

**MILPER Message Number
25-311**

**Proponent
RCHS-SVD-PA**

**Title
Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Interservice Physician Assistant Training Program
Application**

...Issued: [1 Aug 25]...

A. DoDI 6000.13 (Accession and Retention Policies, Programs, and Incentives for Military Health Professions Officers), 30 December 2015 (Change 1, 3 May 2016).

B. DoDI 6130.03, Volume 1 (Medical Standards for Military Service: Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction), Change 5, 28 May 2024).

C. AR 40-501 (Standards of Medical Fitness), 17 March 2023.

D. AR 40-502 (Medical Services: Medical Readiness), 27 June 2019.

E. DA PAM 40-502 (Medical Services: Medical Readiness Procedures), 18 December 2023.

F. AR 135-100 (Army National Guard and Army Reserve: Appointment of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the Army), 1 September 1994.

G. AR 135-101 (Appointment of Reserve Commissioned Officers for Assignment to Army Medical Department Branches), 15 February 1984.

H. AR 350-1 (Army Training and Leader Development), 1 June 2025.

I. AR 600-9 (The Army Body Composition Program), 16 July 2019.

J. AR 601-20 (The Interservice Physician Assistant Training Program), 14 August 2009.

K. AR 601-100 (Appointment of Commissioned and Warrant Officers in the Regular

Army), 21 November 2006.

L. NGR 600-100 (Commissioned Officers Federal Recognition and Related Personnel Actions), 6 July 2020.

1. Expiration Date: This MILPER message will expire no later than (NLT) 14 July 2026.

2. Purpose: This message is the FY 2026 announcement of the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP) board and solicits applications from Regular Army (RA) and United States Army Reserve (USAR) enlisted, commissioned officers, and warrant officers. Army National Guard (ARNG) applicants will refer to paragraph 5 for ARNG specific requirements.

a. Applications are solicited for the IPAP classes starting in January, April, and August 2027 at the Medical Center of Excellence located at Joint Base San Antonio – Fort Sam Houston (JBSA-FSH), Texas. The January 2027 class will report to JBSA-FSH on 29 November 2026.

b. Enlisted students selected for this training will attend in officer candidate status and will be accessed into the Army Medical Specialist (SP) Corps as commissioned officers upon successful completion of the training.

c. Enlisted students must complete Basic Leader Course (BLC) a minimum of 120 days prior to reporting to JBSA-FSH for the IPAP class.

d. Warrant officer students will attend at their current warrant officer rank and will be accessed into the SP Corps as commissioned officers upon successful completion of the training.

e. Commissioned officer students will report with their current rank.

f. Applications from other services for Army IPAP seats will not be accepted for the FY 2026 board. Other service applicants are encouraged to apply for the IPAP through their current branch of service. Active Duty/Regular Army (Component 1), Army National Guard (Component 2) and Army Reserve (Component 3) applicants will only be considered for seats within their respective component for the FY 2026 board. Applicants accepted into the IPAP with a subsequent change in component will not retain their seat; acceptance does not carry over to a different component.

- g. Cadets, including federal service academies such as the US Army Military Academy and Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) are not eligible to apply for the IPAP.
- h. Army personnel selected for the IPAP are exempt from stop loss, stop movement, and life cycle unit requirements (AR 601-20 2-2.e.)
- i. Civilian personnel are not eligible to apply for the IPAP.
- j. All enlisted applicants must complete Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) training prior to application.
- k. All officer applicants must complete the Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) prior to application.

