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**Health Services**

**SPECIAL PAY FOR HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS**

**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY**

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(Maj Scott A. Simpson)  
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This instruction implements AFR 41-1, *Medical Programs and Resources*, and states the policies and procedures governing special pays to health professions officers serving on active duty (specifically, physicians, dentists, nurses, and Biomedical Sciences Corps officers). It implements Title 37, United States Code (U.S.C.), Sections 301d, 302, 302a, 302b, 302d, 302e, 303, and 303a; Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 1340.8, *Special Pay for Dental Corps Officers*, February 21, 1986, with Change 1; DoD Directive 1340.13, *Special Pay for Medical Corps Officers*, July 23, 1988; and the DoD Pay Manual (DoDPM). Send comments and suggested improvements on AF Form 847, **Recommendation for Change of Publication**, through channels to HQ USAF/SGHP, 170 Luke Avenue, Suite 400, Bolling AFB, DC 20332-5113.

**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS**

This is the first publication of this instruction. It deletes excess descriptive detail formerly found in AFR 36-4.

**Section A—Health Professions Officer Special Pays**

**1. Eligibility Criteria for Special Pays.** Health professions officers are eligible for the following special pays, depending on their corps. **NOTE:** DoDPM, Part 1, chapters 5, 6, and 21 list the amounts and eligibility criteria for these pays. AFR 36-58, *Health Professional Special Pay*, explains application procedures, covers additional eligibility criteria not listed in the DoDPM, and provides examples of contracts.

**1.1. Variable Special Pay (VSP).** Payable monthly to all Medical Corps and Dental Corps officers. Headquarters Air Force Military Personnel Center, Force Management Branch (HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1), initiates VSP. Physicians and dentists are entitled to VSP in the following annual amounts ( **Figure 1.** and **2.** ):

**Figure 1. Medical Corps Variable Special Pay.**

| <u>Years of Creditable Service</u> | <u>Annual Rate of Variable Special Pay</u> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| During Internship Training         | 1,200                                      |
| Less than 6                        | 5,000                                      |
| 6 but less than 8                  | 12,000                                     |
| 8 but less than 10                 | 11,500                                     |
| 10 but less than 12                | 11,000                                     |
| 12 but less than 14                | 10,000                                     |
| 14 but less than 18                | 9,000                                      |
| 18 but less than 22                | 8,000                                      |
| 22 or more                         | 7,000                                      |

**NOTE:** Medical Corps officers in the grade of 0-7 and above are entitled to VSP at the rate of \$7,000 per year.

**Figure 2. Dental Corps Variable Special Pay.**

| <u>Years of Creditable Service</u> | <u>Annual Rate of Variable Special Pay</u> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| During Internship Training         | 1,200                                      |
| Less than 3                        | 1,200                                      |
| 3 but less than 6                  | 2,000                                      |
| 6 but less than 10                 | 4,000                                      |
| 10 but less than 14                | 6,000                                      |
| 14 but less than 18                | 4,000                                      |
| 18 or more                         | 3,000                                      |

**NOTE:** Dental Corps officers in the grade of 0-7 and above are entitled to VSP at the rate of \$1,000 per year.

**1.2. Board Certified Pay (BCP).** Payable monthly to eligible Medical and Dental Corps officers. HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1 initiates BCP. Board certified physicians and dentists are entitled to BCP in the following annual amounts ( **Figure 3.** and **Figure 4.**):

**Figure 3. Medical Corps Board Certified Pay.**

| <u>Years of Creditable Service</u> | <u>Annual Rate of Board Certified Pay</u> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Less than 10                       | 2,500                                     |
| 10 but less than 12                | 3,500                                     |
| 12 but less than 14                | 4,000                                     |
| 14 but less than 18                | 5,000                                     |
| 18 or more                         | 6,000                                     |

**Figure 4. Dental Corps Board Certified Pay.**

| <u>Years of Creditable Service</u> | <u>Annual Rate of Board Certified Pay</u> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Less than 12                       | 2,000                                     |
| 12 but less than 14                | 3,000                                     |
| 14 or more                         | 4,000                                     |

**1.3. Additional Special Pay (ASP).** Lump sum annual payment for Medical and Dental Corps officers.

**1.3.1. Medical Corps.** A physician who is not undergoing internship or initial residency training is entitled to additional special pay of \$15,000 annually. HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1 may use ASP contracts as authority to extend a physician's date of separation (DOS) to match the required commitment, as long as the DOS does not carry a physician past a mandatory release or retirement date.

