



Physical Disability Evaluation System and Transition Program: Improvement Costs (FY 2023)

Report to Congress
October 7, 2024



U.S. Coast Guard

Foreword

October 7, 2024

I am pleased to present the following report, “Physical Disability Evaluation System and Transition Program: Improvement Costs (FY 2023),” prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 directs the submission of a report detailing the total aggregate service-wide costs for members of the Coast Guard whose Physical Disability Evaluation System process has exceeded 90 days.

Pursuant to Congressional requirements, this report is provided to the following members of Congress:

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Should you require additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my Senate Liaison Office at (202) 224-2913 or House Liaison Office at (202) 225-4775.

Sincerely,



Linda L. Fagan
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commandant





Physical Disability Evaluation System and Transition Program: Improvement Costs (FY 2023)

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I. Legislative Language

This report responds to the language set forth in Section 11411(f) of the Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022 (Pub. L. No. 117-263), which reads:

SEC. 11411. IMPROVEMENTS TO PHYSICAL DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM AND TRANSITION PROGRAM.

(f) ANNUAL REPORT ON COSTS.

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than annually, the Commandant shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that, for the preceding fiscal year—

(A) details the total aggregate service-wide costs described in subsection (b)(7)(A)(ii) for members of the Coast Guard whose Physical Disability Evaluation System process has exceeded 90 days; and

(B) includes for each such member—

(i) an accounting of such costs; and

(ii) the number of days that elapsed between the initiation and completion of the Physical Disability Evaluation System process.

(2) PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—A report under paragraph (1) shall not include the personally identifiable information of any member of the Coast Guard.

II. Report

The Disability Evaluation System (DES) is intended to ensure fair application of physical disability separation and retirement provisions in Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 61. The Coast Guard uses the Physical Disability Evaluation System (PDES), while the Department of Defense (DoD) primarily uses the Integrated Disability Evaluations System (IDES), reserving PDES for specialty cases. The Coast Guard, partnering with the Department of Veterans Affairs and DoD, is piloting the Coast Guard's entry into IDES.

Tables 1 and 2 show the 201 closed and 38 open cases, total aggregate service-wide cost for the 239 Coast Guard members whose PDES process exceeded 90 days. Tables 1 and 2 also includes individual servicemember gross pay (basic pay, subsistence allowance, and housing allowance) before tax and other deductions, alongside the duration of PDES processing. Number of days elapsed between initiation and completion of the PDES process is also expressed for each service member. Tables 1 and 2 cover cases that took longer than 90 days to process in fiscal year (FY) 2023, which are ordered from greatest day count to least.

TABLE 1: Closed Cases: Pay Costs associated with PDES Process Duration (FY 2023)

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Officer Non-Aviation	333	\$117,717.64
Aviation Survival Technician	317	\$81,275.86
Seaman	315	\$51,397.20
Culinary Specialist	308	\$59,973.54
Boatswain's Mate	306	\$80,229.27
Gunner's Mate	303	\$56,886.52
Electronics Technician	295	\$76,393.83
Information System Technician	288	\$86,410.29
Food Services Specialist	284	\$64,629.68
Aviation Maintenance Technician	283	\$65,918.18
Machinery Technician	282	\$62,047.45
Machinery Technician	276	\$62,900.79
Yeoman	270	\$63,661.18
Electronics Technician	268	\$47,042.04
Officer Non-Aviation	264	\$112,201.70
Electronics Technician	263	\$48,948.43
Fireman	261	\$41,097.25
Maritime Enforcement	261	\$5,296.50
Maritime Science Technician	255	\$66,344.08
Damage Controlman	248	\$27,683.00
Food Services Specialist	243	\$36,090.19
Yeoman	241	\$1,722.27
Boatswain's Mate	238	\$37,237.14
Avionics Electrical Technician	237	\$59,020.11
Boatswain's Mate	225	\$4,711.20
Maritime Enforcement	218	\$8,309.28

