



# U.S. Public Health Service

## THERAPISTS LEADING THE WAY



### Who We Are

Housed under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and led by the Assistant Secretary for Health and Human Services and U.S. Surgeon General, the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps is one of the eight uniformed services - and the only service dedicated solely to protecting, promoting and advancing the health and safety of our nation. The USPHS Commissioned Corps is comprised of an elite group of more than 5,800 full-time, highly qualified officers who are dedicated to serving as America's Health Responders.

### What We Do

#### **Provide essential health services.**

The USPHS Commissioned Corps provides an opportunity for dedicated health care and public health professionals to work in diverse assignments and to serve in underserved and vulnerable communities.

#### **Serve on the front-line of public health emergencies.**

As America's Health Responders, Public Health Service officers respond quickly to natural disasters, disease outbreaks and global public health emergencies.

#### **Lead public health programs and policy development.**

Public Health Service officers utilize their experience, skills, and networks to provide leadership within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and throughout the federal government.

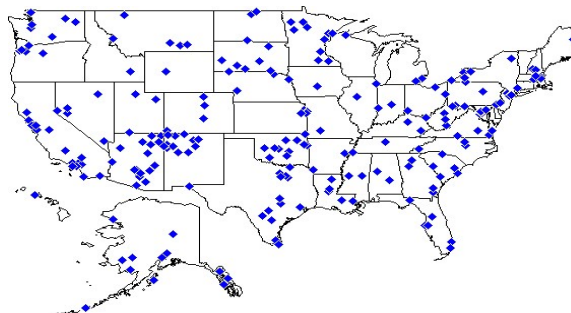
#### **Advance innovation and science.**

Public Health Service officers work on the front lines of the most challenging battles of our times including COVID-19, Ebola, the opioid epidemic, Zika, substance abuse and cancer.

### Where We Serve

U.S. Public Health Service officers serve in locations throughout the United States in various agencies including:

- Indian Health Service (IHS)
- Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Health Service Corps (ICE Health Service Corps)



### Therapist Chief Professional Officer

CAPT Jeff Richardson was selected as the 13th Chief Therapist Officer of the U.S. Public Health Service on March 1, 2020. He provides leadership and direction for the Therapist Category. CAPT Richardson collaborates with the Office of the Surgeon General on strategic priorities and initiatives to protect, to promote and to advance the health and safety of our nation.

# U.S. Public Health Service

## U.S. Public Health Service Officer Benefits

### Healthcare

- Officers and their families receive medical and dental care at little or no cost through TRICARE.

### Tax-free housing and meal allowances

- Officers receive a Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to cover their rent or mortgage. The BAH is calculated by each officer's rank/grade, duty station location and dependent status.
- Officers receive a Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) to offset costs for meals.

### Career advancement and pay increases with years of service

- Officers are encouraged to grow professionally within their agencies, with pay increases based on promotions and years of service.

### Retirement/pension plan

- Officers are enrolled in a Thrift Savings Plan with automatic matching contributions of up to 5% of their basic pay.
- Officers receive a retirement pension plan with benefits eligibility beginning after 20 years of service.

### Vacation/Leave

- Officers earn 30 days of annual leave (vacation) per year.
- Paid Federal holidays (depending on assignment).
- Paid sick leave as needed.
- Paid maternity leave.
- Paid paternity leave

### Financial support for education through the Post-9/11 GI Bill

- Benefits include funding for tuition, housing, supplies and more.
- Benefits can be transferred to an officer's family members.

### Flexibility to work in a variety of settings

- The USPHS Commissioned Corps offers a variety of jobs in rural, urban, tribal and international communities. Officers serve in 800 different locations across all 50 states and numerous foreign duty stations.

### Student loan repayment

- The Indian Health Service awards up to \$40,000 in loan repayment to health professionals in exchange for at least two years of service in health facilities serving American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

### Mobility between government agencies

- Officers are encouraged to expand their knowledge base and pursue professional opportunities across agencies throughout their tenure in the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

### Insurance benefits

- Officers automatically have the maximum of \$400,000 of life coverage through Service Group Life Insurance (SGLI) plans. Officers also have the option of selecting low cost life insurance for their families.

