



|| USPHS Commissioned Corps



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE (IHS) PHARMACY RESIDENT PROGRAM

How do I apply for an IHS residency?

- A. Please visit the [How to Apply](#) page. for additional information.

Will I be notified when my application is complete?

- A. You can use the application manager feature in USAJobs to track your on-line progress to a complete application package. You will also receive notifications from Pharmacy Online Residency Centralized Application Service (PhORCAS) regarding acceptance from your applications. Candidates are responsible for making sure all materials including letters of recommendation are complete/received by the deadlines. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

If I was a Junior COSTEP, do I still need to complete the entire residency package, including the PHS-50?

- A. Yes, a new PHS-50 needs to be completed for consideration of acceptance to the Commissioned Corps. This application will be made available to you if selected for residency.

Is there someone I can speak to regarding available positions I have a SRCOSTEP obligation after graduating. Can I complete a residency before I



finish my obligation?

- A. SRCOSTEPs must serve their full obligation before starting a residency.

How do I schedule a site visit?

- A. Contact the Residency Program Director or Chief Pharmacist at the site you are interested in visiting. The Indian Health Service Residency Programs will also be represented at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting, during the Residency Showcase each December.

Does Indian Preference (IP) apply to the residency training program?

- A. The Indian Health Service is required by law to provide absolute preference to American Indians/Alaska Natives who are enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. To be considered "preference" eligible for the residency training program, the applicant must submit a [Form BIA-4432](#)

When will the selection process for IHS residencies occur?

- A. IHS residency sites are NOT part of the ASHP Match. The applicant selection will occur in February each year, before the ASHP Match deadline, which is typically in March. This allows non-selected applicants to continue with the ASHP Match if they choose. If an applicant is selected for an IHS residency and accepts the offered position, they are expected to withdraw from the ASHP match.

When will the selection process for IHS residencies occur What are the requirements to be a Commissioned Corps Officer in the US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps?

- A. IHS There are stringent requirements to be a commissioned officer including US citizenship, age, height-weight, suitability, and medical standards. To see a description of requirements for Commissioned Corps pharmacists, please visit the [Commissioned Corps website](#). A list of [initial pre-screening criteria](#), found in the [How to Apply instructions](#), can help you determine if you may be eligible.

What salary can an IHS resident expect?

- A. There are several employment systems to choose from at most IHS sites: direct tribal hire, Federal Civil Service, or USPHS Commissioned Corps. The Chief Pharmacist or



the Residency Program Director at each respective site can give you an estimate of the expected salary range.

Are IHS residents eligible for loan repayment?

- A. IHS Residents are not eligible for the IHS Loan Repayment Program (LRP) until they officially complete their residency training. The chance of being accepted into the IHS LRP is dependent on specific site rankings on the Loan Repayment Priority List, the amount of money appropriated by Congress each year, and the number of applicants who apply [IHS LRP information](#).

What is the resident's obligation after completing an IHS residency?

- A. Residents who serve as USPHS Commissioned Corps Officers must be willing to apply for a post-residency position at their training site if one is available or transfer to another IHS duty station. The intent of residency training in this system is to produce highly skilled pharmacists who are willing to serve in high-need locations and to share their knowledge and skills for the benefit of IHS patients. Public Health Service Officers who are selected for a pharmacy residency in IHS are discouraged from transferring to another USPHS agency until at least 2 years of service has been completed with IHS, including the residency year. There may be other limitations to agency transfer that apply at the time of transfer, so it is suggested to speak with the IHS National Pharmacy Residency Coordinators and IHS Commissioned Corps Liaisons for further clarification when post-residency job planning is occurring. As of June 1, 2022, residents wanting to pursue a career in the USPHS Commissioned Corps following their residencies have a mandatory obligation to serve an additional six (6) or seven (7) years in the USPHS Commissioned Corps, depending on whether the resident completed a one or two-year residency.

Are Indian Health Service Scholarship recipients ("437 Scholars") eligible for HIS residency consideration?

- A. Recipients of the Federal Indian Health Service Scholarship are eligible to apply for both PGY1 and clinical PGY2 IHS pharmacy residency programs. The scholarship recipient must discuss their intentions with and obtain approval for deferment from the Scholarship Program Branch by submitting a Notification of Deferment Program Form and follow all rules/regulations regarding fulfillment of scholarship service obligation post-residency if the deferment is approved. Residency service time will not count towards the contractual service obligation. Residents may also be subject to



directed assignment post-residency, based on the IHS program priorities, and needs at that time. [More information at the IHS Scholarship website.](#)

Are international students/pharmacists eligible to apply for an HIS residency?

- A. Residency applicants must be a US citizen and must have earned a degree from an accredited US college of pharmacy to apply to the IHS residency program.

If accepted for residency, when must I obtain pharmacist licensure?

- A. Public Health Service officer pharmacists must obtain pharmacist licensure PRIOR to the final hiring steps and before starting the program. It is highly recommended that all resident selectees test for pharmacist licensure (must pass NAPLEX and MPJE or equivalent as required by state granting licensure) as early as possible after graduation, to avoid delaying the residency onboarding process.