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## MEMORANDUM

From: S. C. Steiner, CAPT  
COMDT (CG-1121)

Reply to B. A. Metcalf, LCDR  
Attn of: (202) 475-5183

To: Physician Assistant Training Applicants

Subj: INTERSERVICE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT TRAINING PROGRAM (IPAP)

Ref:

- (a) ALCOAST 109/23 Coast Guard Advanced Education Program Allocations AY24
- (b) Performance, Training and Education Manual, COMDTINST M1500.10 (series)
- (c) Officer Accessions, Evaluations, and Promotions, COMDTINST M1000.3 (series)
- (d) Coast Guard Medical Manual, COMDTINST M6000.1 (series)
- (e) ALCGPSC 052/23 Postgraduate and Advanced Education Selection Panel Schedule for assignment year 2024 (AY 24)
- (f) Active-Duty Officer Postgraduate and Advanced Education Application Process Guide Assignment Year 2024

1. This Memo clarifies and specifies requirements for applications and eligibility to IPAP. Please read this memo in its entirety prior to contacting the listed POCs. **DO NOT** contact POCs to request a waiver for an item noted that states waivers are not granted. Applicants should read and be familiar with the applicable sections of References (a) through (f). This Coast Guard (CG)-sponsored PA joint service training program is conducted by the IPAP located at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX. The degrees are conferred by the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). This officer specialty is part of an afloat duty community.

2. Important dates and deadlines -- will NOT be waived:

- a) Direct Access My Panel submission: 1 Jun 2023.
- b) Official transcripts must be received by UNMC: 17 Jul 2023.
- c) Physician Assistant Package submission deadline is 31 Jul 2023. This includes the two Minute Interview Video clip or CD submission, and the CG-5527.
- d) The selection board is currently scheduled for 14-18 Aug 2023.

3. Training timeline:

- a) This process requires 3 PCS moves.

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- b) The program is 29 months long. CG students typically start August of the next FY.
  - c) Phase 1 (64 wks.), held at Fort Sam Houston, is heavily didactic and academically rigorous, offering 96 semester hours (SH) consisting of medical and clinical sciences. Students earn a Bachelor of Science (BS) Degree upon completion.
  - d) Phase 2 (60 wks.) consists of clinical rotations and continued didactic instruction at various DoD training sites (50+ SH). Students earn a Master's degree upon completion.
  - e) Enlisted graduates will commission as Lieutenants, Junior Grade (temporary regular) upon graduation from Phase 2. Shortly after, they are required to attend a 4-5 week Direct Commission Officer (DCO) course at the Coast Guard Academy – as soon as practicable.
  - f) Officer attendees will continue to be considered for promotion and maintain their position on the Register of Officers.
  - g) The final PCS is to the first unit (clinic) as a CG PA upon graduation. First unit assignments are based on the needs and priorities of the Service, which take priority over member concerns. These choices will often be quite limited to the student, at times with a single assignment option.
  - h) After the first year of clinical practice, all CG PAs should expect to regularly fill TDY AFLOAT Medical Officer deployment needs.
  - i) There are opportunities to specialize in aviation and hyperbaric/dive medicine, and occasionally other medical specialty training opportunities such as psychiatry, emergency medicine, clinical informatics, or orthopedics/sports medicine.
4. This year we have one officer and four enlisted TABs (for a total of five). IPAP graduates incur, at a minimum, a **payback obligation of 53 months (4 years, 5 months)** Coast Guard service, IAW reference (b). Coast Guard Academy graduates completing IPAP incur this 53-month obligation as well, which is in addition to any remaining Academy obligation, **served consecutively (not concurrently) without a pause.**
5. All students must meet all service requirements prior to graduation to receive their diploma and register to take the Physician Assistant National Certification Exam (PANCE). Failure to meet service requirements will prevent the student from taking the PANCE or receiving their diploma indefinitely and will prevent enlisted students from receiving a commission indefinitely.
6. The application process consists of the following academic, program specific, and

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administrative requirements:

- a) Enlisted Active Duty CG personnel **E4 to E7** with at least 2 years of CG service in any rating, **as of the selection panel date**. Non-rates shall not apply. Enlisted personnel may continue to compete in servicewide exams for advancement prior to IPAP graduation. Enlisted applicants must have at least 5 years remaining on their service contracts prior to entering the program.
- b) Active Duty CG **Officers** with no more than 5 years of commissioned service as of the selection panel date. **These criteria may be waived up to 6 years on a case-by-case basis**. Officers, if selected, will continue to be considered for promotion and maintain their position on the Register of Officers.
- c) **CGA 2/c and 1/c** cadets must meet the requirements listed in this memorandum. The criteria/requirements will not be waived. You must either have completed the required courses, or be currently enrolled in them, to submit an application.
- d) Direct Access My Panel Submission. All applicants should select the position associated with the Physician Assistant Post Graduate Program. IPAP position number is 000096 and should read “PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT”.
- e) Command endorsements must be forwarded in Direct Access (DA) via My Assignments. Command must comment on the applicant’s leadership, interests, ability, and potential value to the service as a PA and may be submitted with the DA Endorsement or with the members IPAP package. For members who will not be tour complete by summer 2024, commands must specifically endorse if they recommend a waiver to short tour. Only endorsements from the immediate command are authorized. In the “job endorsement” page under the “recommendation” drop-down menu, commanding officers should choose “make offer” to positively endorse a candidate’s application. A Process Guide is found under the Documents section of the PSC-OPM-1 PG Portal website: [PG Panels Reference Library](#).
- f) Academy endorsements: CGA cadets shall forward a request for enrollment through their Advisor and the CGA Healthcare Sciences Medical Officer. SUPNOTE will outline the official Academy process for applicants who wish to be considered for IPAP.
- g) Please submit packages in **ONE** PDF document (saved as: Last Name, First Name M.I. Rate/Rank\_IPAP Package) and in the following order:
  - (1) Resume (TAB).
  - (2) Essay (TAB).
  - (3) Two Letters of Recommendation (TAB).
  - (4) Command Comments as noted in section d. if not submitted with DA Endorsement.
  - (5) Verified Experience (TAB).

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- (6) Personal Awards (TAB), maximum of five, in order of newest to oldest.
  - (7) Forms (TAB), Memo verifying enlisted applicants meet commissioning standards, others as indicated.
  - (8) SAT score report (TAB).
- h) Applicants must submit a self-composed, **handwritten essay** (350 words or fewer) expressing the reasons why they wish to become a PA (and CG officer if enlisted), how the CG will benefit by selecting them, and a brief description or example of how they respond to stressful situations.
- i) **100 hours (hrs) of patient care experience.** At least 40 hrs must be shadowing a PA in a clinical setting. If this is not possible due to geographic constraints, contact the CG PA Program Manager. Additional experience as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Health Services Technician (HS), paramedic, hospital volunteer, or in another health-related field can be used towards the 100 hrs. Documentation must be in letter or memorandum form from a supervisor in the facility where the experience was gained, or for CG EMTs and HSs, a command endorsement that documents the experience.
- j) **60 semester hours (SH) of transferable college credits with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.** At least 30 SH must be earned by attending classes (ground or online). Up to 30 SH may be obtained through military schools as recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES). **Pre-requisite courses MUST be earned by attending classes unless you are retaking your prerequisites. Classes taken at online universities that are for profit will not be as competitive during the selection panel.** All credits must be acceptable by UNMC, IPAP, and the CG PA Program Manager. Any CLEP, DANTES, or ACE credits shall be reported on a CG Institute Education Assessment Worksheet, Form CGI-1561. ALL college level coursework must be reported and will be used to calculate a cumulative GPA. **If the cumulative GPA is less than 2.75 the package will not be considered.** *Applicants should calculate their own cumulative GPA prior to applying to determine eligibility.* If UNMC detects a transcript that was not voluntarily provided the package will not be considered.
- k) Completion of the following courses from a regionally accredited college or university. The courses may be lower level (freshman or sophomore) or upper level (junior or senior) but may not be remedial or developmental. The course must be numbered with the SH equivalents listed and have resulted in a letter grade. If precalculus or calculus has been taken and completed, proof of algebra is not required. The prerequisite courses listed below must meet all of the requirements detailed in this paragraph. **The science courses must have been completed in the preceding 8 years; courses completed prior to 01 August 2015 will NOT be accepted.** It is highly recommended that these

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courses be earned within the last 5 years to effectively prepare the applicant for the rigors of training. **The 8-year time limit will NOT be waived.** Additional science course work with lab is highly recommended in Microbiology, Biochemistry, and Organic Chemistry. Abnormal psychology is also highly recommended.

