

Be a Veterinary Officer

in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps



➤ About the Commissioned Corps

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps protects, promotes, and advances the health and safety of the Nation. With more than 6,000 officers, the Commissioned Corps is one of the Nation's seven uniformed services and resides in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As the world's foremost public health service, it is composed entirely of officers who have been commissioned on the basis of their health-related training.

Commissioned officers deliver ongoing health promotion and disease prevention programs and are called on to provide onsite clinical and public health expertise in times of national emergencies and disasters. A career in the Commissioned Corps offers unlimited opportunities to serve your country while improving the quality of people's lives and making a real difference in public health.

➤ What It Means To Be a Veterinary Officer in the Commissioned Corps

Veterinary officers in the Commissioned Corps work throughout the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and in other Federal agencies. Most veterinary officers are assigned to the following:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Agriculture
- Food and Drug Administration
- National Institutes of Health

Veterinary officers also work at:

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Office of Global Health Affairs

Some agencies have opportunities for international assignments.

Veterinary officers in the Corps:

- Carry out cutting-edge biomedical research to improve human health
- Test and regulate the safety and effectiveness of veterinary medical drugs and devices
- Ensure that meat and poultry products are safe and healthy through carefully monitored inspection programs
- Quarantine and inspect animals brought into the country to prevent the introduction of new diseases
- Manage programs to eradicate and control the spread of diseases that pose threats to animal and human health
- Monitor the development and testing of new vaccines to ensure their safety and effectiveness
- Enforce laws for the humane treatment of animals
- Develop and enforce standards for laboratory and clinical studies
- Help to ensure the safety of food processing plants, restaurants, and water supplies
- Study the health effects of pesticides, industrial pollutants, and other contaminants on animals and people

The work of veterinary officers in the Commissioned Corps goes beyond the routine of a traditional private practice. Being a veterinarian in the Corps is different for everyone. Many apply their clinical skills to prevent disease and respond to disease outbreaks among animal and human populations, and to provide state-of-the-art care and use of laboratory animals. Some work with world-class researchers and technicians to conduct cutting-edge medical research. Others serve in more general public health roles such as administration, planning, and coordination and are responsible for facilities with large staffs and multimillion-dollar budgets.

Veterinary officers have the opportunity to advance their careers while performing much-needed public health services to underserved communities. Consistent with the One Medicine Concept, the focus is on improving the health of both animals and people.

➤ Pay

Starting base pay and potential bonuses vary depending on the number of years of training and experience, specialty training received, credentials and certifications, geographic location of duty station, and number of dependents, if any. Base pay increases with promotions and years of service. Tax-free compensation is provided for housing and meals. More information about how compensation in the Corps compares to pay in the private sector is available at www.usphs.gov.

➤ Benefits

As an officer in the Commissioned Corps, you will enjoy a camaraderie and sense of common purpose unlike anything you will experience in the private sector, and Commissioned Corps benefits are generous. They include:

- Health care and dental care at no cost
- Thirty days of paid vacation per year
- Paid sick leave
- Paid maternity leave
- Malpractice insurance coverage
- A retirement plan with benefits eligibility beginning after 20 years of service

Many additional benefits are listed at www.usphs.gov. Officers in the Commissioned Corps have opportunities for mobility among government agencies and career advancement in diverse work settings. The Corps encourages you to expand your knowledge base and grow professionally so that you can effectively deal with the challenges of improving public health. Tuition and long-term training opportunities may be available.

Special Degree and License Requirements

All Commissioned Corps officers must meet several basic qualifications: You must be a U.S. citizen, be less than 44 years of age, and pass a physical examination. To be a veterinary officer, you also need a:

- D.V.M. degree from a program that is accredited by the Council of Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association
- Current, unrestricted, and valid veterinary license in any of the 50 States; Washington, DC; the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; the U.S. Virgin Islands; or Guam (recent graduates are an exception)

If you just graduated from veterinary school and do not yet have a license, you may still apply to the Commissioned Corps, and you may be appointed for a limited tour of duty while you pursue your license.

➤ Join America's Public Health Team

If you are interested in joining the fight for public health, or if you have questions about what we do and how you can make a difference with the Commissioned Corps, we would like to talk to you. For more information, call us at 800-279-1605 or visit our Web site at www.usphs.gov.

