

The Reserve Personnel Career Counseling (RPCC) Guide



CG PSC-RPM
AUGUST 2024

- A. PURPOSE. The Reserve Personnel Career Counseling (RPCC) system is a resource available to provide career management counseling to Reserve Personnel with special emphasis on career decisions as they pertain to competitiveness for assignments, promotions, and advancements.
- B. The RPCC will contribute to the Commandant's Direction by:
1. Guiding officers and enlisted members through careers to make a positive contribution to current and future **readiness**;
 2. Placing emphasis on the growth, professional development, and well-being of **Reserve Personnel**; and
 3. Reinforcing **stewardship**, public trust, and Coast Guard mission performance by ensuring all reservists are knowledgeable about the impacts of career decisions.
- C. DESCRIPTION. The RPCC system consists of three lines of effort to effectively communicate accurate career management advice, based on the environment and current trends of the Reserve force. These lines of effort are:
1. The RPCC Guide;
 2. Reserve Personnel Management (RPM) outreach efforts; and
 3. Individual Reserve Personnel Career Counseling sessions.
- D. RPCC GUIDE. Provides Reserve Personnel an easily accessible reference to better understand the assignment and selection processes, to improve competitiveness for assignment, promotion, advancement, and to ultimately make informed career decisions.
- E. RPM OUTREACH EFFORTS. Provides units on-site assignment and career development presentations annually. FY funding dependent, presentations are typically provided at no cost to the hosting unit(s) and cover a vast array of topics for the benefit of both Reserve Officers and enlisted members. In lieu of an on-site road show, RPM can coordinate unit-wide tele-conferences. See ALCGRSV Reserve Personnel Management Roadshow Assignment Year Solicitation message released the first week of September for the latest scheduling information.
- F. INDIVIDUAL RPCC SESSIONS. Interactive discussions with a Reserve Assignment Officer, normally conducted via telephone. These individually tailored sessions include a joint review of the member's Employee Summary Sheet and Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) via the interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System (iPERMS), a discussion of career paths, a review of the assignment process, and recommendations for future assignments and professional development opportunities to improve competitiveness. See the latest ALCGRSV message for RPCC scheduling information.

1. In order to conduct a joint record review, members should obtain a copy of their OMPF via iPERMS prior to the counseling session: [here](#). Members are highly encouraged to review their record and have any questions/concerns ready to be discussed during the counseling session. **NOTE – it takes approximately 3-4 weeks for a record to be emailed to the requestor.*
2. Members requesting an individual RPCC session are required to review the RPCC Guide prior to the session.

Reserve Personnel Career Counseling (RPCC) Guide

DESCRIPTION: The RPCC Guide, is designed to provide all Reserve members with an easily accessible reference to better understand the assignment and selection processes, to improve competitiveness for assignment, promotion, advancement, and to ultimately make informed career decisions. Reading the RPCC Guide, sections pertinent to each member, is a prerequisite for requesting an individual RPCC session with a Reserve Assignment Officer.

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Zone Sizes and Opportunity of Selection (OOS)

The Reserve Officer Corps Management Plan (ROCMP) is the primary means the Coast Guard uses to shape the Reserve Officer workforce. By law, O-4 and above are considered “controlled grades” with a specified end strength cap. To comply with law and maintain rank pyramids, the ROCMP determines the number of officers that will be considered for promotion (zone size) and the percentage that will be selected (OOS). Due to the running mate system, Reserve Officer zone sizes are tied to the Active Duty zone. However, the ROCMP sets a unique OOS to manage the Reserve workforce’s controlled grades. The Promotion Year 2025 ROCMP can be found at the below link: [Here](#).

Knowing when you may be in zone is critical. Once CG-126 develops the ROCMP RPM releases the annual Promotion Year Inactive Duty Promotion List (IDPL) Selection and Retention Boards message with zone estimates. You can cross reference the projected zone size with your position on the Register of Officers to determine whether or not you are in zone. Ensure your record is up to date and potentially prepare an off cycle Officer Evaluation Report (OER) if you may be in zone.

RPM will release the actual candidate message 30 days prior to each board. It’s important to note that the lists often change due to movement in and out of the IDPL. CG Personnel Service Center Notice 1401 (PSCNOTE 1401) publishes the convening dates for all boards and panels and directs all officers in and above zone to submit OERs without delay.

