



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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SECNAVINST 1120.8C
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18 November 2003

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 1120.8C

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: APPOINTMENT OF REGULAR AND RESERVE OFFICERS IN THE MEDICAL SERVICE
CORPS (MSC) OF THE NAVY

Ref: (a) DODDIR 1310.2 CH-1 of 07 Feb 01
(b) SECNAVINST 1000.7E
(c) SECNAVINST 1210.5A
(d) DODDIR 1300.4 of 15 Nov 96
(e) Title 10, United States Code
(f) DODI 6000.13 of 30 June 97 (NOTAL)
(g) DODDIR 1312.3 of 21 Oct 96 (NOTAL)
(h) SECNAVINST 1420.1A
(i) SECNAVINST 1520.8A
(j) Program Authorization 132
(k) OPNAVINST 1420.1A
(l) Manual of Navy Officer Manpower and Personnel
Classifications. Vol I (NAVPERS 15839I)
(m) SECNAVINST 1920.7A
(n) SECNAVINST 5300.28C
(o) Manual of the Medical Department (NAVMED P-117)
(p) SECNAVINST 1920.6B
(q) SECNAVINST 6401.2A
(r) SECNAVINST 1427.2B
(s) SECNAVINST 1427.1C
(t) DODDIR 6025.13 of 20 Jul 95 (NOTAL)
(u) Program Authorization 115

1. Purpose. To issue regulations governing:

a. Appointment of officers in the MSC, including appointment in the Regular and Reserve components under reference (a), and in either component through interservice transfer from another uniformed service under references (b), (c) and (d);

b. Voluntary recall of officers of the MSC to the active-duty list; and,

c. Award of entry grade credit on appointment in the MSC under sections 533 and 5600 of reference (e) and under references (f) and (g).

2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 1120.8B. All other regulations and memoranda providing guidance on accessions, appointments, eligibility requirements and entry grade credit for officers in the MSC inconsistent with this instruction are held in abeyance pending their modification or cancellation. Processing initiated before the date of this instruction will continue under the policy and instructions in effect before that date.

3. Summary of Changes. This instruction is a complete revision and should be read in its entirety. Marginal notations of changes have been omitted. A summary of major changes is provided:

a. Clarifies criteria for entry grade credit.

b. Clarifies criteria for entry age standards to be waived for all MSC specialties during manning shortages.

c. Updates information on promotion eligibility deferment.

4. Applicability. This instruction applies to all individuals appointed as Regular and Reserve officers in the MSC, including officers transferred from another uniformed service, Reserve officers transferred into the Regular component, Reserve officers recalled voluntarily to the active-duty list, and officers transferred from the line community or another staff corps into the MSC.

a. Additional guidance on the transfer of Regular and Reserve officers between the services into the MSC is found in reference (b).

b. Additional guidance on the transfer of Reserve MSC officers into the regular component of the MSC and the transfer of regular and Reserve officers between the line and the MSC or between another staff corps and the MSC is found in references (c) and (d).

5. Policy. The Department of the Navy will maintain authorized strength and grade levels in the MSC and its approved specialties by recruiting the personnel required to support the annual five-year promotion plan approved under reference (h), to provide a base for an all Regular career force, and to attain authorized strength in the Reserve component to meet approved requirements for mobilization.

a. Requirements for newly appointed officers on the active duty list will be filled from diverse programs, which include direct procurement of qualified civilians, Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program (AFHPSP) and Health Professions Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP) under reference (i), Health Sciences Collegiate Program (HSCP) under reference (j) and Inservice Procurement Program (IPP) reference (k). Any other request for active duty commission will be handled on a case by case basis. All initial appointments shall be in the Naval Reserve with subsequent transfer into the Regular Navy under reference (c).

b. Requirements for Regular officers on the active-duty list in control grades that cannot be met by promotion may be supplemented by voluntary recall to active duty of officers from the Reserve component qualified in the approved specialties.

c. Requirements for the Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve will be filled primarily through transfer of officers from the active-duty list. Requirements that cannot be met from this source will be met through direct procurement of former military officers and other civilians qualified in the approved specialties.

