



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

JAN 06 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Policy for the Dental Officer Accession Bonus

Attached is [policy guidance for the dental officer accession bonus](#), in accordance with Section 615 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997, signed into law September 23, 1996. The Secretary of each Military Department concerned shall establish implementing guidance based on their own accession requirements and capabilities. However, for Fiscal Year 1997 the amount of the accession bonus paid to each eligible individual shall be \$30,000. This policy shall be reviewed annually.

The Service Secretaries shall ensure their implementing guidance is promulgated within ten working days upon receipt of this memorandum, with a copy to Health Affairs.

Edward D. Martin
Stephen C. Joseph, M.D., M.P.H.

Attachment:

As stated

cc:

Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management Policy)

Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs)

Surgeon General of the Army

Surgeon General of the Navy

Surgeon General of the Air Force

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

HA POLICY 97-021

DENTAL OFFICER ACCESSION BONUS

A. **Eligibility.** To be eligible for the accession bonus, an individual must:

1. Be a graduate of an ADA accredited dental school.
2. Be fully qualified to hold an appointment as a commissioned officer.

3. Execute a written agreement to accept a commission as an officer of the Dental Corps of the Army or the Navy, or as an officer of the Air Force designated as a dental officer, to serve on active duty for a period of not less than four years, upon the acceptance of the agreement by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned. An individual who holds an appointment as a dental officer in either the active or Reserve component is not eligible for the accession bonus. A former dental officer who no longer holds an appointment, and is otherwise eligible, must have been discharged from any Uniformed Service at least two years prior to execution of the written agreement to receive the accession bonus.

4. Not have received financial assistance from the Department of Defense to pursue a course of study in dentistry in exchange for an agreement to accept an appointment as a dental officer. This includes, but is not limited to, participants of the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program and Financial Assistance Program.

5. Be qualified to become and remain certified and licensed as a dentist, as determined by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.

B. **Bonus Authorized.** The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may award an accession bonus to an eligible individual in an amount that shall not exceed \$30,000. Eligible individuals who sign a written agreement, on or after October 1, 1996, to serve on active duty in exchange for receiving the accession bonus are authorized to receive the accession bonus.

C. **Recoupment**

1. An officer who receives an accession bonus and who fails to become and remain certified or licensed as a dentist during the period for which the payment is made shall refund to the United States an amount equal to the full amount of such payment.

2. An officer who voluntarily terminates service on active duty before the end of the obligated period shall refund to the United States the unserved portion of that payment. An obligation to reimburse the United States under paragraph C. is, for all purposes, a debt owed to the United States.

D. **Bankruptcy.** A discharge in bankruptcy under Title 11 that is entered less than five years after the termination of an accession bonus agreement does not discharge a person from a debt arising under such agreement or paragraph C. This provision applies to any case commenced under Title 11 after October 1, 1996.

E. **Termination Authority.** In accordance with Section 615 of the FY 97 National Defense Authorization Act, the accession bonus authority expires September 30, 2002.