PSC Note 1401 PY25 Schedule of Officer Personnel Boards and Panels:

[PY25 PSCNOTE 1401.pdf \(uscg.mil\)](#)



Figure 1

Officer Boards and Panels

Getting selected by a board to the next higher pay grade or selected for assignment, advanced education, or other programs by a panel may seem mysterious. The following section is intended to help demystify the process and give you a greater understanding of how to ensure you and your record are properly prepared. A Reserve Officer’s career requires the successful navigation of the board process and an understanding of how this relates to the assignment process.

Boards and panels are presented with multiple items to assist in making their selection decisions. Just like promotions, assignments are competitive and Assignment Officers use the same tools to make their decisions. These items include:

- The “Board/Panel View” of the candidate’s Employee Summary Sheets (ESS),
- Reserve Point Statement from Direct Access,
- Communications to the board/panel (if applicable), and
- Each candidate’s Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) via iPERMS

COMDTINST 1410.2 provides a complete list of items viewable by selection boards/panels. These include items such as OERs, educational transcripts, disciplinary documentation, CG-3307s, CG-4082s, and awards.

Remaining competitive for promotion and assignment requires a complete and accurate record. This includes an up-to-date OER, no missing OERs, an updated ESS, and an accurate Reserve point balance statement. All Officers are encouraged to review their OMPF. To find out more about viewing your OMPF via iPERMS, please visit the [PSC-BOPS-mr](#) website. Even if you do not anticipate going before a board, annual checks ensure your record is solid when you go in zone.

Record Verification Checklist

Officer Evaluation Reports (OER)	Up to date, no gaps, none missing
Employee Summary Sheets (ESS)	Accurate, competencies, OSC’s, Awards, Education
Reserve Point Statement	Accurate, no gaps, qualified years towards retirement
Official Military Personnel File (OMPF)	OERs, Awards, Education, CG-4082s

Figure 2

Another way to remain competitive is to know what each board or panel will be targeting. Per COMDTINST M1000.3 (series), Article 6.A.3, boards/panels are directed to use four pillars to establish criteria: **Performance, Professionalism, Leadership and Education.**

Each spring, the Commandant publishes the “Commandant’s Guidance to Officer Selection Boards and Panels” [PY25 Guidance Boards - Panels.pdf](#) that provides specific guidance and expectations to board and panel membership. This guidance includes the basic characteristics of successful officers and serves as the foundation that boards/panels use to build selection criteria by which each candidate’s record will be evaluated. Selection criteria, as determined by the board members under the umbrella of the Commandant’s guidance, are neither published nor disclosed to any person who is not a member of the board or panel. Once the criteria is established to define the pillars, the board will then decide how each will be weighted to build a unique score sheet used to evaluate each record.

Recommendations for selection can ONLY be made from matters of a candidate’s official record. A selection cannot be made based on rumor, hearsay or an opinion of a candidate. If it’s not in your record, it will not be discussed by the board.

Whether for retention, promotion, or assignment, selection relies upon a strong record. Ultimately, “You are what your record says you are.”