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Operations Specialist	197	\$48,123.86
Food Services Specialist	196	\$47,837.58
Seaman	190	\$38,645.59
Boatswain's Mate	171	\$33,297.00
Maritime Enforcement	163	\$26,879.86
Officer Non-Aviation	162	\$60,392.33
Electronics Technician	160	\$38,043.09
Machinery Technician	155	\$28,354.70
Boatswain's Mate	145	\$31,767.12
Fireman	128	\$14,331.79
Aviation Maintenance Technician	123	\$15,732.05
Lieutenant Commander	118	\$65,528.69
Total		\$1,874,078.28

TABLE 2: Open Cases: Pay Costs associated with PDES Process Duration (FY 2023)

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Seaman	362	\$39,411.46
Gunner's Mate	362	\$132,667.83
Culinary Specialist	362	\$76,104.55
Boatswain's Mate	361	\$116,473.04
Yeoman	361	\$96,260.65
Officer Aviation	359	\$143,820.27
Damage Controlman	359	\$93,525.14
Yeoman	353	\$101,485.48
Maritime Science Technician	352	\$123,634.22
Aviation Electrical Technician	348	\$77,747.43
Boatswain's Mate	348	\$86,951.53
Machinery Technician	348	\$98,866.05
Machinery Technician	348	\$81,621.41
Boatswain's Mate	348	\$98,813.85
Officer Non-Aviation	346	\$137,815.26
Operations Specialist	345	\$119,090.55
Machinery Technician	339	\$72,927.38
Storekeeper	338	\$80,418.65
Aviation Survival Technician	333	\$70,296.78
Boatswain's Mate	333	\$72,640.86
Operations Specialist	332	\$62,340.11
Maritime Enforcement Specialist	332	\$7,570.56
Aviation Electrical Technician	331	\$102,154.17
Gunner's Mate	331	\$89,337.37
Storekeeper	330	\$75,541.71
Yeoman	330	\$75,700.82
Boatswain's Mate	327	\$79,723.07

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Boatswain's Mate	327	\$56,101.99
Operations Specialist	327	\$64,223.27
Culinary Specialist	327	\$96,221.39
Culinary Specialist	324	\$60,725.01
Information System Technician	324	\$84,780.39
Health Services Technician	320	\$67,929.60
Culinary Specialist	318	\$106,969.98
Aviation Maintenance Technician	318	\$66,312.54
Machinery Technician	318	\$101,924.00
Machinery Technician	317	\$62,425.68
Officer Non-Aviation	312	\$132,660.39
Cadet	307	\$13,344.63
Boatswain's Mate	306	\$3,546.51
Boatswain's Mate	305	\$77,937.74
Maritime Enforcement	305	\$78,094.60
Damage Controlman	305	\$60,469.95
Maritime Science Technician	303	\$119,153.02
Marine Science Technician	303	\$70,229.34
Cadet	299	\$13,595.96
Boatswain's Mate	298	\$92,863.61
Machinery Technician	298	\$77,049.39
Boatswain's Mate	298	\$55,855.20
Cadet	298	\$13,550.49
Boatswain's Mate	297	\$99,301.31
Maritime Science Technician	295	\$55,201.24
Health Services Technician	295	\$3,065.37
Maritime Enforcement	292	\$74,816.03
Officer Non-Aviation	291	\$109,252.62
Damage Controlman	290	\$64,676.21
Yeoman	288	\$45,927.15
Maritime Science Technician	277	\$88,952.02
Damage Controlman	270	\$81,959.85
Operations Specialist	269	\$79,719.50
Public Affairs Specialist	269	\$53,479.12
Machinery Technician	267	\$61,224.44
Electrician's Mate	267	\$89,890.70
Maritime Enforcement	267	\$31,489.60
Electrician's Mate	264	\$63,059.61
Boatswain's Mate	263	\$68,208.49
Yeoman	263	\$73,207.37
Aviation Maintenance Technician	262	\$46,360.90
Storekeeper	253	\$105,581.78
Officer Non-Aviation	250	\$85,821.25
Aviation Maintenance Technician	250	\$49,132.50
Cadet	250	\$11,367.86
Officer Non-Aviation	247	\$52,193.70