6. Accessions Plans

a. The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) will establish an annual accession plan for the active duty force and for the Reserve component which together with retention incentives, will attain authorized strength in each of the specialties in the MSC. There must be sufficient accessions to support the annual five-year promotion plans for the active-duty force and inactive-duty Reserve component and ensure that the promotion opportunity and flow points necessary to meet authorized strength-in-grade requirements are maintained.

b. In determining the proportions of accession programs used to attain and maintain specialty authorizations, both the current and projected supply and demand for officers in each of the approved specialties shall be considered. Maximum use of the most effective program, relative to cost and

time to attain, will be used in preference to more expensive programs. Plans will ensure flexibility in adjusting to changes in the civilian market and in specialty requirements. Reasonable career progression opportunities for the authorized strength of entry-level applicants shall be maintained.

7. Basic Qualifications. To be eligible for appointment as a MSC officer in either the active duty force or the active status (Reserve component) or for voluntary recall from the Reserve component to the active duty list, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

a. Citizenship. Must be a citizen of the United States.

b. Entry Age. Entry age eligibility criteria are established to meet four goals: (1) attain the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) objective of an all Regular career force; (2) provide the maximum pool of Reserve officers eligible for regular service; (3) maintain an officer corps young enough and vigorous enough to meet the more arduous duty requirements, such as duty at sea and in arduous locations; and (4) define a recruiting pool large enough to meet accession requirements. The basic entry age standard for appointment in the active duty force is that the applicant be able to attain 20 years of active commissioned service by age 55. The entry age standard may be adjusted or waived for all MSC specialties as follows:

(1) Active Force. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower and Personnel) (DCNO(M&P)), may raise the entry age standard up to 20 years by age 60 for a specified period when a manning shortfall exists against authorized strength in a specialty authorized by the CNO in reference (1) for which there are programmed authorizations that cannot be filled by the use of authorized bonuses; in-zone promotions in the annual five-year promotion plan; recruiting of civilian candidates; voluntary recall of Reserve officers who meet the basic age requirement; and continuation of officers on the active-duty list beyond statutory retirement age under reference (m). DCNO (M&P) will advise the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) (ASN(M&RA)) in advance of the period of such increase and the specialties designated under these criteria.

(2) Reserve Component. DCNO(M&P) may raise the entry age standard up to 20 years by age 60 for a specified period when a manning shortfall exists against authorized strength in a specialty, authorized by the CNO in reference (1), for which there are programmed authorizations in the Selected Reserve that cannot be filled by the use of authorized bonuses; loan repayment, scholarship and stipend incentives; in-zone promotions in the annual five year promotion plan; recruiting of civilian candidates and affiliation of separating active duty list officers who meet the basic age requirements; and continuation of members of the Selective Reserve beyond statutory retirement age under reference (m). DCNO(M&P) will advise the ASN(M&RA) in advance of the period of such increase and the specialties designated under these criteria. As provided by reference (e), ASN(M&RA) shall additionally set a maximum entry age standard of 47 years for health care specialties which he/she determines, considering the recommendations and supporting justification of the DCNO(M&P), to be specialties critically needed in wartime. Critical specialties for the purpose of Reserve Component accession management are those Medical Service Corps specialties which are:

(a) At least 20 percent below authorized strength or

(b) Otherwise significantly under strength in the Selected Reserve and

(c) For which full use of the sources described above are projected to be unable to correct shortages within three years.

(3) Age Limit Waivers. DCNO(M&P) may further waive the age limits on a case-by-case basis to reduce manning shortages, when extraordinary circumstances indicate the waiver would be in the best interest of the naval service, or when a gross inequity to the applicant would otherwise result.