**1.3.2. Dental Corps.** A dentist who is not undergoing dental internship or residency training is entitled to additional special pay in the annual amounts outlined in **Figure 5**. Dental officers must apply for a DOS extension to match the required commitment.

**Figure 5. Dental Corps Additional Special Pay.**

| <u>Years of Creditable Service</u> | <u>Annual Rate of Additional Special Pay</u> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 3 but less than 14                 | 6,000                                        |
| 14 but less than 18                | 8,000                                        |
| 18 or more                         | 10,000                                       |

**1.4. Incentive Special Pay (ISP).** Lump sum annual payment for Medical Corps officers. HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1 may use single-year ISP contracts as authority to extend a physician's DOS to match the required commitment as long as the DOS does not carry a physician past a mandatory release or retirement date.

**1.4.1. Eligibility.** A Medical Corps officer is entitled to ISP if the individual is serving in pay grade 0-6 or below, is not undergoing medical internship or initial residency training, and is fully qualified in a medical specialty and practicing in that specialty. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) (ASD(HA)) updates the specialties authorized to receive ISP and the ISP amount for each specialty on an annual basis. HQ AFMPC/DPMM provides this information to each facility upon receipt from ASD(HA).

**1.5. Multi-Year Special Pay (MSP).** Lump sum annual payment for Medical Corps officers who sign a contract for 2, 3, or 4 years.

**1.5.1. Eligibility.** A Medical Corps officer is entitled to MSP if the individual is serving in pay grade 0-6 or below, has at least 8 years of creditable service or has completed any active duty service commitment incurred for medical education and training, and has completed specialty qualification (or is scheduled to complete initial residency training before 1 October of the fiscal year in which the member wishes to receive MSP). ASD(HA) updates the specialties authorized to receive MSP and specifies the 2, 3, and 4 year MSP amounts on an annual basis. HQ AFMPC/DPMM provides this information to each facility upon receipt from ASD(HA).

**1.6. Nurse Anesthetist Pay (NAP).** Lump sum annual payment for fully qualified certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA). Amount of NAP is \$6,000. HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1 may use NAP contracts as authority to extend a CRNA's DOS to match the required commitment, as long as the DOS does not carry a CRNA past a mandatory release or retirement date.

HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1 initiates this pay.

**1.7. Nurse Accession Bonus (NAB).** A bonus initiated by Headquarters Air Force Recruiting Service for eligible Nurse Corps officers that agree to enter active duty for a period of 4 years. Amount of NAB is \$5,000.

**1.7.1. Eligibility.** A nurse is not eligible for the NAB if:

- The individual received financial assistance from DoD to pursue a baccalaureate degree.
- The individual holds an appointment as a Nurse Corps officer.

Additionally, an individual with prior active duty service as a Nurse Corps officer must have been discharged from active duty at least 12 months prior to execution of the written agreement.

**1.8. Optometry and Veterinary Professional Pay.** Payable monthly to optometrists and veterinarians. Veterinarians assigned as environmental health officers are not eligible. HQ AFMPC/DPMMUF1 initiates these pays. Amount of pay is \$100 monthly.

### ***Section B—Special Pay for Reserve, Active (Involuntarily Retained), and Recalled Officers***

**2. Eligibility.** *The Fiscal Year 92/93 National Defense Authorization Act* (Public Law 102-190, Section 634) provides special pay authority to Medical Corps, Dental Corps, and non-physician health care providers who are:

- Reservists called to active duty (other than for training) for a period of not less than 30 days or more than 1 year.
- Active duty health care providers involuntarily retained (under the legislative rules of a contingency operation) for a period of more than 30 days or who voluntarily agree to remain on active duty for a period of less than 1 year when officers are involuntarily retained.
- Recalled retirees (under the legislative rules of a contingency operation) for a period of more than 30 days.

**2.1. Payment Information.** Officers who fulfill the above eligibility criteria are entitled to a pro-rata amount of ASP, VSP, BCP, NAP, and optometry/veterinary special pay for all active duty service. Earliest entitlement date is 5 December 1991.