Promotion Boards

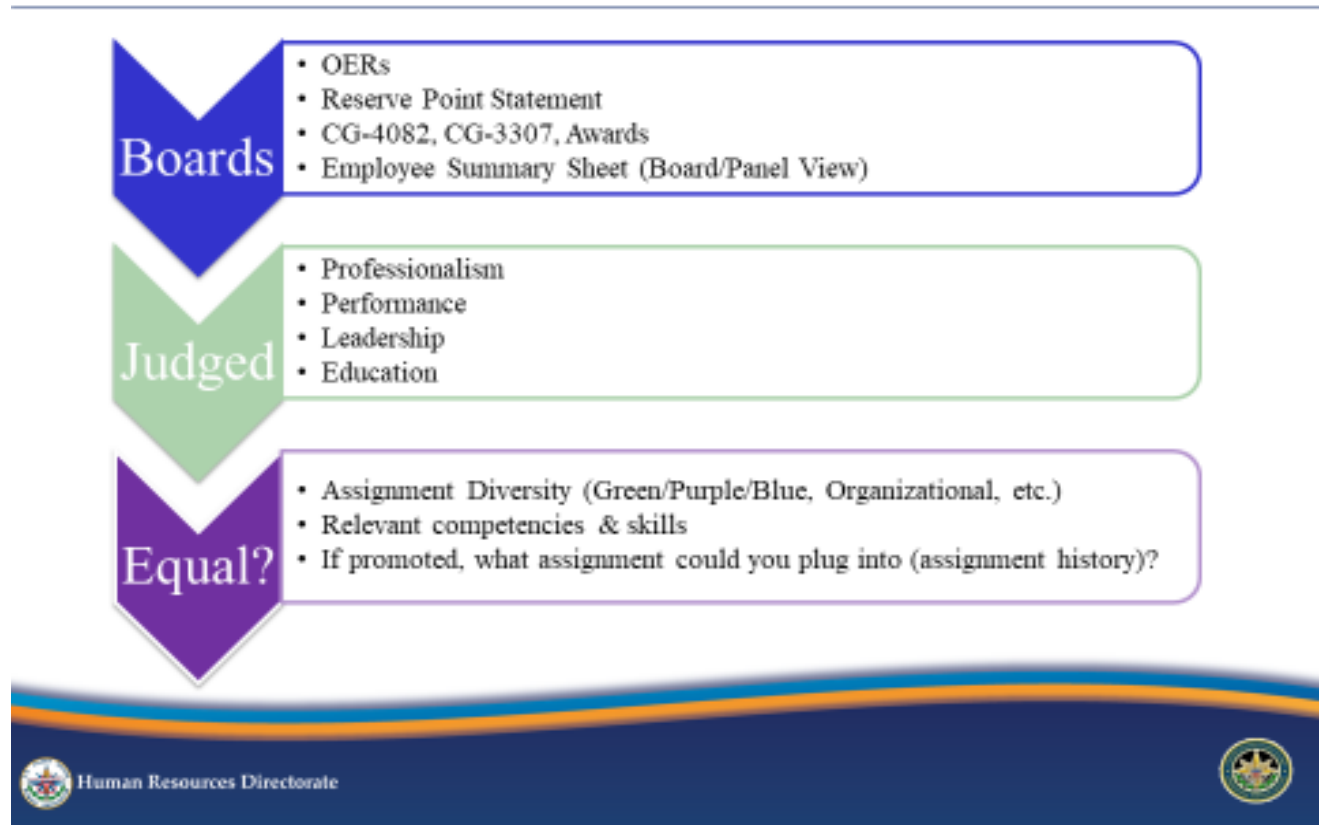


Figure 3

The Reserve Officer Career Path

Per the Reserve Component Action Plan ([USCG Reserve Component Action Plan \(defense.gov\)](https://www.defense.gov/Portals/0/Documents/2017/USCG_Reserve_Component_Action_Plan.pdf)) the Reserve Component is a contingency-based workforce trained to meet the Coast Guard’s mobilization requirements in the following prioritized mission areas:

- Defense Readiness,
- Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security,
- Incident Management and Response, and
- Mission Support

The Reserve Component is first and foremost a contingency response organization. Officers should strive to develop skill sets (competencies, Officer Specialty Codes, etc.) that demonstrate an organizational contingency response value. When called upon, what skills will you bring to the table? By nature, contingencies are unpredictable so we never know exactly what

capabilities the Coast Guard may need. Therefore, Reserve Officers with wide ranging skill sets provide more value to the organization and are typically more successful competing for varied assignments. If you promoted tomorrow, what assignments would you qualify for?

Unlike the ADPL that values a more linear, specialized career path, IDPL boards place a high value on career diversity. Diversity can be defined several different ways. However, recent board results indicate that more successful Reserve officers have experience in two or more of the three "communities" – the traditional Coast Guard (Blue), the Joint/Combatant Command community (Purple), and the Defense Operations community (Green). It is essential that an officer seek assignment diversity early in their careers when more job opportunities are available. As you become more senior, the force pyramid thins, and it becomes more difficult to compete for the limited diverse options.