(4) Applicant Acknowledgement of Age Limitations

(a) Before appointment, applicants who will be unable to complete 20 years of active commissioned service by age 55 will be required to acknowledge in writing that they are ineligible for Regular appointment.

(b) Before appointment, applicants who may be unable to complete 20 years of creditable service for retirement will be required to acknowledge the same in writing.

(5) Record of Age waivers Authorized. The Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, acting for the DCNO(M&P), shall maintain on file written justification for each waiver granted. Age waivers will be reported annually to the ASN(M&RA) under guidance provided in paragraph 14.

c. Moral Character. Must be of good moral character and of unquestioned loyalty to the United States as determined by interview and investigation. As prescribed in reference (n), individuals who are drug or alcohol dependent, who abuse drugs or alcohol, whose pre-service abuse of drugs or alcohol indicates a proclivity to continue abuse in the service, or who have a record of any drug trafficking offenses shall not be permitted to enter the Medical Service Corps.

d. Physical Standards. Must meet the Physical standards for service on active duty as recommended by the Chief, Bureau of Medicine & Surgery and approved by the CNO. DCNO(M&P), upon recommendation of the Chief, Bureau of Medicine & Surgery, may waive physical defects that will not interfere with performance of active duty within the guidelines of reference (o).

e. Availability for Mobilization. Appointments in the Reserve component not on the active-duty list are predicated upon mobilization requirements and the applicants' availability for mobilization. Members of Congress, federal political appointees, elected state and local government officials and federal career Senior Executive Service (SES) employees may not be tendered an original direct appointment without prior approval of the Secretary of the Navy.

f. Indoctrination Requirements. Officers appointed directly to the active duty list must complete an officer indoctrination training course prior to reporting to their first duty station. Officers appointed directly into the Reserve Component must complete a reserve officer indoctrination training course during their first year.

g. Failure to Complete Initial Training Requirements. Officers who fail to complete officer indoctrination requirements shall be separated for cause under reference (p).

8. Professional Qualifications. To be eligible for appointment in the Medical Service Corps or for voluntary recall from the Reserve component to the active-duty list, the applicant must meet the following educational requirements:

a. Must be a graduate of a certified health care professional educational program at an accredited school which meets Program Authorizations.

d. Applicants for the following specialties must be certified, licensed or registered by one of the individual states, District of Columbia, or appropriate national accrediting agency as specified in reference (q):

Clinical Psychologist	Pharmacist
Podiatrist	Dietician
Physical Therapist	Social Worker
Optometrist	Physician Assistant
Occupational Therapist	

Appointees who do not attain required licensure or certification within one year of appointment will be separated under reference (p).

e. Applicants for the MSC Inservice Procurement Programs (MSC IPP) are guided by the program requirements and application procedures as stated in reference (k).

d. All Physician Assistant Warrant Officer (CWO-PA) conversions to MSC were completed in 1989. Any requests from remaining CWO PAs desiring conversion will be addressed per reference (k). Reserve PAs serving in an ADSW status are not eligible for conversion.

9. Examination of Professional Qualifications. The Director, Medical Service Corps shall review the credentials and examine the professional qualifications of all applicants for appointment in the Medical Service Corps or for voluntary recall of a Reserve officer to active duty.

a. Direct Appointments. The Director, MSC shall examine and certify the professional qualifications of all applicants, and the completeness and authenticity of the Individual Credentials File (ICF) or Individual Professional File (IPF), as applicable.

b. Voluntary Recall. Reserve and retired officers to be voluntarily recalled to active duty must be currently licensed, certified, and/or engaged in the practice of the MSC specialty for which recalled and provide documentation necessary to recertify professional qualifications required in paragraph 8 above. The Director, MSC shall recertify qualifications specified for appointment in paragraph 8. Recalled officers within the same specialty will retain the rank held in the Reserve component without recomputation of entry grade.

c. Professional Review Procedure

(1) The Director, MSC shall appoint a MSC Professional Review Board (PRB) to examine the professional qualifications of all applicants. The Board shall be composed of senior MSC officers on active duty and MSC Officers of the Naval Reserve assigned to the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery for temporary duty. At least three but not more than five Board members shall review applicants' records. The senior member of the Board shall be in the grade of captain or above. When considering applicants for appointment in one of the specialties the Board shall confer with an officer designated by the Director, MSC as the specialty leader when readily available for this purpose.