3. Responsibilities: (Clarification to AR 601-20 1-4)

- a. Addition to AR 601-20 1-4d. Unit commanders and immediate supervisors for applicants will interview and provide specific recommendations on applicants under their control and/or supervision. Unit commanders must include the following conditional release statement in their Letter of Recommendation (LOR): "I approve (rank, name)'s request for conditional release upon acceptance to the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP). This approval is a non-waiverable administrative requirement that will permit (them) to change (their) branch to Army Medical Specialist Corps upon completion of the IPAP." The minimum level of command for this endorsement is battalion.
- b. Recommending Physician Assistant (PA) will interview and provide specific recommendations on applicants under their control and/or supervision. Physician Assistant recommendations must include USAREC Form 601-37.11 (Application Evaluation Worksheet), and completion of the supplemental evaluation provided after the applicant has completed their online registration. The applicant will complete block 10 of USAREC Form 601-37.11 and include a summary of their shadow time. The summary must include a brief overview of the types of patients, care, and procedures they saw. It must also discuss the quality of shadow hours with regard to how it may have affected their interest in medicine and any improvements they feel may maximize the value of shadow hours. The Recommending PA will complete blocks 6 and 7 as indicated on the form while also documenting at least 80 hours of shadowing. A minimum of 40 hours must be within 12 months of the selection board; more than 80 hours is highly recommended. Applicants without access to a Recommending PA may

request approval for shadowing hours with a health care professional other than a Physician Assistant by email to their respective component IPAP Manager.

4. Program Information:

a. Ineligibility (Clarification to AR 601-20 2-1):

(1) Update to AR 601-20 2-1(3): The IPAP Manager will process all waivers to the appropriate waiver authority.

(2) Update to AR 601-20 2-1(3)(a): The Date Initially Entry Military Service (DIEMS) or Basic Date of Appointment (BDA) will be used to determine time of service. Applicants that do not meet time in service (TIS) requirements are ineligible without an approved waiver. Waivers will be considered for individuals who demonstrate exceptional academic, clinical, or leadership potential. Requests must be routed through the applicant's component IPAP Manager to the PA Consultant to TSG, with supporting letters of recommendation and a justification memorandum. Final approval resides with the PA Consultant to TSG.

Waiver Required to Board
Army Applicants with less than 3 years of total AFS as of 01 January 2027
Regular Army Applicants with over 15 years of total AFS as of 01 January 2027
ARNG and USAR Applicants with over 10 years TIS as of 01 January 2027
Officers with over 8 years of AFCS as of 01 January 2027

(3) Clarification to the AR 601-20 2-1(3)(b): Enlisted applicants only: per AR 601-100 para 1-9, an original appointment as a commissioned officer in the RA must occur prior to age 42. For the USAR, an original appointment as a commissioned officer must occur prior to the age of 47. To compete for an active duty IPAP seat, the applicant must be under the appropriate commissioning age as of 1 February 2030. Age waivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

(4) Change to AR 601-20 2-1.b: All applicants with P2 profile are ineligible to apply for the IPAP. An exception to board may be requested through the respective component IPAP Manager to their component PA Consultant to the Surgeon General (TSG) for applicants with a P2 in the P, H, or E category on their PULHES. No exceptions to board will be authorized for applicants with a P2 in the U, L, or S category on their PULHES. All applicants with a P3 in any PULHES category are ineligible to apply. There

is no waiver for this requirement.

(5) Clarification to AR 601-20 2-1.b: Applicants with a temporary profile are ineligible to board. An exception to board, including exception for pregnancy, may be requested through the respective component IPAP Manager to their component PA Consultant to TSG.

b. Basic prerequisites: Updates can be found on the US Army Recruiting Command IPAP website at: <https://recruiting.army.mil/armypa> .

(1) Change to AR 601-20 2-2.a: Due to the critical skills war time shortage of physician assistants (AOC 65D), Soldiers in each component may only apply for their current component's IPAP seats.

(2) Change to AR 601-20 2-2.m (1): Applicants must have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 and a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all science courses. The science GPA will include the highest grade attained for each science course completed within eight (8) years of the start of the IPAP (courses completed Fall 2019 and after) as determined by the IPAP affiliated university. Highest science grades are only calculated if the same class is retaken at the same university or college in the same format. Applicants must meet all GPA requirements by the application deadline, 1 March 2026. Minimum GPA requirements are no longer waiverable. Coursework completed after 1 March 2026 will NOT count towards the GPA. A list of courses that count towards the science GPA can be found on the US Army Recruiting Command IPAP website in the right-hand side pane titled "Additional Resources".