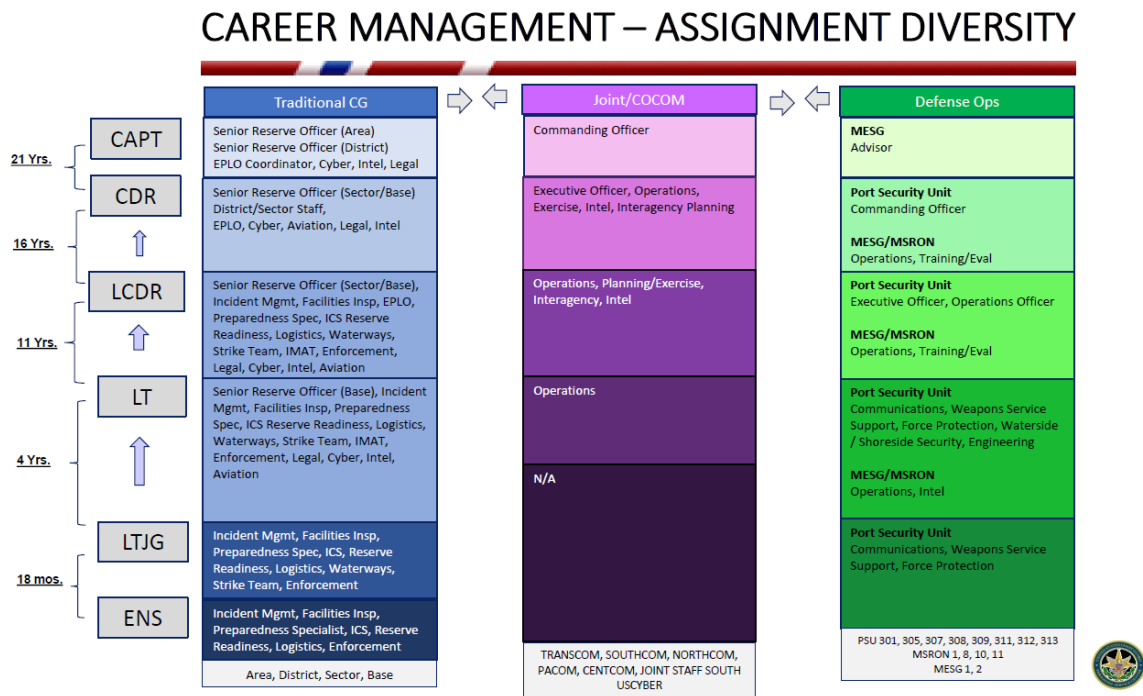


Figure 4

It is still possible to have a long and successful career just within the "Blue Guard," but officers should seek assignment diversity within that community and accrue contingency response related qualifications like advanced ICS competencies to be competitive for future promotions. Assignment diversity is perhaps even more important for officers in more specialized career fields like Cyber, Intel, Legal, Aviation and Prevention. Organizational diversity is a topic a board will value as well. Officers should consider positions that allow opportunities to see how the organization is managed, and decisions are executed at multiple levels: unit, Sector, District, Area, HQ, etc.

Regardless of the community or level of the organization, Reserve Officers should continually seek increasingly challenging assignments that afford the opportunity to lead people, oversee processes, and manage assets. Recent data indicates that O-5s that have taken on these billets (PSU, MESG/MSRON , COCOM, and SRO) fared better for retention and selection than counterparts who did not.