(2) The Board will review the applicant's credentials, including academic performance, post-graduate education, professional and managerial experience, professional recognition such as membership in professional

societies and authorship of professional publications, professional reputation, current experience in a primary specialty, and level of certification/licensure. This review must be completed, based on the abbreviated documentation requirements specified in this instruction, before recommending qualifications for appointment or recall and entry grade credit to be awarded an appointment.

(3) The Board shall recommend to the Director, MSC, which specific qualifications of the Table in paragraph 10 are met; recommend entry grade credit for those qualifications; and provide an evaluation of the quality and desirability of the candidate based on his/her professional qualifications and experience in the MSC specialty for which being considered. The Board shall make its report directly to the Director, MSC without intervening endorsements or clearances.

(4) The Director, MSC, shall make his or her approval directly to DCNO(M&P), or his designee, without intervening endorsements or clearances.

(5) Once the Director, MSC has approved the applicant's professional qualifications, the DCNO(M&P) shall determine whether the applicant is otherwise qualified for a commission as a MSC officer in the specialty for which designated. The DCNO(M&P) may delegate this authority to CNRC with appropriate guidelines.

10. Entry Grade Credit. A prospective MSC officer's entry grade and rank within grade shall be determined by the number of years of entry grade credit awarded on original appointment, designation, or assignment as an MSC officer. The entry grade credit to be awarded shall equal the sum of constructive service credit and prior commissioned service credit (other than as a commissioned warrant officer), except in cases where the total exceeds the maximum credit allowed, and as stated in the below table. A period of time shall be counted only once when computing entry grade credit. Prior commissioned service credit includes commissioned service on active duty or in an active status as a commissioned officer as required by references (f) and (r). Constructive service credit includes credit for advanced education and training and may also include credit for professional experience. Entry grade credit will be subject to the computation and maximum credit criteria in paragraphs 11 and 12 and as specified in the following table.

ENTRY GRADE CREDIT TABLE

<u>Prior Commissioned Service Credit</u>	<u>Credit</u>
1. Commissioned service on active duty in an active status as a MSC officer in any of the Uniformed Services in the specialty being appointed.	One year for each year.
2. Commissioned service on active duty or in an active status as a commissioned officer in any of the Uniformed Services but not in the corps or professional specialty in the MSC.	One-half year for each year.

Constructive Service Credit

Credit

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| 3. | Successful completion of qualifying degree for each MSC specialty authorized by the CNO and identified by a specialty classification code in Part E of reference (1). The qualifying degrees and level required are specified in the Program Authorization. | One year for each year (2 years max for masters, 4 years max for PhD/doctoral degrees). |
| 4. | Successful completion of Post-baccalaureate professional education in the health care and science areas such as residencies in Optometry, Pharmacy, and Podiatry which are approved by an accrediting agency. | One year for each year. (maximum 2 years) |
| 5. | Experience in a related health profession or specialty may be credited. Such experience must be comparable to experience in, and will be directly used in, the MSC specialty in which being appointed. | One-half year for each year of experience up to a maximum of three years credit. (If 6 months or less, no credit will be granted). |
| 6. | In unusual cases, additional credit may be granted for special professional experience in the specialty in which appointed when that experience is accrued after obtaining the qualifying degree. This additional credit applies only to individuals who have an experience level that uniquely distinguishes that from the normal qualifications required for appointment as a commissioned officer. Maximum credit for experience must be earned under Qualification 5 before earning any experience credit under this paragraph. Credit under this provision will not be given to health professionals solely on the basis of special experience that is unassociated with advanced education or an advanced degree. | One year for each year of special professional experience (if 6 months or less no credit will be granted) |