### ***Section C—Special Pay Withholding or Termination***

**3. Approval Authority.** The Air Force Surgeon General, as designated by the Secretary of the Air Force, may withhold or terminate at any time an officer's entitlement to ASP, ISP, MSP, or NAP. Withholding or termination is based on unprofessional conduct, medical incompetence, noncompliance with Air Force standards, or substandard performance. Unprofessional conduct includes the failure to attain or maintain Air Force standards of military or medical performance. Substandard performance refers to substandard performance as an officer and/or as health care provider.

**3.1. Withholding or Termination Action.** The basis for initiating both actions are the same, as are the procedures involved (AFP 36-58 explains in detail both procedures). There are, however, significant differences. For example, once a special pay contract has been terminated, it can not be reinstated, and a new contract must be submitted. Termination action results in the Air Force recouping the unearned portion of the special pay, as well as the potential adjustment to the officer's ADSC. Withholding pay, on the other hand, does not end an active multi-year contract. A withholding action anticipates the possibility of an officer's exoneration or improvement with subsequent return of all withheld pays to the individual--the ADSC is not adjusted. Termination action, however, does not

anticipate exoneration or improvement and is therefore more definitive. A withholding action can also be used in connection with contracts before they become active. Consequently, the commander can recommend disapproval of a new contract or renewal of an existing one. If at a later date the health care provider improves, the commander may reinstate special pay privileges and the effective date becomes the date the agreement is signed.

ALEXANDER M. SLOAN, Lt General, USAF, MC  
Surgeon General

## Attachment 1

### GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES, ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND TERMS

#### *References*

AFPD 41-1, *Medical Programs and Resources*

AFP 36-58, *Health Professional Special Pay*

Public Laws 96-284, 99-145, 101-189, 101-510, and 102-190.

Title 37, U.S.C. 301d, 302, 302a, 302b, 302d, 302e, 303, and 303a

Department of Defense Military Pay and Allowances Entitlements Manual

DoD Directive 1340.8, *Special Pay for Dental Corps Officers*

DoD Directive 1340.13, *Special Pay for Medical Corps Officers*

#### *Abbreviations and Acronyms*

**ADSC**—Active Duty Service Commitment

**AFMPC**—Headquarters Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center

**AFP**—Air Force Pamphlet

**AFPD**—Air Force Policy Directive

**ASD(HA)**—Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs)

**ASP**—Additional Special Pay

**BCP**—Board Certified Pay

**CRNA**—Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist

**DoD**—Department of Defense

**DoDPM**—Department of Defense Pay Manual

**DOS**—Date of Separation

**ISP**—Incentive Special Pay

**MSP**—Multi-Year Special Pay

**MSPD**—Medical Service Pay Date

**NAB**—Nurse Accession Bonus

**NAP**—Nurse Anesthetist Pay

**U.S.C.**—United States Code

**VSP**—Variable Special Pay

#### *Terms*

**Creditable Service for Medical Corps Officers**—Physicians receive creditable service only for the

standard number of years that the appropriate American medical or osteopathic specialty board requires. However, physicians may receive 6 months' credit for time spent in a chief resident program. Physicians who complete a portion of a residency year before entering active duty and then complete the rest of the training year on active duty receive credit for the training completed before entering active duty. Physicians receive credit only for prior active duty periods of 1 year or longer.

**Creditable Service for Dental Corps Officers**—Dentists receive credit only for active duty periods of 1 year or longer.

**Medical Service Pay Date (MSPD)**—HQ AFMPC and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service use the MSPD to determine a physician's or dentist's eligibility and amounts of special pay. To calculate the MSPD for a physician or dentist, subtract the officer's creditable service from the extended active duty date.

**Medical, Osteopathic, or Dental Internship**—The first year of graduate medical education, whether a formal internship or the first year of residency, immediately following medical, osteopathic, or dental school.

**Initial Residency Training**—That period of time in residency training before formally completing a first residency that qualifies an officer as board eligible. To qualify for ASP, Medical Corps officers must have a formal postgraduate medical training program of 2 or more academic years in their initial residency training. Board certification based on specialty experience also fulfills ASP initial residency requirements for physicians. Dental Corps officers may only use programs that qualify them as board eligible to receive ASP.

**Fully Qualified**—(definition varies by corps) --A physician who has completed a residency training program or is board certified or board eligible in a medical specialty and, if involved in independent patient care, has received credentials in that specialty is considered fully qualified. A dentist who has successfully completed an American Dental Association accredited dental school and, if involved in independent patient care, has received credentials is considered fully qualified. A nurse anesthetist who has passed the certification examination from the Council on Certification of Nurse Anesthetists is fully qualified.