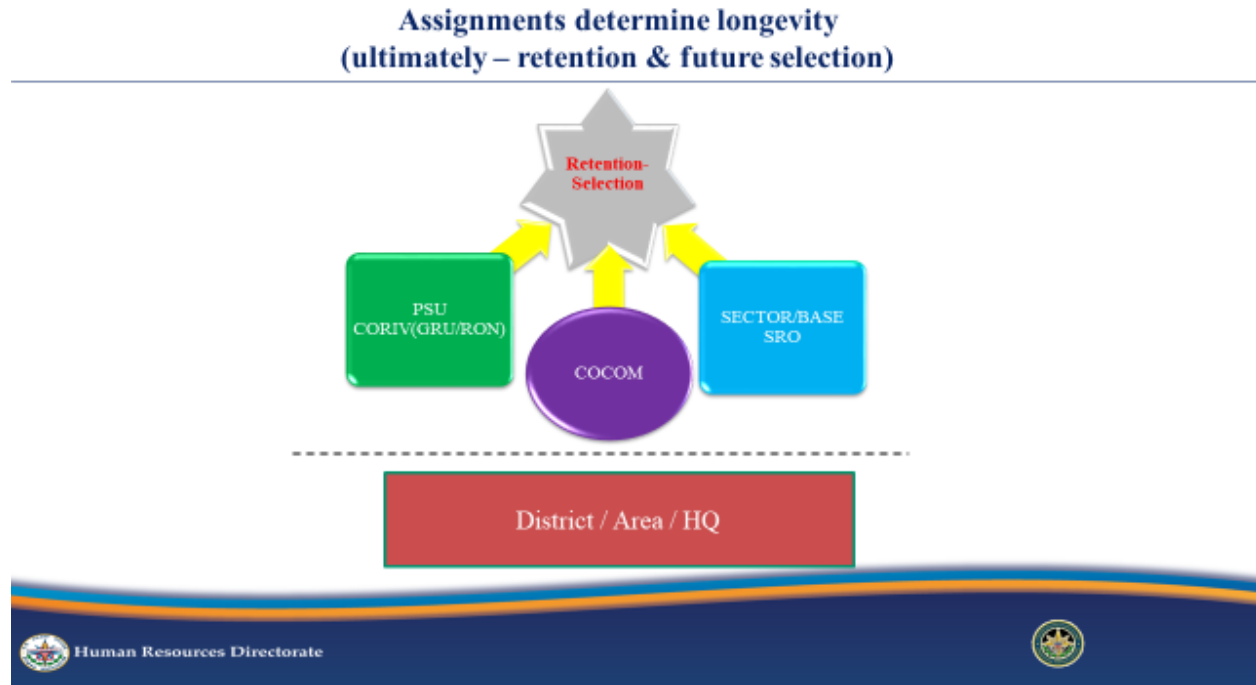


Figure 5

The pinnacle of responsibility for any officer is command. As a Reserve Officer, you have two opportunities: PSU command at O-5 and CGGRU COCOM command at O-6. The chart below is adapted from Enclosure (1) to CG PSCINST 1401.C and shows the current eligibility criteria for command screening. As you can see, there are a variety of ways to become eligible, but they all require a significant degree of planning early in one’s career to earn a qualifying assignment.

IDPL Officer Commands	Grade	Eligibility Criteria
CGRU COCOM, including CGRU JSS	O-6	Meet any one of the following assignment / education combinations: (1) PSU Command cadre (CO or XO); Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron (MSRON)/Maritime Expeditionary Security Group (MESG)O-5/O-4 assignment, or COCOM/JSS CGRU Executive Officer

		(2) PSU, MSRON/MESG COCOM/JSS CGRU, or Joint Staff assignment and Joint Professional Military Education (JPME-1) Completion. (3) Any Area/District/Sector/Base SRO duty and JPME-1 completion.
PSU	O-5	Served in one of the following positions: (1) PSU Executive Officer, Operations Officer, or Engineering Officer (with prior waterside/shoreside/communications division officer assignment). (2) A MSRON/MESG (O-5/O-4 assignment). (3) Senior Reserve Officer (SRO) at any Coast Guard unit with PSU Insignia or Advanced Boat Forces Insignia. (4) Tactical DSF department head assignment with Advanced Boat Forces Insignia. (5) Joint Staff assignment with a minimum of two years' experience at a CORIVRON or PSU with prior waterside/shoreside/communications division officer assignment.

Figure 6

While your assignment history, performance in those positions, and progress towards contingency response related competencies may be the most important consideration for retention and promotion, they are not the only factors. You should also consider the importance of how frequently you have mobilized. Officers that involuntarily mobilize under T-10 or T-14 are often looked favorably upon by promotion boards and Assignment Officers. Voluntarily acceptance of excessive Long Term Active Duty for Operational Support (LT-ADOS) or Extended Active Duty (EAD) may not always carry the same weight.

LT-ADOS and EAD offer officers the opportunity to gain valuable skills, experience, and have their performance documented in an OER. However, officers should be judicious when accepting these opportunities. Remember, you are a Reserve Officer. An IDPL board will want to see your impact upon the Reserve Component and its primary mission areas. Some LT-ADOS and EAD opportunities will provide that. Others may not. Officers on EAD should also be aware that they will compete on the ADPL should they come into zone while under contract, competing against ADPL officers.

Chief Warrant Officers (CWO)

Appointment

Unlike active duty, the Reserve component does not utilize a pre-scoring system for CWO candidates. Personnel Data Extracts (PDE) and a pre-board eligibility list will not be available.

Applicants if selected, must agree to transfer to a vacant, or projected vacant SELRES CWO position for a minimum of two years from the appointment effective date. Selectees who fail to complete the initial two-year SELRES CWO Assignment commitment shall be assigned to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) for the balance of their initial two-year commitment. CWOs who complete their initial two-year commitment while assigned to the IRR may compete

during the next Assignment Year (AY) for vacant SELRES CWO positions on the Personnel Allowance List (PAL).

Selectees who decline appointment and follow-on assignment should familiarize themselves with latest PY Reserve Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Appointment Board Timelines, ALCGRSV message to determine their eligibility to reapply for appointment.