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Machinery Technician	247	\$63,773.11
Boatswain's Mate	247	\$69,023.62
Aviation Maintenance Technician	245	\$61,209.23
Machinery Technician	243	\$50,623.32
Avionics Electrical Technician	242	\$51,514.37
Aviation Maintenance Technician	241	\$77,699.61
Information System Technician	240	\$86,173.20
Maritime Enforcement Specialist	239	\$67,378.37
Aviation Survival Technician	235	\$61,279.10
Operations Specialist	233	\$74,280.73
Machinery Technician	232	\$57,553.73
Aviation Maintenance Technician	232	\$39,194.25
Culinary Specialist	229	\$54,082.44
Storekeeper	227	\$54,892.98
Seaman	227	\$42,152.28
Damage Controlman	227	\$49,517.94
Electronics Technician	227	\$43,722.96
Aviation Maintenance Technician	226	\$82,073.03
Culinary Specialist	226	\$57,053.22
Boatswain's Mate	226	\$44,166.37
Boatswain's Mate	221	\$31,652.25
Damage Controlman	221	\$3,458.24
Health Services Technician	220	\$45,173.07
Yeoman	219	\$63,287.87
Aviation Maintenance Technician	219	\$56,137.05
Aviation Maintenance Technician	219	\$44,494.86
Information System Technician	217	\$47,628.40
Officer Non-Aviation	215	\$99,337.53
Aviation Maintenance Technician	215	\$52,760.54
Electronics Technician	214	\$52,627.49
Officer Non-Aviation	213	\$84,623.99
Machinery Technician	212	\$48,689.89
Culinary Specialist	212	\$38,985.29
Electronics Technician	208	\$53,716.00
Aviation Maintenance Technician	208	\$57,953.55
Boatswain's Mate	208	\$66,148.01
Boatswain's Mate	208	\$92,895.77
Yeoman	208	\$36,286.34
Damage Controlman	207	\$44,629.50
Fireman	207	\$34,801.14
Electronics Technician	207	\$61,882.21
Marine Science Technician	207	\$40,204.87
Marine Science Technician	207	\$44,125.01
Boatswain's Mate	207	\$3,621.24
Machinery Technician	206	\$41,365.83
Yeoman	206	\$61,807.36

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Boatswain's Mate	205	\$38,480.99
Machinery Technician	201	\$74,194.41
Gunner's Mate	200	\$42,532.14
Gunner's Mate	199	\$56,029.16
Yeoman	199	\$36,571.23
Electrician's Mate	197	\$39,495.26
Storekeeper	197	\$36,502.27
Machinery Technician	194	\$63,842.91
Information System Technician	193	\$50,496.66
Officer Non-Aviation	192	\$73,435.75
Officer Non-Aviation	192	\$86,984.09
Yeoman	192	\$39,846.45
Maritime Enforcement	191	\$40,750.12
Aviation Maintenance Technician	191	\$47,607.71
Yeoman	191	\$4,575.00
Maritime Enforcement	191	\$32,090.73
Boatswain's Mate	190	\$33,381.24
Officer Non-Aviation	187	\$78,698.15
Officer Non-Aviation	186	\$87,526.15
Maritime Enforcement	185	\$57,386.60
Boatswain's Mate	182	\$33,233.46
Aviation Maintenance Technician	180	\$60,331.11
Seaman	178	\$29,100.71
Information System Technician	177	\$25,063.33
Avionics Electrical Technician	172	\$34,485.02
Machinery Technician	166	\$35,527.08
Boatswain's Mate	165	\$34,411.93
Operations Specialist	165	\$37,643.57
Operations Specialist	164	\$31,018.96
Electrician's Mate	162	\$32,427.19
Health Services Technician	162	\$49,615.97
Avionics Electrical Technician	159	\$37,035.30
Health Services Technician	159	\$19,391.41
Operations Specialist	158	\$28,931.49
Chief Warrant Officer-Naval Engineering	158	\$59,820.38
Yeoman	157	\$35,931.92
Machinery Technician	155	\$27,035.54
Yeoman	151	\$36,369.97
Storekeeper	151	\$24,286.19
Machinery Technician	150	\$45,748.61
Aviation Electrical Technician	150	\$32,399.68
Yeoman	148	\$33,994.23
Boatswain's Mate	148	\$5,517.00
Officer Non-Aviation	145	\$44,915.20
Officer Non-Aviation	144	\$49,047.33
Boatswain's Mate	143	\$26,130.39

