

AIR FORCE APPLICATION FOR THE INTERSERVICE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM SELECTION YEAR 2021

The Air Force is accepting applications for the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP). This advanced medical training program is a unique, multi-service opportunity available to **active duty** enlisted and officer applicants from **any career field**. IPAP offers an accelerated path towards a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree from the program's underwriter, the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC).

IPAP is a 29-month program conducted in two phases. Phase 1 is a 16-month period of intense classroom and hands-on instruction conducted at Joint Base San Antonio, Fort Sam Houston. Phase 2 is a 13-month period of various clinical rotations at a military medical treatment facility.

Enlisted members are commissioned upon program completion as a First Lieutenant. IPAP (enlisted and officer) graduates are inducted into the Air Force Medical Service (AFMS) as a Physician Assistant/42G in the Biomedical Sciences Corps.

1. KEY DATES:

- A. Applications will be accepted from **01 Oct 2020** through **22 Jan 2021**. Applicants are responsible for preparing and submitting the required documents through the UNMC IPAP Centralized Application Service (UNICAS). *See UNICAS information in section 10.* Incomplete or unvalidated applications will NOT be forwarded to AFPC and therefore they will not be viewed by the selection board
- B. Video interview submission suspense is **22 Jan 2021**
- C. IPAP selection board will convene about **April/May 2021**
- D. Results will be released **approximately 60 days** after the board
- E. IPAP Phase 1 classes will convene in **August 2021, December 2021, April 2022 and August 2022**

2. CHANGES FOR SELECTION YEAR 2021:

- A. Information Resources: New IPAP POC. *See section 3.*
- B. Waivers: COVID-19 impacts on shadowing hours. *See section 4.B.*
- C. New mandatory academic requirements: Biochemistry added. *See section 6.B.i.*
- D. Additional documents: Revision of personal letter topic. *See section 7.A.*
- E. Additional documents: Limit of one optional letter. *See section 7.B.ii*
- F. Video interview submission date is now same as UNICAS application deadline: *See section 8.C.*

3. INFORMATION RESOURCES:

Interested applicants are **directed to thoroughly review** the application guidelines. Listed below are other sources of information. You should start with the first reference listed and **go sequentially** through the list until your question is answered

Do not skip any resource!

1. Knowledge Exchange (Kx): <https://kx.health.mil/kj/kx3/afbsceducation>
 - a. Knowledge Exchange is a .mil domain access website
 - b. Application Guidance
 - c. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
2. U.S. Army Med COE IPAP website: <https://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/ipap/>
3. Facebook: Unofficial sites “IPAP Air Force” and “IPAP”
4. **Education Support Offices (ESO):** ESO are encouraged to contact UNMC or AFPC **on behalf of** the applicant
5. PAs you are shadowing
6. Other IPAP graduates
7. IPAP POC: Major K. Graham
 - a. Ensure subject is: “**IPAP Applicant Inquiry**” and send to kevin.r.graham14.mil@mail.mil
8. **Final option, once you have exhausted all other resources:** HQ AFPC/DP2NW
 - a. Be advised this is a one person section that handles education and accessions for 14 primary AF specialties and 2,300 BSC officers. IPAP is just one of many programs and responsibilities
 - b. Ensure subject is: “**IPAP Applicant Inquiry**” and send to afpc.dp2nw.workflow@us.af.mil

4. WAIVERS:

- A. In general, **no waivers** will be considered for selection year 2021. This includes, but is not limited to, waivers for SATs, prerequisites, Time in Service, and academics
- B. Waivers may be considered for shadowing hours on a case-by-case basis. If an applicant is unable to complete all hours, due to COVID-19 shadowing limitations imposed by the Medical Treatment Facility, a waiver may be requested.

5. MILITARY ELIGIBILITY:

- A. ENLISTED:
 - i. GRADE: Must be in grades E-4 through E-8 as of 01 Sep 2021
 - ii. TIME IN SERVICE (TIS): Must have a minimum 3 years or up to a maximum 14 years of service as of 01 Aug 2021
 - iii. RETENTION: Must be eligible to obtain five (5) years of retainability prior to the training start date
 - iv. ADSC: Members will subsequently incur a 4.5 year Active Duty Service Commitment (ADSC) upon graduation from IPAP. The training ADSC will override existing enlistments/extensions in effect at the time of graduation
 - v. CONDUCT: Must be of high moral character and personal qualifications. Must NOT have received a court-martial conviction at any time. Article 15 Non-Judicial Punishments (NJP) must be evaluated by