Since appointment is based upon SELRES CWO PAL vacancies, members must be in the Ready Reserve (SELRES/IRR) on the date of appointment. Members on Title 10, Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS), or Extended Active Duty (EAD) must be released from Active Duty prior to appointment. Appointees must serve in the assigned SELRES CWO position for a minimum of two years before pursuing voluntary Active Duty of any sort (ADOS or EAD) other than at the member's SELRES unit.

Selectees who decline appointment and follow-on assignment should contact RPM-2 to determine their eligibility to reapply for appointment. All messages pertaining to CWO appointments will be available under ALCGRSV messages and the CWO OCMP available on the RPM-1 website: [B&P \(uscg.mil\)](http://B&P.uscg.mil).

Chief Warrant Officer Professional Development (CWOPD)

The CWOPD course is designed to assist newly commissioned CWOs in transitioning into the commissioned officer ranks. The course curriculum focuses on leadership, service etiquette, customs and courtesies, communication (oral and written), and the necessary administrative skills needed to become an effective Coast Guard Officer. CWOPD builds upon individual skills attained through ones career and provides a vehicle for sharing experiences to improve group effectiveness. This course facilitates professional and personal growth in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities through learning, self-awareness, self-assessment, feedback, and reflection.

Key areas of emphasis are Coast Guard Vision, Core Values, Professionalism, Lifelong learning, and the uniqueness of Chief Warrant Officers in our service. This course also emphasizes education assessment, diversity, critical thinking, and mentoring. Attendance and successful completion of the CWOPD course is mandatory for all W-2s within the first 18 months of commission.

CWO PD Course Information and Schedule can be found [HERE](#)

Promotion
A CWO is deemed a technical expert and a subject matter expert in their specialty. CWO's have demonstrated potential to assume positions of greater responsibility requiring broader conceptual, management and leadership skills.

The overall career path for a Chief Warrant Officer is straightforward. Members should ensure that they are developing in a positive direction within their respective specialties, showing increasing levels of the above mentioned skills while hitting the benchmarks for promotion at the various stages in their career for CWO3/CWO4 (In zone 3rd year and promoted 4th year).

In some instances, CWO's within the F&S and PERS specialties can elect to pursue the Warrant to LT route as a Reserve Component Manager (RCM). At the time of release of the RCM application message (typically released in August or September annually) requirements may change specifically based on needs of the service.

OER submission schedule

Grade	Regular IDPL	Promotion/Retention IDPL
Chief Warrant Officer (W4)	April (Biennial, even year)	April
Chief Warrant Officer (W3)	July (Biennial, even year)	July
Chief Warrant Officer (W2)	June (Biennial, even year)	June

Figure 7

Senior Enlisted Selection Boards and Panels

In accordance with the Commandant and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Guidance to Enlisted Selection Boards and Panels, enlisted members are highly encouraged to pursue a Special Assignment during their career. Three business rules that RPM strives to attain each assignment year for Senior enlisted positions are:

1. Try to assign E-7's in POC billets
2. Try to grade match E-9's in POCM billets
3. Attempt to place best E-9's and E-8's into badge positions

These unique assignments provide valuable opportunities to represent their professional communities and networks, learn other operation and mission support activities and prepare the way for future assignments to highly visible leadership and management positions.

These positions include:

Senior Enlisted Reserve Advisor (SERA)

Reservists filling SERA positions will assist their commands in maximizing readiness of assigned reservists for mobilization. SERAs also coordinate with their commands to address leadership, training, and administrative processes required to support mobilization requirements, and mentoring of assigned SELRES.

SERA Selection /Assignment Process

Reserve Senior Enlisted members (E7 to E9); regardless of rating, can compete for SERA positions during the regular and off-season assignment schedule. However, a command endorsement is required and MUST address leadership suitability as described in COMDTINST 5320.4.

Assignments are made based on multiple factors (Service needs, unit needs and member desires). Additionally, the strength of a members record and RCD are significant in the assignment process.

Command Senior Enlisted Leadership (CSEL) Positions ((Reserve Gold and Silver Badge)

CSELEs are direct representatives to their flag officers/principals on all matters pertaining to the efficient and effective management of the day-to-day activities in their area of responsibility, as well as advancing broader strategic objectives and support to the workforce.