11. Limits and Computation of Entry Grade Credit. Entry grade credit shall be computed as follows:

- a. A period of time or special qualification shall be counted only once.
- b. Qualifying period of less than one full year shall be credited proportionately to the nearest day except where noted otherwise.
- c. Credit will not be awarded for service as an enlisted member, warrant officer, or commissioned warrant officer.
- d. In general, credit will not be granted for work experience prior to the qualifying degree.

e. Credit will not be awarded for qualifying degrees earned while on active duty in a commissioned status.

f. Graduates of the service academies will not be awarded credit for service performed or education, training or experience obtained before graduation from the academy.

g. The recall of a MSC officer in the Reserve component not on the active duty list is not an original appointment; therefore, such officers are not entitled to additional entry grade credit.

12. Maximum Entry Grade Credit. Total entry grade credit granted shall normally be limited to 6 years. After considering the recommendations of the DCNO(M&P), ASN(M&RA) may waive the 6-year limit to a maximum of 8 years on a case-by-case basis in the following circumstances:

a. For Appointment as a Regular or Reserve Officer for Service on the Active-Duty List. When there is a shortage against authorized strength in the MSC specialty for which the appointee is nominated which cannot be met by:

(1) Direct and inservice procurement of qualified health professionals in the grades of lieutenant commander and below;

(2) Voluntary recall to active duty of qualified Reserve officers;

(3) Continuation of officers subject to mandatory retirement for service under reference (a);

(4) In-zone promotion under the five-year promotion plan approved by the Secretary; or,

(5) When a gross inequity to the applicant would otherwise result.

b. For Appointment in the Active Duty Reserve Component. When there is a shortage against authorized strength in the MSC specialty for which the appointee is nominated which cannot be met by:

(1) Transfer of officers from the active-duty list;

(2) Direct procurement of qualified health professionals in the grades of lieutenant commander and below;

(3) In-zone promotion under the five-year promotion plan approved by the Secretary; or,

(4) When a gross inequity to the applicant would otherwise result.

13. Entry Grade Credit in Transition Period. This instruction provides for entry grade credit to be awarded to individuals being appointed in the MSC from the effective date of this instruction. There shall be no retroactive changes, as a result of this instruction, to the entry grade credit granted to officers appointed in the MSC prior the date of this current instruction.

14. Report of Waivers. As required by reference (f), the DCNO(M&P) shall provide, by 20 November, an annual summary report of appointments above the grade of lieutenant commander during the fiscal year just concluded, for the

ASN(M&RA) to send to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (ASD(HA)) for submission before 30 November. The report will include a copy of the written justification for each waiver granted. This report will show both age and grade waivers for appointments on the active-duty list and in the Reserve component in each primary specialty and grade, with an assessment of the effectiveness of such waivers in attaining accession plan goals.

15. Appointments. Appointments in the MSC shall be made subject to the following guidance.

a. Entry Grade. A prospective MSC officer who is not awarded entry grade credit under the Service Credit Table shall be appointed in the grade of ensign with the date of rank coinciding with the date of appointment. A prospective MSC officer who is awarded entry grade credit under the Service Credit Table shall be appointed in a grade based on total entry grade credit awarded under reference (f). The minimum entry grade credit required for each grade is equal to the promotion flow points prescribed in the approved annual five-year promotion plan in effect at the time of appointment. Under references (b) and (c), officers transferred from other Uniformed Services into the MSC of the Navy shall continue to hold the same grade and date of rank held in the losing Uniformed Service except as provided in reference (d).

b. Date of Rank. When the minimum entry grade credit required for appointment in a given grade is granted, the date of rank shall be the date of appointment. When entry grade credit is granted in excess of the minimum years required for appointment in a given grade, but less than the amount necessary to justify the next higher grade, the excess credit shall be used to adjust the date of rank within grade.

c. Assignment of Precedence. Each appointee will be placed on the active-duty list as follows:

(1) Appointees ordered to active duty or retained on active duty (other than Reserve officers on active duty for special work (ADSW) as described in section 641(1) of reference (e)) incident to appointment shall be placed on the active-duty list under reference (s).