### Relocation expenses

- Officers receive paid relocation when they join the USPHS Commissioned Corps. Officers also receive payment for relocation expenses when relocating between duty assignments.

### VA benefits

- Officers have access to a host of VA benefits such as the VA Loan Guaranty Home Loan Program, VA Disability benefits, Group Life Insurance, and VA Survival and Death benefits as applicable.

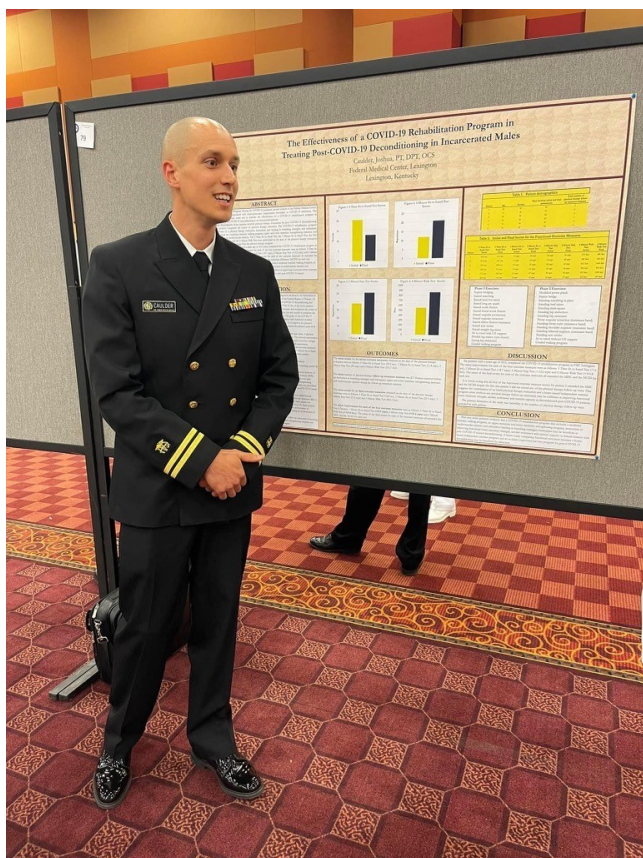
# U.S. Public Health Service

## WHY IS A CAREER AS A USPHS THERAPIST A GREAT CHOICE?

The combination of rewarding professional service, competitive pay, excellent benefits, diversity of duty stations and assignments, the potential for career advancement, and the honor and respect of a career in uniformed service make a career as a Therapist Category officer in the USPHS Commissioned Corps an incredibly unique and rewarding experience.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Many career choices tend to lock you in to one career path; however, Therapist Category officers within the USPHS Commissioned Corps have the opportunity to serve in a variety of exciting clinical and non-clinical roles within various federal agencies throughout the United States.



### **Who's Who in Therapy**

LCDR Joshua Caulder (pictured above as LT), presents his research on COVID-19 rehabilitation at the 2022 USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona.



### **Who's Who in Therapy**

LCDR Alyssa Plata, provides an outpatient pulmonary function test at the IHS Lawton Indian Hospital in Lawton, Oklahoma.



# U.S. Public Health Service

## SRCOSTEP PROGRAM

In the Senior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (SRCOSTEP), full-time students entering their final year of graduate school or professional training get paid while in school in exchange for committing to enroll in the USPHS Commissioned Corps upon graduation. Students receive the basic pay and allowances of an O-1, Ensign, while in the program and are guaranteed a spot in the USPHS Commissioned Corps upon graduation. The service obligation is equal to twice the period of training supported by the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

- **Students within one year of receiving a degree** in audiology, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, physical therapy or speech language pathology.
- Participants must be enrolled full-time in an academic or professional training program, which upon completion, will qualify them to receive a commission in the USPHS Commissioned Corps.
- Participants must also meet certain physical, medical and security background requirements. ~~AAA~~

For more information, please visit our website: <https://usphs.gov/student>.



### Who's Who in Therapy

CDR Carlos Estevez, is stationed at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. CDR Estevez is pictured above as the Coast Guard Academy team coach for 11 Cadets participating in a competition at West Point.