[COMMAND SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER \(CSEL\) RATING FORCE MASTER CHIEF \(RFMC\) AND SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER \(SEL\) PROGRAM, COMDTINST 1306.11 \(sharepoint-mil.us\)](#)

Reserve Gold and Silver Badges are the highest level of Reserve senior enlisted leadership and requires panel screening.

Commands should encourage senior enlisted members to aspire to CSEL positions and become familiar with the Commandant and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Guidance to Enlisted Selection Boards and Panel.

Reserve Master Chief Advancement Panel (RMCAP)

All E-9 positions in the Reserve Component (RC) are now “rating-less.” Member's eligibility for the RMCAP is the same as if they were competing on the RSWE. It is strongly recommended that members review CGMHRR and ensure the PDE is updated.

Progression From E-7 To E-9

As a Chief in the RC, the positional pyramid includes SERA, Silver Badge, Gold Badge...etc. As members advance their roles shift from being technical experts (rating specific) to predominantly leadership roles. Therefore, diversity of assignment in progressive leadership opportunities is key; this may require travel, depending on your residential location.

High-Year Tenure

Reserve High Year Tenure (R-HYT) is designed to increase personnel flow, compel rating advancement, plus allow consistent training and advancement opportunities for the Reserve enlisted workforce. It is essential for both command and the member to stay abreast on all correspondences pertaining to R-HYT.

Junior Enlisted Progression

As a junior member, you **MUST** stay abreast on the requirements for progression in your rating. Advancements are dependent on meeting those requirements and following sequence of events for the Servicewide Examination (SWE). For advancement to first class petty officer, completion of a Leadership and Management School (LAMS) is required.

Step	Servicewide Exam Sequence of Events
1	Member meets advancement eligibility requirements outlined the Enlisted Advancements and Evaluations Manual <u>ENLISTMENTS, EVALUATIONS, AND ADVANCEMENTS, COMDTINST M1000.2C (defense.gov)</u>
2	Commanding Officer recommends member for advancement on latest Employee Review
3	Unit receives ALCGENL or ALCGPSC message announcing the upcoming SWE. Unit passes message info on EOCT and SWE waivers, time line, and other important message data to members.
4	PPC posts PDE to Direct Access. Corrections to PDE are initiated by member and completed by unit and SPO.
5	Member follows up to ensure that PDE corrections are reflected in Direct-Access prior to PDE Correction Deadline Date.
6	Unit notifies PPC via message of any waiver requests, changes to Exam Board OPFAC and changes of eligibility status of members prior to PDE Correction Deadline Date.
7	PPC (adv) sends SWE tests and instructions to the SWE Officer of the exam board unit.
8	SWE Officer notifies PPC (adv) of any missing or incorrect exams.
9	SWE Officer administers SWE and follows pre and post-test handling procedures provided in administrator's booklet
10	PPC (adv) scans test answer sheets and uploads scores to Direct-Access for inclusion into members final multiple score.
11	PPC (adv) ensures Profile Letters containing exam score, and final multiple score are posted in DA.
12	CGPSC (epm) or (rpm) releases the Advancement Eligibility List and cutoffs.
13	CGPSC (epm) or (rpm) releases monthly Advancement Announcement Messages with the names of members authorized to promote on the first day of the upcoming month.
14	PPC (adv) completes advancements in the pay and personnel system and completes and forwards CPO Certificates to E7's and above.

Figure 8

*****SWE for all Reservists will normally occur in the month of October.**

If you are uncertain or need assistance regarding your specific rating eligibility requirement, we cannot over-emphasize the importance of contacting your SRO, SERA or PPC-adv.

Additional information can be found on the PPC-ADV webpage at: [Enlisted Advancement Information \(uscg.mil\)](http://www.uscg.mil/enlisted-advancement-information).

The PPC website also contains information on the Reserve supplemental lists for ratings in which the Reserve Servicewide (RSWE) have been waived. [Reserve Supplemental Lists Information.pdf \(uscg.mil\)](http://www.uscg.mil/reserve-supplemental-lists-information.pdf).

Career-Broadening Thoughts

If your goal is to advance to CPO, a second tour at a new unit type is extremely advantageous. Commands should ensure members are aware of Professional Growth Points (PGP) criteria.

Assignment Tips

It is vitally important that you know your rotation date and meet all established Assignment Year (AY) deadlines to remain competitive for assignment. RPM releases AY Kickoff messages annually in September. This message sets each AY's deadlines and announces the members who will be "in-play" for the AY. Simultaneously, RPM will also post a Reserve Personnel Assignment Guide on its web site with amplifying information. As a leader, you must comply with these directions and ensure that your subordinates do as well.