(2) Officers in the grades of lieutenant, lieutenant commander and commander, in-zone and above-zone eligible officers whose placement on the active duty list is within one year of the convening dates of selection boards are automatically deferred unless they specifically request to be considered. Under reference (h), the officer may waive this deferment and request consideration for promotion, in writing, to Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-85), 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-8500. The request must be received by PERS-80 not later than the convening date of board.

(3) Officers in the grade lieutenant (junior grade) whose placement on the active duty list is within one year of convening dates of a selection board are not automatically deferred but, may request to defer their promotion eligibility. Deferment eligibility policy is further explained in reference (h).

(4) Appointees not concurrently ordered to or retained on active duty other than ADSW described in section 641(1) of reference (e), shall be placed on the inactive duty precedence list in an active status under reference (s).

16. Application Processing

a. To facilitate rapid application processing, the DCNO(M&P) will establish all military and professional documentation required for the application.

b. Completed applications for appointment on the active duty list shall be forwarded to CNRC expeditiously.

c. Applicants accepted for appointment to the active duty force in grades lieutenant commander and below shall be issued commissioning documents within 90 days of the date the applicant signs the application for commission.

d. Executive nominations for qualified applicants for appointment in grades commander and above shall be submitted to the Senate for confirmation within 90 days of the date the applicant signs the application for commission.

e. Prospective appointees awaiting authorization for appointment in grades commander and above may be appointed in a grade of lieutenant commander pending approval of the higher grade. Officers who accept appointments in the lower grade may at their option be voluntarily separated under reference (p) if the grade for which nominated is not approved.

f. The professional credential documents must be obtained from the issuing source or validated for authenticity through contact with the issuing source or a secondary source approved by the Surgeon General to meet the requirements of reference (t).

g. CNRC shall notify DCNO(M&P) and ASN(M&RA) when "high visibility" candidates are being considered for direct appointment in the inactive duty Reserve component. Such candidates include high-named-recognition individuals not connected with the government and non-SES government officials who occupy positions of significant responsibility.

h. DCNO(M&P) shall include in the recruiting reports required by paragraph 14, a report of performance against the maximum time standards established in this paragraph including an evaluation of problems identified and corrective actions taken.

17. Responsibilities

a. The ASN(M&RA) is responsible for ensuring successful execution of the policy and program guidance in this instruction.

b. The CNO is responsible for:

(1) Procurement and appointment of MSC officers in compliance with this instruction.

(2) Establishing the annual accession plan for the active duty force and the inactive duty Reserve component.

c. The DCNO(M&P):

(1) Will approve entry grade credit, establish entry grades and dates of rank of MSC officers in compliance with the guidelines in this instruction.

(2) Will ensure that all direct accession applications are processed within the maximum time standard in this instruction.

(3) May propose changes in the policies governed by reference

(h) for submission by the ASN(M&RA) to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)

d. The Director, MSC shall:

(1) Certify professional qualifications and provide the calculation of entry grade credit to the DCNO(M&P).

(2) Establish the MSC Professional Review Board and review qualifications under reference (u).

e. The CNRC shall:

(1) Determine grade and date of rank based on calculations provided by the Director, MSC, subject to approval of the DCNO(M&P), in compliance with the guidelines in this instruction.

(2) Maintain statistical data required for preparation of summary reports for the ASN(M&RA) and for special reports when required by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs).

(3) Prepare for the DCNO(M&P) the annual summary report and supplementary information required by reference (f) and paragraphs 14 and 16 of this instruction.

18. Reports. The Professional Review Board reports required by paragraph 9c, are exempt from reports control per SECNAVINST 5214.2B.

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(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

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