

Program Authorization: Active Component direct commissioning program for designator 1650 (Public Affairs Officer (PAO)). Provides an opportunity for exceptional civilians and enlisted personnel the ability to apply for a commission as a Navy PAO through Officer Candidate School (OCS). PAO Community Manager (BUPERS 314F) is the officer community manager (OCM).

1. Program Authority: Title 10 U.S. Code sections 531, 532 and 533.
2. Cancellation: Program Authorization 103, September 2023.
3. Quota: As prescribed by the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Personnel, Manpower, and Training, N1.
4. Qualifications
 - a. Citizenship: Applicants must be United States citizens.
 - b. Age: Must be at least 19 years old and not have passed their 37th birthday at the time of commissioning.
 - c. Time in Service. Active service personnel and veterans may have no more than 8 years of total active service on the application deadline. Waivers may be requested between 8-10 years of total active service.
 - d. Education
 - (1) Minimum of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.8 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Postgraduate education is preferred but not required. Waiver requirements are described in paragraph 5.
 - (2) Candidates applying for a Public Affairs Officer commission must have a completed degree by the application deadline. Preferred degrees are in communication, public relations, public information, journalism, advertising, marketing, English, Political Science and International studies. Social Sciences and liberal arts degrees not listed in the preferred list are also acceptable. Degrees outside of those listed as preferred or acceptable will only be considered if the applicant has at least one year experience in a communication field. Work experience requirement is described in paragraph 4f(1) and waiver process in paragraph 5b(2). Candidates with preferred degrees who meet the criteria for Program Authorization 147, Baccalaureate Degree Completion Program (BDCP), may apply for Public Affairs under PA 147 prior to graduation. BDCP Applicants should contact the PAO Community manager at 901-874-3098 for details on applying for PAO via the BDCP program.
 - e. Physical: In line with the Manual of the Medical Department, Chapter 15, selectees must maintain eligibility for deployment and worldwide assignment. Waivers may be requested in instances where medical limitations may only apply to specific duty types and will be considered on a case by case basis.

- f. Duty Preference: Not applicable.
- g. Program Specific Requirements

(1) Work Experience: Work experience is not required for candidates with preferred or acceptable degrees but is desired. Candidates with other degrees must have experience in the communication field. Military or civilian work experience should be similar to acceptable fields of study, as discussed in paragraph 4c(2). Military experience will only be validated by submission of an applicant's service record that must include all performance evaluations, positions held, and military training and education attended/completed. If applicable, include documentation concerning previous military service discharge. Civilian applicants should include a resume highlighting any public affairs related experience, certifications or accreditations. See paragraph 5b(2) for waiver requirements.

(2) Interviews: Applicants must complete an interview with one of the CHINFO approved quarterly interview panels. Upon completion of the interview, the panel will send a NAVCRUIT 1131/5 Interview Appraisal Sheet assessing the candidate to the Professional Recommendation board, BUPERS-OCM, and CHINFO OI-8. The candidate will be provided a confirmation memorandum that must be included by the applicant as part of the application package. Minimum eligible scores are excellent/outstanding overall with no more than one category rated as good on accessible areas and a minimum of 7 on interviewers willingness to serve with the applicant. Applicants should contact the PAO Community manager at 901-874-3098 at least four months prior to the package deadline to schedule their panel interview.

(3) Endorsements: Endorsements by senior officers or senior enlisted, active duty, reserve or retired must be included with the application.

(4) Test Scores/Certifications: A minimum score of 40 on officer aptitude rating. See paragraph 5b(3) for waiver requirements.

(5) Personal Security Investigation: A national agency check, local check investigation or its equivalent, is required to be complete prior to commissioning.

(6) Portfolio: Applicants must submit a portfolio to include but not limited to stories, photographs, speeches, communication plans, and/or any marketing material. Portfolios should demonstrate the applicant's ability to research, plan, implement, and evaluate their communication efforts.

h. Drug and Alcohol Screening: Due to the public facing nature of the public affairs community, all candidates will complete the same drug and alcohol screenings used by nuclear propulsion programs. Specifically, no officer or officer candidate will be accepted into the PAO community who has:

(1) Been addicted to any illicit drug or is physically or psychologically dependent on any illicit drug or alcohol;

- (2) Been a drug trafficker or manufacturer per OPNAVINST 5355.3; and
- (3) Abused illicit drugs (other than marijuana).