(3) IPAP Academic Delay (AD) for RA, ARNG and USAR allows applicants to apply for the IPAP, pending no more than three prerequisite courses, as of the 1 March 2026 application deadline. There is no limitation on the total semester hours for AD. All AD prerequisite courses must be completed with transcripts to the IPAP Manager and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) by 1 October 2026. The minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 and minimum science GPA of 3.0 must be maintained upon completion of all prerequisite courses. All coursework must have a letter grade of C or higher to be accepted.

(4) All applicants must complete the following mandatory pre-requisite coursework either in-residence or online from a regionally accredited university or college:

(a) 3 semester hours of Human Anatomy or Human Anatomy and Physiology I.

(b) 3 semester hours of Human Physiology or Human Anatomy and Physiology II. When taking a combined Human Anatomy and Physiology course, applicants must take another combined Human Anatomy and Physiology course to meet the prerequisite requirement. Mixing of course types is not authorized.

(c) 3 semester hours of College Algebra or higher-level math course. Statistics will not count. College Level Examination Program (CLEP) or Advanced Placement (AP) College Algebra or higher-level math completed within five (5) years of the application deadline will be considered for requirement completion. A CLEP score of 50 or more is required to receive credit. An AP letter grade of C or higher is required to receive credit.

(d) 3 semester hours of Psychology. Introductory courses will count.

(e) 6 semester hours of Chemistry. Chemistry coursework must include a minimum of both General Chemistry I and General Chemistry II, but either course may be replaced with a higher-level chemistry course. Introductory courses will NOT count. Labs are highly encouraged.

(f) 6 semester hours of Humanities.

(g) 6 semester hours of English (must include 3 semester hours of composition or writing). CLEP English Composition test or AP English Composition completed within five (5) years of the application deadline will be considered for requirement completion. A CLEP score of 50 or more is required to receive credit. An AP letter grade of C or higher is required to receive credit.

(5) Applicants must complete all mandatory science courses (Anatomy, Physiology and General Chemistry) within 8 years of the start of the IPAP (courses completed Fall 2019 and after); recommended within five years. Credit for MOS- and AOC-related training are as follows: 68K (Medical Laboratory Specialist) and 68Q (Pharmacy Specialist) will receive 6 hours of General Chemistry credit; 65A (Occupational Therapist), 65B (Physical Therapist), and 68X (Behavioral Health Specialist) will receive 3 hours of Psychology credit; 18D (Special Forces Medic), 38BW4 (Special Operations Civil Affairs Medical Sergeant), 68C/68WM6 (Licensed Practical Nurse), 68WF2 (Advanced Flight Paramedic), and 68W with the W1 skill identifier after completion of the Special Operations Combat Medic (SOCM) course will receive 3 hours of either Human Anatomy and Physiology I or Human Anatomy and Physiology II credit, as applicable; 65A (Occupational Therapist), 65B (Physical Therapist), and all AOC 66 series (Army Nurse Corps) will receive 6 hours of Human Anatomy and Physiology credit.

(6) The Medical Terminology course must be completed within five (5) years of reporting to the IPAP (Fall 2022 and after) by either taking the military correspondence course or a college class. The military correspondence course can be found on Army Training Information System (ATIS) by searching for Basic Medical Technology (081-MD0010). Applicants without medical background are highly recommended to meet this requirement through college coursework.

(7) Grade replacement is not accepted for applicants applying to the IPAP FY26 board.

(8) For questions regarding academics that are not clear in the regulation or this MILPER, interested applicants must contact the UNMC via email at cahpadmissions@unmc.edu.

(9) Tuition assistance memorandums are provided by the UNMC. Applicants can request a memorandum by completing the academic worksheet link on the center pane of the US Army Recruiting Command IPAP website: recruiting.army.mil/armypa.

(10) Applicants must complete online IPAP registration through Unified College Application System (UNICAS) for the UNMC at <http://ipap.liaisoncas.com>. Online registration will be open from 1 October 2025 through 1 March 2026. Online registration is mandatory for all interested applicants and is in addition to sending their application to US Army Recruiting Division (USARD) at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the UNMC has received all transcripts and the online application. If the registration is not complete by the application deadline, the applicant will not be boarded.

