



KEY PROVIDER ISSUES IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

May 2010

COMMISSIONED CORPS AND READY RESERVE CORPS (SEC. 5210)

The U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) re-commissions Reserve Corps officers serving in a full time capacity as members of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps.

The Commission Corps is a team of more than 6,500 full-time, public health professionals including physicians, dentists, pharmacists, psychologists and other healthcare professionals trained to meet the nation's public health and emergency response needs. Commissioned Corps officers have provided health services during natural disasters, such as the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, Hurricanes Ike and Gustav in 2008, and also provided support during the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center.

Commission Corp employees work primarily in agencies under the Department of Health and Human Services, although Corps members can also be placed in other Federal agencies under the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and others. Corps members are not employed in private industry, although they may be deployed to assist local communities in response to acute needs such as natural disasters.

The Ready Reserve Corps

The law creates a new Ready Reserve Corps, a subsection of the Commission Corps. Members of the Ready Reserve Corps will be available to assist the Commissioned Corps personnel on short notice to meet both routine public health and emergency response missions. The Ready Reserve Corps members perform duties for assigned periods of time as opposed to full time Regular Commissioned Corps members who are on extended active duty. The Ready Reserve Corps officers will participate in routine training and must be available and ready for active duty.

Commissioned Corps Requirements and Benefits

To qualify for the Commissioned Corps, you must be a U.S. citizen under the age of 44. Commissioned Corps members must also be medically qualified with a current, unrestricted professional license (if applicable) and have a qualifying degree from an accredited institution. Benefits of Commissioned Corps includes a competitive salary, free health and dental care, tax-free housing, meal allowances, malpractice insurance coverage and many others.

Additional information about the Commissioned Corps and Ready Reserve Corps can be found on the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps website. www.usphs.gov

For information, visit www.strategichealthcare.net, or contact Marian Lowe, Partner, Strategic Health Care, at 202-266-2606 or at marian.lowe@shcare.net.