# U.S. Public Health Service

## Therapist Category Officer Qualifications

- You must be U.S. citizen.
- You must be able to meet the mental, moral, physical and security standards of service.
- You must possess a qualifying degree.
- You must be under the age of 44 at the time of commissioning.
- You must have less than 8 years of prior active duty service.
- You must medically qualify (you must pass a physical examination).
- For **audiology**, you must have a master's or doctoral degree in audiology earned from a school or college of audiology accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid certification by the American Board of Audiology or the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.
- For **occupational therapy**, you must have a bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctoral degree in occupational therapy (entry level). The qualifying degree must be earned from a school or college of occupational therapy accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) at the time of graduation. You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid certification/registration by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). Licensed by any state.
- For **physical therapy**, you must have a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in physical therapy earned from a school or college of physical therapy accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid license/registration as a physical therapist by any state.
- For **respiratory therapy**, you must have a bachelor's or master's degree in respiratory therapy from a school or college of respiratory therapy accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Respiratory Care (CoARC) or Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) at the time of graduation. You also must possess an active, current, unrestricted, and valid Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) license from any U.S. state, territory, commonwealth, or District of Columbia, and the RRT program must be recognized by the National Board of Respiratory Care (NBRC). It should be noted that a certified or registered pulmonary function technician/technologist is not a qualifying certification.
- For **speech-language pathology**, you must have a master's degree in speech-language pathology earned from a school or college of speech-language pathology accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). You also must possess a current, unrestricted, and valid certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and current license in any state.

## Who Do I Contact?

### LCDR Joshua Caulder

Therapist Professional Advisory Committee  
Recruitment Subcommittee Chair  
jcaulder@bop.gov  
(859) 255-6812 Ext 5782

### LCDR Courtney Jones

Therapist Professional Advisory Committee  
Applicant List Lead  
courtney.v.jones8mil.@mail.mil  
(919) 907-8258

# U.S. Public Health Service Compensation

Commissioned Officer Compensation (O-3) 2022 with  
Dependents and <2 years of service (Lexington, KY)

## Military Compensation

Yearly ☒ Monthly

Basic Pay \$55,638.00

Basic Allowance for Housing \$18,648.00

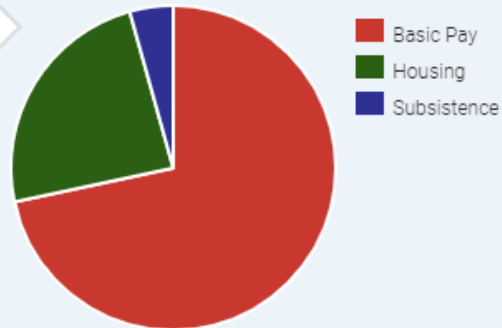
Basic Allowance for Subsistence \$3,363.48

**Total Income \$77,649.48**

Taxable Portion \$55,638.00

Non-taxable Portion \$22,011.48

## Compensation Components



## Taxable / Non-taxable



Commissioned Officer Compensation (O-5) 2022 with  
Dependents and 20 years of service (Lexington, KY)

## Military Compensation

Yearly ☒ Monthly

Basic Pay \$120,970.80

Basic Allowance for Housing \$23,832.00

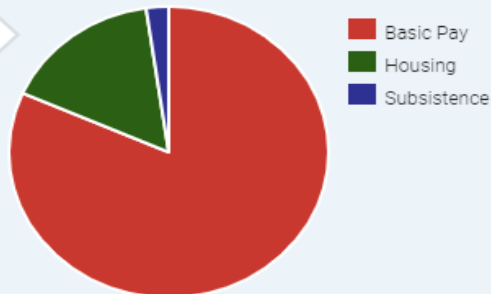
Basic Allowance for Subsistence \$3,363.48

**Total Income \$148,166.28**

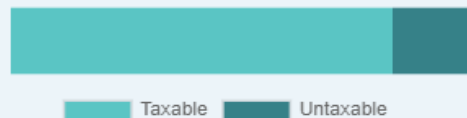
Taxable Portion \$120,970.80

Non-taxable Portion \$27,195.48

## Compensation Components



## Taxable / Non-taxable



# **U.S. Public Health Service Loan Repayment, Specialty Pay Opportunities & TSP**

## **Indian Health Service Loan Repayment Program (LRP)**

The Indian Health Service awards up to \$40,000 in loan repayment to health professionals in exchange for at least two years of service in health facilities serving American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Eligibility and selection criteria can be found at <https://www.ihs.gov/loanrepayment/lrpbasics/>