(4) **Note:** The Nuclear Propulsion Program Pre-Service Drug Abuse Statement Form (NAVCRUIT 1131/8) will be used to document the statements made by applicants for the PAO community regarding drug use. This form will be submitted with the application kit to Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (COMNAVCRUITCOM). COMNAVCRUITCOM will review all pre-service drug abuse statements and grant waivers (with BUPERS-314F concurrence), if appropriate. Applicants for these programs may be granted a pre-service drug abuse waiver by COMNAVCRUITCOM (with BUPERS-314F concurrence) for experimental use of marijuana only. All candidates will use the NAVCRUIT 1131/8 Drug screening form and route it to COMNAVCRUITCOM and BUPERS-314F instead of PERS-42 and OPNAV N133 as listed on the form.

i. During processing and in personal history questioning, the following will be accomplished for applicants to the PAO community:

(1) Applicants will acknowledge, by signature, that they may be subject to further background investigation and that any false statements made during application may subsequently result in removal from the program. The certification will also indicate to what extent the applicant meets the criteria in the above paragraph and will contain a signed statement rejecting the illegal use of drugs.

(2) If the applicant admits to drug abuse and requests consideration, the following information concerning the circumstances of past drug abuse involvement will be obtained:

- (a) Type(s) of drug(s) abused
- (b) Number of times, approximate dates and amounts
- (c) Period over which taken
- (d) Last involvement
- (e) Civil involvement

5. Waivers: In cases where the applicant does not meet all of the qualifications, but otherwise has an exceptional record or proven skillset required by the Navy, a waiver may be authorized in limited numbers.

a. Waivers may be requested for the following items:

(1) Cumulative GPAs between 2.6 and 2.8 for individuals with graduate education transcripts showing a cumulative GPA above 3.0. Undergraduate cumulative GPA below 2.6

will only be waived if the applicant has completed a masters with a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher.

(2) Degrees outside of preferred or acceptable list may be waived for individuals who have documented work experience in a communication field (military public affairs, public relations, marketing, advertising, journalism, public speaking or community relations) in excess of one year. Waiver request should include transcripts and a description of the job experience and period of service in a communication field.

(3) Officer aptitude rating (OAR) scores between 37 and 39 may request waivers if the candidate has a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale.

(4) Medical limitations that would preclude an applicant for serving in Type 2, 3 or 4 Sea duty, as defined in MILPERSMAN 1306-102, may be waived if the applicant is medically stable in all other shore based duty types and meets retention standards IAW DoDI 6130.03 volume 2 or meets accession standards IAW DoDI 6130.03, volume 1. Waiver requests should include a NAVMED 1300/3 form with noted limitations signed by a MTF or MEPS medical screener. Limited waivers will be considered on a case by case basis. BUPERS-314F may professionally recommend a maximum of two applicants per Fiscal Year that meet this criteria.

b. If a waiver is requested, then follow the steps below prior to the convening of the selection board.

(1) Application Contents: Letter or email addressed to Director, Military Community Management (BUPERS-3) via BUPERS-314F.

(2) Routing: Route requests to the Public Affairs OCM.

(3) Approval Authority: BUPERS-3.

(4) Notifying the Applicant: Public Affairs OCM will notify the applicant.

6. Accession Source

a. Civilians.

b. Enlisted personnel in the Active or Reserve Component (Selected Reserves (SELRES) or Individual Ready Reserve) of any service of the armed forces. SELRES on extended or recall orders may apply but must complete their active duty obligation under current orders before being commissioned. Those serving on active duty, including Training and Administration of the Reserve (TAR) are not eligible to apply unless appropriate release is authorized.

c. Personnel of the other armed Services with an approved inter-service transfer.

7. Indoctrination: Selectees will attend OCS at Officer Training Command, Newport, RI, followed by the Public Affairs Communication Strategy Qualification Course at Defense Information School, Fort Meade, MD.

8. Enlistment: Civilians and enlisted applicants in the paygrades of E-4 or below, who are selected for this program are designated officer candidates and advanced to the paygrade of E-5 upon reporting to OCS. Enlisted applicants in the paygrades of E-5 and above are designated officer candidates in their present paygrades.

9. Constructive Entry Credit: Not applicable.

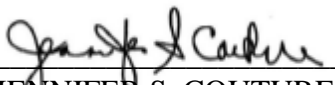
10. Appointment: Candidates will be commissioned in the restricted line of the U.S. Navy as an ensign, designator 1650.

11. Service Obligation

a. Selectees will incur a four year active-duty obligation from date of appointment. The obligation commences upon commissioning.

b. The balance of service, sufficient to complete eight years of total obligated service may be served in a Ready Reserve status.

12. Pay and Allowances: Upon commencing OCS, selectees will receive pay and benefits based on paygrade as outlined in paragraph 8.

Approved: 
JENNIFER S. COUTURE
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Director, Military Personnel
Plans and Policy (OPNAV N13)

Date: 10 Oct 24