- (1) College Algebra (3 SH; Intermediate not accepted)
  - (2) Anatomy & Physiology with lab (8 SH; “introductory” not accepted. Must have been completed in the preceding 8 years)
  - (3) General Chemistry with lab (8 SH; “introductory” not accepted. Must have been completed in the preceding 8 years)
  - (4) English (6 SH – 3 SH must be English Composition)
  - (5) Humanities and Social Sciences (6 SH)
  - (6) Psychology (3 SH)-Introduction to Psychology is acceptable
  - (7) Medical Terminology (3 SH; HS "A" school satisfies this Requirement. Must have been completed in the preceding 8 years)
- l) All transcripts must be submitted to UNMC. Instructions can be found at the application [Website](#). This application must be submitted, complete, and in a “verified” status to be evaluated and moved on for consideration at the CG IPAP selection panel. Transcripts from all institutions attended should be submitted to UNMC IPAP Transcript Processing Center, PO Box 9140, Watertown, MA 02471. **Any difficulties with this process should be addressed to UNMC.**
- m) A Scholastic Aptitude Test (**SAT**) within 5 years is required of all applicants regardless of degree status. **This will not be waived, and no substitutions are accepted.** There is no minimum score. However, to be competitive, the combined SAT reasoning test score in critical reading, math, and writing should at least 1040, and 460 math. Applicants who were not able to take an SAT due to COVID-19 are not exempt from this requirement. A previous SAT may be submitted, or a package without an SAT may be submitted, but must be completed prior to program start date. However, if there are adequate qualified applicants who have a qualifying SAT score within the previous 5 years, incomplete packages will not be competitive for selection.
- n) **Letters of recommendation.** Two are required; at least one from a CG PA and one from a U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) PA or physician familiar with the applicant’s medical experience and potential for becoming a PA. If unable to obtain a letter from a CG PA or PHS PA or physician, non-HS applicants may substitute letters from a DoD or civilian PA or physician who is familiar with the applicant’s health care experience. Applicants who are unable to secure two letters of recommendation from a PA or physician shall contact the CG PA Program Manager.
- o) Applicants **must be physically qualified for worldwide duty and enlisted**

**applicants must pass and maintain a qualified Pre-Commissioning Physical Examination IAW reference (d). A memorandum from the approving authority to the IPAP Selection Panel with the date of the physical examination should state the member meets CG commissioning and retention medical standards as of the date of the approved physical. Should an enlisted applicant not meet Pre-Commission physical standards, a waiver may be requested through CG Recruiting Command via the usual medical waiver process. Enlisted applicants who are unable to meet or maintain commissioning standards will be disqualified from the IPAP program. A periodic health assessment (PHA) will be completed prior to receiving commissioning paperwork before graduation. If the student no longer meets commissioning standards, they will be removed from the program. All new graduates must be prepared to accept a billet anywhere the Coast Guard requires. If an aviation billet is assigned you may be sent to Flight Surgeon training.**

- p) Applicants must NOT have any court-martial convictions on record, nor Non-Judicial Punishment (NJP, i.e., Captain's Mast) during the previous 5 years.
- q) Applicants must be United States Citizens.
- r) **Officer program interview** (for enlisted applicants only). The Officer Programs Applicant Assessment Form, CG-5527, must be completed by the interview panel and submitted directly to PSC-OPM-1 for enclosure with the member's application. The Officer Interview Panel can normally be scheduled through any CG Education Service Officer (ESO). PHS Officers may not be part of this panel. Those applicants re-applying may use the same Officer Programs Applicant Assessment Form, CG-5527, for up to 2 years. Thereafter, a new interview must be conducted. ESOs and applicants having difficulty securing a CG PA for the interview panel should contact the CG PA Program Manager. In addition, any applicants having trouble scheduling an officer interview should contact the CG PA Program Manager for further assistance. Once the Officer Interview Board is complete and signed by every panel member, submit the CG-5527 directly to the PG Panel inbox ([HQS-SMB-CGPSC-opm-1-PGpanels@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CGPSC-opm-1-PGpanels@uscg.mil)).
- s) **Video Interview:** A 2-minute video of the applicant providing responses to questions is required. Instructions will be provided by UNMC, who provides the final video to the selection panel.

7. Points of Contact:

- a) UNMC: [CAHPadmissions@unmc.edu](mailto:CAHPadmissions@unmc.edu) or (402) 559-6673, regarding course requirements, transcript submission or other concerns. **If UNMC is contacted, identify yourself as a CG IPAP applicant.**

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- b) CG PA Program Manager: Applicants are encouraged to seek amplifying information on eligibility requirements, prerequisites, and clarification of application procedures by contacting, 202-475-5183, or [HQS-SMB-CG-Medical-Program-Managers@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CG-Medical-Program-Managers@uscg.mil).
- c) PSC (OPM-1): Questions regarding the processing of advanced education applications should be directed to PG/Adv Ed Questions/Submission inbox: [HQS-SMB-CGPSC-opm-1-PGpanels@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CGPSC-opm-1-PGpanels@uscg.mil) or LT Anna Ruth at [Anna.L.Ruth@uscg.mil](mailto:Anna.L.Ruth@uscg.mil).

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