(11) Applicants must send an official transcript from every university or college they have attended to the UNMC no earlier than (NET) 1 October 2025 and NLT 1 March 2026. Transcripts can be sent to the UNMC digitally via the online registration portal instructions or by mail to: Liaison – IPAP Transcript Processing Center, PO Box 9140, Watertown, MA 02471.

(12) All applicants must include a complete physical examination (PE) on DD Form 2807-1 (Report of Medical History) and DD Form 2808 (Report of Medical Examination) within their application. The PE forms must be dated within 12 months of the first day of the selection board. Official results of the medical urine drug screen (UDS), alcohol blood test (ETOH), human immunodeficiency virus blood test (HIV), and urinalysis (UA) must be included in the application. Transcribed results on the PE forms will not meet this requirement. Females are also required to include the result of a recent human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) test (pregnancy test). Applicants must also include a

copy of their audiogram (hearing test) dated within 12 months of the first day of the selection board. All enlisted Soldiers must meet commissioning standards IAW AR 40-501, chapter 2 and DODI 6130.13, Volume 1. All officers must meet retention standards IAW AR 40-501, chapter 3.

(13) The IPAP Manager processes all waivers. Waivers are processed for appropriate action during pre-board and throughout the entirety of the IPAP IAW DODI 6130.13, Volume 1 ; AR 40-501; AR 135-100; AR135-101; AR 601-100 and local USARD policy. This is to ensure that Soldiers remain eligible for appointment as a commissioned officer for RA and USAR. ARNG applicants must refer to paragraph 5 for submitting waivers.

(14) A conditional release is no longer required prior to the selection board but it is highly encouraged. All selected applicants must request and receive an approved release from their branch within 90 days of the board results MILPER publication date. Releases are requested through IPPS-A as a Personal Action Request (PAR), under 'correct the record', as an 'other' request. Conditional release statements for applicants completing the PAR prior to the board must include the following statement: "I request a conditional release from my current branch to attend the IPAP. Upon program completion, I will branch into the Army Medical Specialist Corps." A release statement for applicants processing a PAR after selection must include the statement: "I have been board selected to attend the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP) with a (DDMMYY) class report date. I request a release from my current branch to attend the IPAP. Upon program completion, I will branch into the Army Medical Specialist Corps." Applicants must maintain command and branch support for attending the IPAP throughout the process to include pre-matriculation into the IPAP (non-waiverable administrative requirement). Failure to maintain command support or receive an approved branch release PAR within 90 days of the MILPER publication date will result in removal from the selection list and from the OML. The PAR must be signed by the applicant's Battalion or Brigade Commander and Branch Chief/Manager. DD Form 368 (Request for Conditional Release) is not required for RA or USAR applicants because they are staying in the same component. All Soldiers currently Department of the Army selected for Drill Sergeant or Recruiter duties are ineligible to apply and their packets will not be boarded.

(15) All applicants must take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) within five (5) years of the FY of application (1 March 2020 or after). Applicants must score a minimum of 450 in both the reading and math section with a cumulative score of at least 1000. The SAT must be scheduled and taken NLT 14 March 2026 to allow a minimum of eight (8) weeks for the College Board to grade the examination. The SAT scores must be sent directly to USARD by including code '3994' on your SAT scantron document. Scores

may be received NET 1 October 2025 and NLT the last duty day prior to the selection board. There are no exceptions and no waivers to this requirement. The last available SAT date noted on the College Board website is 14 March 2026. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) will not fulfill the SAT requirement. American College Testing (ACT) will not fulfill the SAT requirement.

(16) All applicants must take the Physician Assistant College Admissions Test (PA-CAT). The PA-CAT must be taken NLT 1 March 2026. The PA-CAT will not be scored as part of the selection criteria but will be viewed by members of the selection board. Allow a minimum of 8 weeks for the test results to reach USARD. Registration for the exam can be found at <https://www.pa-cat.com>. Scores must be sent directly to USARD by selecting US Army Active Duty (Regular Army), US Army National Guard, or US Army Reserve as the program during registration. Results may be received NET 1 October 2025, but NLT the last duty day prior to the selection board.