HQ AFPC/DP2NW. Member must address Article 15/NJP via MFR detailing the incident NLT 31 Dec 20. Send to afpc.dp2nw.workflow@us.af.mil

- vi. MEDICAL: Must be medically qualified for appointment as a commissioned officer, IAW AFI 48-123, *Medical Examination and Standards*. Must be physically qualified for worldwide duty with no history of a mental health diagnosis requiring a duty limiting profile
- vii. SECURITY CLEARANCE: Must have a valid Entrance National Agency Check (ENTNAC) or National Agency Check (NAC)
- viii. CITIZENSHIP: Must be a United States citizen. Citizenship verification will be conducted IAW AFI 31-501, *Personnel Security Program Management*
- ix. COMMISSIONING: Must meet **commissioning requirements** as specified in AFI 36-2005, *Appointment in Commissioned Grades*, for appointment as an officer in the Biomedical Sciences Corps (BSC)

B. OFFICERS, ACADEMY & ROTC CADETS:

- i. GRADE: Must be in grades O-1 through O-3 as of 01 Sep 2021
- ii. COMMISSIONED TIME IN SERVICE (TIS): Must have less than a maximum six (6) years of service as of 01 Aug 2021
- iii. RETENTION: Not Applicable
- iv. ADSC: Members will incur a 4.5 year ADSC upon graduation from IPAP
- v. CONDUCT: Must be of high moral character and personal qualifications
 - a) Must NOT have received a courts-martial conviction at any time
 - b) Must NOT have received an Article 15 Non-Judicial punishment at any time as an officer
- vi. MEDICAL: Must be medically qualified for service as a commissioned officer, IAW AFI 48-123, *Medical Examination and Standards*. Must be physically qualified for worldwide duty with no history of mental health diagnosis requiring a duty limiting profile.
- vii. SECURITY CLEARANCE: Must have a valid Entrance National Agency Check (ENTNAC) or National Agency Check (NAC)
- viii. CITIZENSHIP: Must be a United States citizen. Citizenship verification will be conducted IAW AFI 31-501, *Personnel Security Program Management*

6. **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS:**

A. OVERVIEW:

- i. ACADEMIC EVALUATION: Must submit official transcripts for upload via UNICAS. E-transcript may also be submitted. The validation process is essential for credit acceptance and transfer during IPAP enrollment
 - a) After identifying the college/university within UNICAS, applicants will request the transcript be sent to the IPAP Transcript Processing Center. *See instructions in section 10*
- ii. TOTAL COLLEGE CREDITS: Must have a minimum **60 semester hours** of transferable credits

- a) Earning the majority of credits within **the past five (5) years** is highly recommended to better prepare students for the rigors of this fast paced program
 - b) May earn up to 30 semester hours from the following non-traditional sources: DANTES, CLEP, end-of-course or subject examinations, correspondence courses, off-campus classroom study, or resident/intern programs conducted by an accredited college/university
 - c) Community College of the Air Force credits are acceptable
- iii. GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA):
- a) Cumulative GPA: Must have a minimum 2.5 GPA or better on a 4.0 scale for the applicant's entire academic history. **Repeated courses are included in the cumulative GPA calculation.**
 - b) Math and Science GPA: Must have a minimum 3.0 GPA or better on a 4.0 scale for the required math/science courses (A&P, Chemistry, and Algebra). Every math and science course, in the applicant's academic history, will be used to compute the math/science GPA. **Must have completed ALL mandatory math and science requirements within the past ten (10) years (e.g. after May 2011)**
- iv. SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT): **Required for IPAP Accreditation**
- a) SAT results must be dated between **March 2016** and **December 2020**
 - b) No minimum score required
 - c) Is required even if you have taken the GRE or have a degree. Essay is NOT required

B. SPECIFIC PREREQUISITE COURSES:

- i. **MANDATORY:** Traditional classroom courses are **highly encouraged**, as classroom courses more closely represent the IPAP experience. However, online courses are acceptable
 - a) ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY (A&P): 6 semester hours required (recommend 8 hours w/labs). May not CLEP this requirement. "Introductory" or "Intro" courses are not acceptable
 - b) GENERAL CHEMISTRY: 6 semester hours required (recommend 8 hours w/labs). May not CLEP this requirement. "Introductory" or "Intro" courses are not acceptable
 - c) COLLEGE ALGEBRA (or higher): 3 semester hours required. May not CLEP this requirement. Online courses acceptable
 - d) ENGLISH: 6 semester hours required (3 of the 6 hours must have been earned from an English Composition course). May not CLEP this requirement
 - e) PSYCHOLOGY: 3 semester hours required. May not CLEP this requirement
 - f) SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES: 6 semester hours required. CLEP acceptable
 - g) MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY: 2 semester hours required. CLEP acceptable. A no cost, online course is available via the Army Knowledge Exchange (AKO). Instruction on acquiring AKO access and the course are found on the Kx
 - h) STATISTICS: 3 semester hours required. Intro or higher. CLEP acceptable
 - i) BIOCHEMISTRY: 3 semester hours required. Intro or higher. CLEP acceptable