## **Health Professional Specialty Pay:**

As a licensed health professional, you may choose to obtain additional board certifications. Recognized board certifications are eligible for additional monthly compensation of \$500 per month. Additional information can be found at <https://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/HPSP/HPSP.aspx>

## **Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)**

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is the federal government's "defined contribution" plan; it works like a 401(k). Federal civilians and uniformed services members can contribute a portion of their salaries to their TSP accounts and decide how that money should be invested.

### **What is the Blended Retirement System (BRS)?**

BRS is the retirement system for members of the uniformed services who commissioned after January 1, 2018. Members covered by BRS receive TSP contributions from their employing service in addition to other benefits.

### **How do service contributions work?**

Under BRS, your service will begin contributing an amount equal to 1% of your basic pay into your TSP account each pay period. This does not come out of your pay. It's called a Service Automatic (1%) Contribution. In addition, if you elect to contribute a portion of your own pay into your TSP account, your service will match a portion of it. This is called a Service Matching Contribution. For every dollar you contribute up to 3% of your basic pay, your service will also contribute a dollar. For every dollar you contribute beyond that up to 5% of your pay, your service will contribute 50 cents. If you contribute 5% of your basic pay in a pay period, your service will contribute an amount equal to 4% of your basic pay (1 for 1 on the first 3% and .50 to 1 on the next 2%). Because you receive the Service Automatic (1%) Contribution no matter how much you contribute of your own pay, you can receive a maximum contribution from your service of an amount equal to 5% of your basic pay.

### **Are contributions from my service also mine to keep if I separate from service?**

BRS members are always vested in their own contributions and their earnings. They're also immediately vested in Service Matching Contributions and their earnings. To become vested in Service Automatic (1%) Contributions, you must have completed at least two years of service. If you've completed two years of service before you opt in, you're immediately vested in your entire account.

**More information about the USPHS Retirement and Investment benefits can be found at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) or by calling the THRIFTLINE at 1-877-968-3778.**

# Ready Reserve Corps

## Ready Reserve Officers

- Provides trained, ready and equipped public health professionals, capable of mobilizing and deploying to augment the active duty U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, under the authorities of the Secretary for Health in response to national emergencies and public health crisis.
- Support active duty Public Health Service officers by backfilling in clinical and public health roles.
- Deploy alongside active duty Public Health Service officers in various public health and humanitarian missions.
- Enhance skills through continuous development and learning opportunities unique to Ready Reserve officers.
- Are assigned to a region based on their geographical location.
- Are structured using the same ranks as active duty officers.

## Requirement Needed to Serve

- You must be a U.S. citizen.
- You must be able to meet the mental, moral, physical and security standards for service.
- You must possess a qualifying degree.
- You must be age 40 or under at time of commissioning (must complete 20 years of total credible service by age 60).
- You must medically qualify (must pass a physical exam for commissioning).

## Service Obligations

- Officers must complete a six year service obligation.
- Officers must train one weekend per month and two weeks per year.
- Officers must maintain physical readiness.
- Officers must be prepared to mobilize and deploy for urgent or emergent public health needs.
- Officers must commit to displaying respect for country and service, in and out of uniform.

## Benefits

- Officers are paid for drill weekends, two weekends of Annual Training, and any other time spent on activity duty.
- Officers will receive retirement pay after 20 qualifying years of satisfactory service with pay based on time.
- Medical insurance: officers are eligible for TRICARE Prime when on active duty for at least 30 days.
- Retirement planning: officers are eligible to participate in Thrift Savings Plan and Service Member's Life Insurance.

## JOIN AMERICA'S PUBLIC HEALTH TEAM!

If you are a therapist or therapy student 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 U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, we would like to speak with you! For more information, visit our website at [www.usphs.gov](http://www.usphs.gov).