Specialty	FY 23 Case Duration (days)	Gross Pay (U.S. Dollars)
Yeoman	143	\$53,093.86
Officer Non-Aviation	141	\$41,335.06
Officer Non-Aviation	141	\$46,111.94
Seaman	141	\$16,897.04
Boatswain's Mate	138	\$28,222.48
Officer Non-Aviation	137	\$53,372.17
Seaman	136	\$13,884.14
Avionics Electrical Technician	135	\$23,076.03
Machinery Technician	134	\$27,281.16
Damage Controlman	131	\$26,862.21
Culinary Specialist	131	\$30,845.54
Officer Non-Aviation	130	\$58,644.76
Public Affairs Specialist	129	\$39,789.59
Yeoman	129	\$30,323.94
Health Services Technician	129	\$37,188.40
Officer Non-Aviation	127	\$43,629.85
Damage Controlman	127	\$31,430.41
Officer Non-Aviation	123	\$49,465.68
Storekeeper	122	\$28,032.72
Health Services Technician	121	\$48,397.58
Boatswain's Mate	116	\$42,116.29
Machinery Technician	115	\$29,553.93
Officer Non-Aviation	115	\$75,020.17
Maritime Enforcement	115	\$24,659.86
Culinary Specialist	114	\$29,403.21
Electrician's Mate	110	\$21,535.25
Damage Controlman	110	\$12,419.39
Maritime Enforcement	108	\$2,136.24
Health Services Technician	102	\$27,204.49
Officer Aviation	101	\$40,032.00
Culinary Specialist	100	\$31,148.93
Culinary Specialist	96	\$20,274.99
Electrician's Mate	94	\$15,890.43
Maritime Enforcement Specialist	92	\$20,068.95
Maritime Enforcement Specialist	92	\$24,813.71
Machinery Technician	92	\$2,919.87
Total		\$11,055,372.92

IV. Conclusion

Entry into the DES is limited to active-duty members and reserve members on active-duty orders with a disability that prevents the service member from performing their duties, necessitating separation from the Service. While some conditions may lead to a total inability to perform duties, most personnel in the PDES process still support Coast Guard missions in a limited duty capacity.

The Coast Guard has made significant strides in reducing the process duration of the PDES system through its phased implementation of the IDES. This shift enables concurrent fitness and disability evaluations, which streamline the process and shorten the time for service members to receive benefits. The Coast Guard's continued focus on modernization, staff training, and interagency coordination ensures ongoing improvements as the Service moves toward a full transition to IDES, reducing the overall burden on service members awaiting evaluation and benefits. The Coast Guard remains committed to ensuring its service members receive timely and accurate evaluations, while also providing timely access to disability benefits through the Veterans Affairs Department.

Appendix: Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Definition
DES	Disability Evaluation System
DoD	Department of Defense
FY	Fiscal Year
IDES	Integrated Disability Evaluations System
PDES	Physical Disability Evaluation System