- ii. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** **While these are not mandatory, course(s) completion will make you much more competitive during the board!
Additionally, it will increase student success in IPAP Phase 1:
 - a) MICROBIOLOGY
 - b) UPPER LEVEL MATH
 - c) ORGANIC CHEMISTRY

7. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS:

- A. PERSONAL LETTER: Must submit a typed essay illustrating the applicant's desire to become a Physician Assistant. This essay is also known as the "**What is a PA and Why I Want to Become One**" statement of intent. Must be 300 words **or less** and signed by the applicant
- B. EVALUATION DOCUMENTS:
 - i. MANDATORY EVALUATIONS:
 - a) Air Force Physician Assistant (active duty or retired). A PA with a **minimum of two years clinical experience** is preferred. *This is primarily to unburden the new PA's practice and skill building*
 - i. If an AF PA is not available, a sister-service PA will suffice
 - ii. Recommendation from an IPAP graduate is preferred
 - iii. The PA must complete the **PA Interview and Evaluation Document** form
 - b) Physician familiar with the role of a **military** Physician Assistant. Format: Letter of Recommendation, **limited to one page**
 - c) Immediate supervisor or rating official. Format: Letter of Recommendation, **limited to one page**
 - d) Immediate commander: Format: **Must use required pdf**, found on Kx
 - ii. OPTIONAL LETTERS: Applicant may submit up to **ONE** additional recommendation documents from anyone who may attest to the applicant's suitability for this program/profession
- C. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Applicants must input the email address for the author of each recommendation document into UNICAS. The authors will submit the signed/dated documents **directly into UNICAS**. Documents must have either an ink signature or an electronic signature from a validated source, such as a military Common Access Card "CAC"

8. VIDEO INTERVIEW:

- A. Video interview instructions and question, for selection year 2021, can be found at:
<https://kx.health.mil/kj/kx3/afbsceducation/Pages/home.aspx>
- B. Videos may be submitted electronically to AFPC via MilSuite
- C. Submission suspense is **22 Jan 2021**

9. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

A. SHADOWING:

- i. Shadowing is defined as interaction, with the provider and patient, throughout the encounter, and participation in case discussions. Simply assisting with clinic functions or performing patient check-ins and/or intake exams does NOT qualify as shadowing
- ii. Shadowing is essential for the applicant to understand the nature of the profession they are applying to become part of. **The quality (and quantity) of shadowing is a key component in successful applications and selectees**
- iii. Must complete a minimum of 80 hours. It is strongly recommended to have 100+ hours
- iv. Shadowing hours must be logged on **IPAP Shadowing Log** form. Do not submit lists of patients or personally identifiable information (PII)
- v. You may shadow multiple medical disciplines. However, the emphasis (majority of hours) needs to be in Primary Care/Family Medicine/Family Health
- vi. If needed, a waiver MFR will be uploaded into UNICAS along with the shadowing log. Waiver MFR must state the reason for not meeting the shadowing hours requirement and how it was beyond the control of the applicant

B. MEDICAL CLEARANCE:

- i. Submit an AF Form 422, *Notification of Air Force Member's Qualification Status*, more commonly known as a 'Physical Profile' form
- ii. The AF Form 422, coordinated by a medical representative, must include one of the following statements:
 - a. "Based upon review of the applicant's medical records, I certify the applicant is fully qualified for worldwide duty IAW AFI 48-123, *Medical Examination and Standards*
 - b. "Based upon review of the applicant's medical records, I certify the applicant's current assignment limitation code of (enter code) is controlled and well managed with (enter no or minimal) impact on daily duties."

- C. **FITNESS REPORT:** Must submit a Member Individual Fitness Report, also known as a Fitness Tracker Report, from the Air Force Fitness Management System II available via the AF Portal. The fitness report must be a complete report containing all available fitness assessments. **All fitness exemptions or failures must be explained** in one separate memorandum uploaded into UNICAS.

10. UNMC IPAP CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE (UNICAS):

- A. Online registration is mandatory for all applicants at <https://ipap.liaisoncas.com>
- B. Applicants must complete all questionnaires. **Redact all but the last 4 of the SSN** before uploading document into UNICAS