

## **Opportunities for U.S. Public Health Service Pharmacists in the U.S. Coast Guard**

Most of our clinics are small, one-pharmacist ambulatory care settings. In addition to the clinics in which we are assigned, pharmacists are responsible for additional “collateral duty” units to oversee, guide and train the independent duty corpsmen that are assigned to these units. Our pharmacy patients consist of active duty members and reservists, retirees and dependents of the Coast Guard or other military services.

Each clinic undergoes an accreditation survey utilizing the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). A few of our pharmacy officers are tasked with coordinating the quality improvement focus groups within their clinics. In addition to managing pharmacies at our clinics, our senior pharmacy officers may be assigned the responsibility of Senior Health Services Officer, and as such would be responsible for a medical unit, including the supervision of medical, dental officers and associated staff members. Our pharmacy officers may have the opportunity to attend training courses such as the Joint Forces Pharmacy Services, Homeland Securities Medical Executives, Senior Leadership, Joint Operations Medical Management and Medical Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties courses. We have the highest retention rate of pharmacy of all the uniformed services and welcome pharmacists who would like to transfer from other PHS agencies or uniformed services. For more information on the U.S. Coast Guard Pharmacy Program you may utilize the following website: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/cg112/cg1122/pharmacy.asp>

Our clinics provide operational medical and dental readiness to over 41,000 active duty enlisted and officers of the United States Coast Guard as well as members of other branches of the uniformed services. On an average Coast Guard Day, the United States Coast Guard saves 15 lives, assists 114 people in distress, conducts 82 search and rescues, 23 waterfront facility safety inspections, 202 law enforcement boardings, services 40 aids to navigation, interdicts 26 illegal migrants at sea, protects \$4.9 million in property, seizes \$12.4 million worth of illegal drugs, and provides 4 cutters in support of Theatre Security Operations. The missions of the United States Coast Guard include national defense expeditionary, homeland security, maritime safety/maritime security, protection of natural resources and maritime mobility in addition to our contingency medical support. Historically, the Coast Guard functions under the Navy in times of war. Since March 1, 2003, the Coast Guard became part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

We have 15 pharmacists in our organization, which consists of 13 Field and 2 Administrative positions. We provide support to over 150 sites, which include ashore and afloat clinics and sickbays. Our units are located mainly along the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific Coasts, including Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

## LOCATION OF COAST GUARD CLINICS

**Key:**  
 TRACEN - Training Center  
 ATC - Aviation Training Center



### Coast Guard Pharmacist Sites

ATLANTIC COAST	PACIFIC COAST
Cape Cod, MA	Alameda, CA
Cape May, NJ	Petaluma, CA
Clearwater, FL	Seattle, WA
Elizabeth City, NC	Kodiak, AK
Miami, FL	
Mobile, AL	
New London, CT	
Washington, DC (1)	
Norfolk, VA	

If you are interested in joining our program, you must first be commissioned by the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). Information about commissioning and the application process can be obtained by calling the USPHS at (800) 279-1605 or by visiting their web site at: <http://www.usphs.gov>.

To read about the appointment process including the tabulation of your training and education date which will determine what rank at which you will be commissioned, go to: [http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF\\_docs/ccpmtransmittal663\\_2.pdf](http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/ccpmtransmittal663_2.pdf)

**Training and Experience Date (T&E):** The T&E date calculation varies by profession. In general, 4 years credit is given for baccalaureate level degree, regardless of how long it took to obtain the degree and then additional credit is given for the pharmacy degree.

The number of years of T&E credit required for each rank is as follows:

Rank	Temporary	Permanent
O-2 Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTjg)	4 years	7 years
O-3 Lieutenant (LT)	8 years	10 years
O-4* Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)	12 years	17 years
O-5* Commander (CDR)	17 years	24 years
O-6* Captain (CAPT)	24 years	25 years

\* These three ranks are restricted grades – new officers cannot be given this rank unless they have enough credit to earn a permanent O-4 (the full 17 years are required).

To get an idea of what your starting salary will be, go to Military Pay Rates: <http://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/payentitlements/military-pay-charts.html> Your military pay will include the following:

- **Basic Pay:** The years of service reflects the years of active duty service in the military and uniformed services
- **Basic Allowance Housing (BAH):** This varies based on the area of your duty station and whether you are single or married and have children
- **Special Pay for Pharmacy Officers:**
  - ***Variable Special Pay (VSP):*** All pharmacy officers receive this benefit and it is \$15,000 per year, divided equally in monthly installments.
  - ***Board Certification:*** PHS officers who have successfully completed examination in a pharmacy specialty administered by the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties are eligible for this additional annual pay of between \$2000-\$5000, divided equally in monthly installments, based on years of creditable service. (Note: Board Certification in Ambulatory Care is not yet approved for this Board Certification Pay)

For assistance with your USPHS application please contact CAPT Wade McConnell at 202-475-5186 or [Wade.B.McConnell@uscg.mil](mailto:Wade.B.McConnell@uscg.mil). For additional information on the Coast Guard pharmacy program please contact:

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