contacting the following:

Air Force: 1-888-AFLODGE (1-888-235-6343)

Army: 1-800-GO-ARMY-1 (1-800-462-7691)

Marine Corps: (703) 695-9767

Navy: 1-800-NAVY-INN (628-9466), 1-877-NAVY-BED (628-9233)

Coast Guard: <http://www.uscg.mil/mwr/lodging/Lodging.asp>.

Many hotels, car rental companies, and airlines offer discounted rates to members of the Uniformed Services and their families while traveling with or without orders and are often referred to as the current "Military" or "Government" rates.

Armed Forces Vacation Club (AFVC) – AFVC is a "Space Available" program that offers excess condominium timeshares at resorts around the world for only \$349.00 per unit, per week. All Uniformed Services members and their adult dependents are eligible to use this program. For more information visit their website at: <http://www.afvclub.com/>.

Armed Forces Recreation Centers (AFRC) – AFRC resorts are affordable Joint Service facilities operated by the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center. These resorts are located at ideal vacation destinations throughout the world, such as Hawaii, Disney World, and Bavarian Alps in Germany. AFRCs offer a full range of resort hotel opportunities for service members and their families. Due to the high demand, reservations should be made well in advance. For more information visit: <http://www.armymwr.com/travel/recreationcenters/>.

Recreational Facilities – Most military installations have a variety of recreational facilities available. These include theaters, swimming pools, bowling lanes, sports equipment rentals, youth centers, and information/ticket offices. Several installations also have wilderness camps, waterfront sites, and other

vacation-type sites. Check your closest base's website for details. Reduced-price tickets may be obtained at most military installations through the Moral, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) office for local attractions, movies and many well-known theme parks at: <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/l/mwr/resources> .

Legal Services Benefits – PHS officers are entitled to certain legal benefits like the creation of “Simple Wills” and “Powers of Attorney.” These services are provided by the legal staff of the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) office, which is located on most military installations.

Assignment Move Information

Are you getting ready to move? When accepting your first assignment or when accepting a new assignment later, you may have a geographic permanent change of station (PCS) move. There are many great resources to help you get moved and settled in. PCS America is a relocation network guide of military installations all over the world for the active as well as the reserve community. The website address is: <http://www.pcsamerica.net> and is a great resource guide for transitioning to a new area with such helpful tips as lodging, schools and even weather. Another resource that provides worldwide service is a commercial realtor such as RE/MAX and Weichert Realtors'. You can go to their website at: <http://www.remax.com>, for more information. If you are moving to the Washington, DC Metropolitan area, the main housing assistance office is 1-800-210-0139.

Your agency may be paying for your move, and so you may collaborate with them to ship your household goods to your new duty station. For information concerning the shipment of household goods, contact your Agency Liaison. You will need to download and complete form PHS-4013-1, which can be found at: http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/4013_1.pdf. Be sure to check with your duty organization to determine if relocation expenses will be paid.

XIV. Mentoring Networks

The Commissioned Corps mentoring networks are designed to facilitate the transition of recently Call to Active Duty (CAD) officers into the PHS and to promote the long-term career development of PHS officers. The program is open to all qualified Commissioned Corps Officers appointed to a Category and all new CAD officers will be assigned a mentor. Mentoring is an active partnership between an experienced member of your Category and a less experienced member to foster professional growth and career development. The mentor's knowledge and insight gained over years of experience serves as a valuable tool to facilitate the effective and efficient growth of the mentee. The mentor serves as an initial contact person from whom information about the Commissioned Corps and the PHS may be readily obtained. To ensure potential mentors are able to optimally relate to the mentee, an effort will be made to pair up a mentor who has current or past experience in the Operating Division (OPDIV) and/or geographic location to which the mentee is assigned. Please visit your individual category websites for details.

DoD/PHS Mentoring Program

The DoD/TMA – PHS mentoring program is a communication network for the mentor (a more senior officer) to provide guidance to the mentee (a more junior officer) on career and professional development. This structured mentoring program aims to assist the mentee in developing to their full potential at DoD/TMA.

If interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, please contact the program coordinator:

Capt. Nita Sood

Email: Nita.Sood@tma.osd.mil

XV. Professional Advisory Committees

Staying involved with the PHS while you are assigned to DoD can be challenging. We are serving to support the DoD mission while working to keep ties to PHS. Staying involved in your category Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) is a great way to keep in touch with issues that concern your profession. The categories are as follows: Physician, dentist, nurse, engineer, scientist (health related), sanitarian/environmental health, veterinarian, pharmacist, dietician, therapist (physical, occupational, respiratory, speech pathology and/or audiology, and health services (includes 58 professional disciplines).

List of the Professional Advisory Committees can be found here:

<http://ccmis.usphs.gov/CCMIS/Linksofinterest.aspx#pac>

There is also several Professional Advisory Groups that officers could get involve with including junior officers.

XVI. DoD Senior Advisors and Commissioned Corps Liaison Officers

RADM Thomas J. McGinnis (Senior Advisor)

Chief, Pharmaceutical Operations Directorate
TRICARE Management Activity
Office Phone: (703) 681-2890

CAPT D.W. Chen SG Rep

Director, Civil-Military Medicine,
Force Health Protection & Readiness Programs,
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs,
Office Phone: (703) 681-8227

CAPT Nita Sood SG Rep Alternate

Chief of Staff, Pharmaceutical Operations Directorate
TRICARE Management Activity
Office Phone: (703) 681-2890

CDR Berry F. Williams

Commissioned Corps Liaison Officer
DoD/TMA (TRICARE Management Activity)
Office Phone: (703) 681-9537

CDR Sophia Russell

Commissioned Corps Liaison Officer
DoD/TMA (TRICARE Management Activity)
Office Phone: (703) 681-9534

LCDR John Welch

Commissioned Corps Liaison Officer
DoD/TMA (TRICARE Management Activity)
Office Phone: 703-681-3910

The Commissioned Corps Liaison officers handle all PHS Officer administrative actions (e.g. PHS-1662s for calls to duty & transfers, Awards [both PHS & DoD], and OFRD Readiness Issues, PHS-Billets changes/upgrades, OBC scheduling (Basic/Provisional/Intermediate/Advanced), Special Pay Forms Processing/Contract Renewals etc.

XVII. Contacts and Listservs

We encourage you to sign up for the PHS-DoD listserv: [click here to subscribe to the PHS-DoD Listserv](#) to ensure you are keeping up to date.

XVIII. Commissioned Corps Resource Directory

Awards

COER

Directory at DCCPR

Direct Access tutorial

Official forms

Pay

Policies

Promotion

Readiness

USPHS Training office