(17) All applicants must provide a memorandum signed by their unit security manager validating their secret or interim clearance as part of their application. All applicants need a minimum of an interim clearance granted by the application deadline, 1 March 2026, to apply. There is no exception or waiver authorized for this requirement.

(18) All applicants must pass height and weight standards IAW AR 600-9 and pass the Army Fitness Test (AFT) or current fitness test of record IAW AR 350-1 to apply. There are no height and weight exceptions or waivers.

(19) DA photos are no longer allowed or included in the application.

(20) Commissioned officers not selected for promotion within their primary zone are ineligible to apply. An exception to board may be requested through the respective component IPAP Manager to their component PA Consultant to TSG. Any changes to promotion status, including primary zone non-selection during the application cycle or following selection, require immediate notification to the IPAP Manager.

c. Academic delay versus the Requirements Completion Course (RCC): Update to AR 601-20 can be found on the US Army Recruiting Command IPAP website. Failure to complete academic requirements prior to 1 October 2026 will result in removal from the program. This requirement is non-waiverable.

(1) The RCC will not be available for the FY 2026 board.

(2) Academic delay: RA, ARNG, and USAR applicants refer to paragraph 4.b.(3).

d. Application deadlines, updates, and application documents can be found on US Army Recruiting Command IPAP website: recruiting.army.mil/armypa.

(1) Applications must be complete and digitally submitted NET 1 October 2025 and NLT 1 March 2026, or they will not be processed. RA and USAR applications will be submitted to the USARD IPAP mailbox usarmy.knox.usarec.mbx.hsd-ipap@mail.mil and ARNG applications will be submitted through the applicant's State specialty branch recruiter to the ARNG IPAP Manager using DoD SAFE (<https://safe.apps.mil>).

(2) Applications should be in portable document format (PDF) and in sequence as listed on the Application Checklist found on the right pane of the US Army Recruiting Command IPAP website. Tab 1, Tab 2, and Tab 3 of the Application Checklist should each be a separate PDF. Each tab should be titled: applicant's LName, FName - Tab # (e.g. Smith, John – Tab 1). Applications will be returned to the applicant if they are incorrectly labeled or not in the correct format.

e. Program description and service obligation:

(1) Update to AR 601-20 2-4 b(1): Didactic instruction (Phase 1) will be provided at the Medical Center of Excellence for a period of approximately 66 weeks. IPAP students are not authorized leave during any instruction block in Phase 1. Exceptions to this requirement can be made on a case-by-case basis, to include emergency and parental leave. Students are provided breaks between instruction blocks to allow for ordinary leave. Parental leave should not be taken while actively engaged in a block of instruction, with exception of the birthing parent, infant's primary caregiver, or on a case-by-case basis. IPAP students will be afforded an opportunity to take parental leave IAW current regulatory guidance while in training.

(2) Update to AR 601-20 2-4 b(2): Clinical training (Phase 2) will occur at select military medical treatment facilities for a period of approximately 57 weeks. IPAP students are not authorized leave during any instruction block in Phase 2. Exceptions to this requirement can be made on a case-by-case basis, to include emergency and parental leave. Students will coordinate with their Phase 2 site coordinator for leave. Parental leave should not be taken while actively engaged in a block of instruction, with exception of the birthing parent, infant's primary caregiver, or on a case-by-case basis. IPAP students will be afforded an opportunity to take parental leave IAW current regulation and policy while in training.

(3) Clarification to the AR 601-20 2-4 d(4): RA and USAR commissioned officers will be

“detailed” into the SP Corps while attending the IPAP. Upon successful completion of Phase 2 training, eligible graduates are tendered a RA or USAR appointment as a commissioned officer in the SP Corps, with their rank determined by their individual constructive service credit calculated IAW DODI 6000.13, Enclosure 3 and policy established by the OTSG.