Managing your career can be a delicate balance. Unfortunately, there are no concrete templates to follow. When crafting an e-resume, you will likely have to choose how to prioritize potential assignments between one that will get you into a new community and one that will offer the opportunity to further develop a career enhancing and organizationally valued competency. Remember that you are not the only one seeking a highly desired assignment. Realistically weigh your odds and have a solid back up plan to increase your value to the organization.

A well-crafted e-resume allows for assignment flexibility and acknowledges possible outcomes. You should submit a reasonably broad e-resume that communicates your preferences in priority order and addresses alternatives based upon your background and experience. Do not list any position that you are not willing to accept. Use the Member Comments section to concisely relay goals, limitations, span of travel, least desired areas, or co-location to your Assignment Officer.

Assigning members to positions within reasonable commuting distance (RCD) remains a priority. However, available positions within RCD become increasingly scarce as you promote and advance. RPM will not involuntarily assign you to a position outside of RCD, but these positions are sometimes the only ones available. If you desire to compete for a career enhancing billet outside of RCD, you may request one. However, these requests are completely voluntary and you should carefully balance such a request with your civilian profession and personal life.

Remember that Assignment Officers use the same information as boards and panels. You must ensure your record is complete and accurate to best position yourself for success prior to competing for assignment.

Assignment Timeline

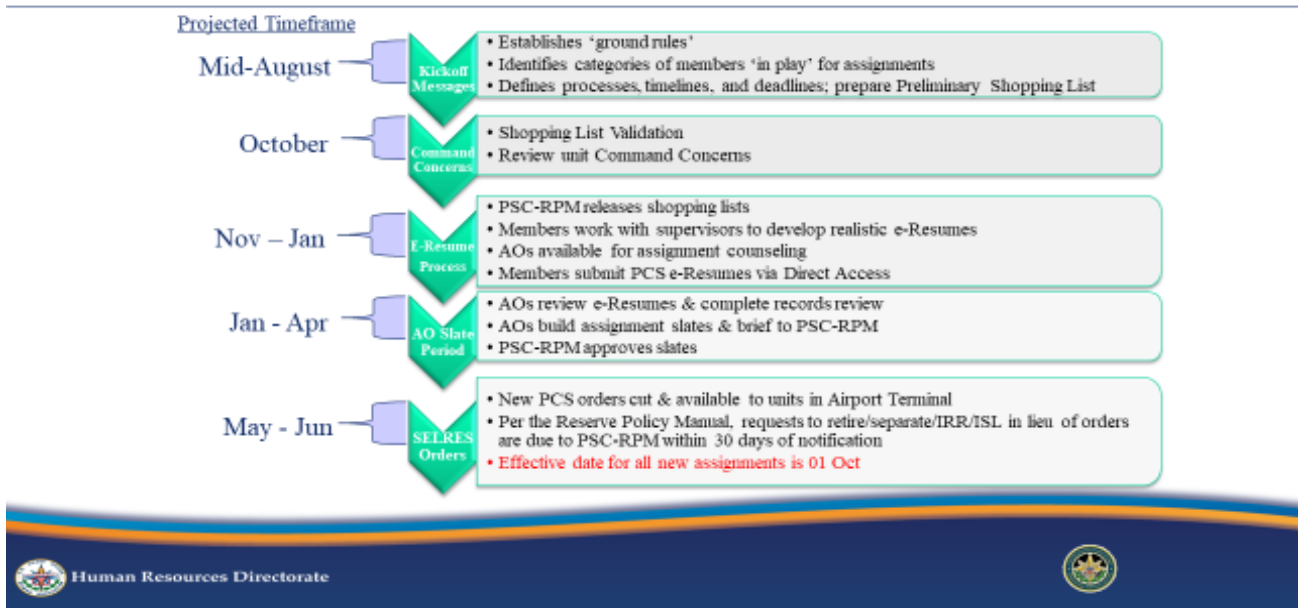


Figure 9

Individual RPCC Session

Now that you have read the RPCC Guide, you may schedule an Individual RPCC Session with a Reserve Assignment Officer. See the latest ALCGRSV message for additional information, and email HQS-DG-CGPSC-RPM-RPCC@USCG.MIL with tentative dates and times that you are available. RPM will reply and establish a firm appointment.