(4) Update to AR 601-20 3-1 e(3): The basic application memorandum for commissioned officers will consist of the following statement adjustments, “I understand that I will attend the IPAP in my current officer rank held, and will be ‘detailed’ into the SP Corps. Upon successful completion of Phase 2 training, I may be tendered a Regular Army appointment as a commissioned officer in the SP Corps with a rank determined by my individual constructive service credit calculation IAW DODI 6000.13 and policy established by the OTSG.”

(5) Update to the AR 601-20 4-1.c: Commissioned officers will report with their current rank held.

(6) Commissioned officers in the IPAP will be assigned to B Company 187th Medical Battalion for command and control. The B Company 187th Medical Battalion chain of command will be responsible for in/out processing, personal finances, UCMJ authority, academic tracking, and enforcement of program policy.

(7) Officers will be under the control of their basic branch (State for ARNG officers) for promotions and career status integration while attending the IPAP.

(8) All Regular Army IPAP students will incur a 54 month Active Duty Service Obligation upon successful completion of the program.

(9) ARNG and USAR IPAP students will have a total of an 8-year obligation for completing the IPAP: the Mobilization Day (M-Day)/Selective Reserve (SELRES) obligation of 6 years and an Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) obligation of 2 years.

f. Milestones in processing applications:

(1) Effective upon publication of this message, applications will be accepted when submitted between 1 October 2025 and 1 March 2026.

(2) Applicants must include all required documents in their application on the initial submission NLT 1 March 2026. Each applicant must ensure that their unit commander’s global email address is on their letter of recommendation. Applicants will

be notified of any required application corrections at their email address provided. Incomplete applications will not be boarded. Applicants will send a separate email to the IPAP mailbox to confirm receipt of their packet NLT 72 hours after initial packet submission.

(3) All documents within the application must be dated within 12 months of the June 2026 board.

(4) Applicants must complete the UNMC online IPAP registration through UNICAS, at <http://ipap.liaisoncas.com>. Online registrations will be open from 1 October 2025 through 1 March 2026. Online registration is mandatory for all applicants and must be submitted even if the applicant is pending transcript receipt from all the universities or colleges they attended. There are no exceptions or waivers for this requirement. Applicants must ensure the UNMC has received all required transcripts and their online application. Applicants must provide preceptor name and contact information during registration to ensure supplemental preceptor evaluation delivery. If this registration is not complete by the application deadline, the application will not be boarded.

(5) Selections for RA and USAR will be announced by USARD (RCHS-SVD) via a worldwide MILPER message at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/milper> after June 2026. Selections for ARNG will be announced by NGB via a national message after June 2026.

5. ARNG specific requirements

a. Age, age in grade, and civil conviction waivers are processed through the State OPM to ARNG-HRH at NGB IAW AR 40-501, AR 40-502, AR 135-100, AR 135-101, AR 601-100, DA PAM 40-502, NGR (AR) 600-100, and ARNG policy.

b. The PEs will be conducted at a Medical Detachment, MEPS, or MTF and IAW AR 40-501, Chapter 2 and DA PAM 40-502. Medical waiver requests must be submitted into the Medical Action Tracking System (MATS), a module within MEDCHART. The approved MATS waiver must be included within the application. An ETP IAW with 4.a.(4) will only be considered after waiver approval (see paragraph 4.a.(3) above). DODMERB physicals are not authorized. All PEs will be reviewed and approved by the ARNG Medical Standards Officer before applications are submitted to the board.

c. All ARNG applicants will work with their State AMEDD recruiter to apply. Only State AMEDD recruiters are authorized to contact the ARNG IPAP Manager.

6. Inquiries and assistance:

For additional assistance for RA and USAR applicants, contact the IPAP Manager, HQ, USARD (RCHS-SVD-PA), 1307 Third Avenue, Fort Knox, KY 40121-2726. Commercial (520) 693-3905, email: jason.n.sharp.mil@army.mil or visit <https://recruiting.army.mil/armypa>.

For additional assistance for ARNG applicants, contact the State AMEDD Recruiter. For State AMEDD recruiter information contact ng.ncr.ngb-arng.mbx.arng-hrr-specialty-branch-accessions@army.mil.