



CIVIL ENGINEER CORPS Frequently Asked Questions - Career -

1. I am interested in employment with the Navy as a civilian. How do I apply?
 - a. There are far more civilian employees in Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) than military employees! With or without a uniform, we are all members of the Navy-Marine Corps team in NAVFAC. [Follow this link for more information about civilian engineering careers with NAVFAC.](#)

2. What will I do in the Navy Civil Engineer Corps?
 - a. Civil Engineer Corps officers primarily work in NAVFAC on construction projects, infrastructure repairs and maintenance, facility support contracts, real estate management, natural resource management, environmental planning and management, and many other facilities engineering areas for the Navy and Marine Corps. NAVFAC jobs can be broadly divided into Public Works (facility management) and Construction Management.
 - b. Civil Engineer Corps officers also serve in Expeditionary jobs, primarily leading the Seabees of the Naval Mobile Construction Battalions and Amphibious Construction Battalions (NMCBs and ACBs) who provide mobile construction capabilities and support amphibious operations for the Navy and Marine Corps.

3. Is there a chance I will experience combat?
 - a. The Navy is designed to win wars, deter aggression, and maintain freedom of the seas. While most Civil Engineer Corps functions are to support warfighting units via engineering, construction, and infrastructure management in defensive or logistics contexts, every CEC officer is expected to be prepared to lead in combat.

4. What is a Public Works job like?

- a. Public works involves operating and maintaining all of the Navy's facilities. We do many of the same things that facilities managers do in every city, at every hospital, and on every college campus: power distribution, heating, air conditioning, water and wastewater, grounds maintenance, telecommunications, transportation and equipment, environmental issues, and facilities maintenance. Public works touches every member of the Navy/Marine Corps team. Aviators, submariners, ship-drivers, SEALs, Marines, and scientists all require public works support. CEC officers in Public Works Departments (PWDs) coordinate with these military facility users to plan and execute projects that support their missions.

5. What is a Construction Management job like?

- a. New CEC officers most often work as construction managers in the construction division of a military base's Public Works Department. Although exact details differ from job to job, the basic task is to ensure that Navy construction projects are built safely, as designed, on time, and within budget. Tasks include ensuring that construction is in accordance with the project plans and specifications, resolving design problems, coordinating construction schedules with Navy operations, ensuring that payments correctly reflect progress, and managing the project budget. Anything that affects safety, quality, and the timely completion of the project is a concern for the construction manager. That includes not only technical problems, but contractual and business issues as well.

6. What is an Expeditionary job like?

- a. The majority of expeditionary jobs with the CEC are in the Naval Construction Force, AKA the Seabees. Seabees are enlisted Navy personnel trained in construction and defensive combat. Most Seabee units, Naval Mobile Construction Battalions, are trained to build roads, port facilities, utility systems, and buildings – and deploy annually to distant and rugged places. They perform peacetime or contingency

construction and engineering, disaster response, humanitarian construction, or participate in stabilization operations at home and around the world. A new CEC officer assigned to a Seabee unit may serve on the Battalion staff or as a Platoon Leader. Most Seabee units are based in Gulfport, MS and Port Hueneme, CA.

7. How long will I spend at any type of job?
 - a. NAVFAC jobs are typically 2-3 year assignments, and Expeditionary jobs are typically 2 year assignments that includes at least one deployment.

8. What does it mean to be assigned vs. deployed?
 - a. CEC officers are assigned to NAVFAC jobs to support permanent bases across the continental U.S. and overseas in Japan, Guam, Hawaii, Spain, Italy, Greece, and many other locations. These are called overseas assignments and are not deployments because the CEC officer's permanent place of duty is at a single base. An officer's family may move to the base with them.
 - b. CEC officers in expeditionary jobs are assigned to a unit based in the continental U.S. and the officer's family may move to the base with them. The officer can expect to deploy at least one time while in that assignment for approximately 6-9 months, unaccompanied by their family.

9. Do I get to choose where I get assigned?
 - a. Prior to every assignment you will speak with a detailer (the person responsible for assigning jobs) about your options for your next job. You will see a list of options approximately one year in advance and you will specify your top preferences. The detailer will balance your preferences and family life considerations, your career development, and the needs of the Navy to determine your next duty assignment. You are expected to rotate between NAVFAC, expeditionary, and various staff jobs throughout your career.

10. Where can I expect to be stationed? Can I stay in one geographical area?

- a. CEC officers are stationed at every Navy and Marine Corps base worldwide. There are over 140 different locations. Officers can expect to relocate every two to three years to get experience in different regions. [Navy Civil Engineer Corps Locations Map](#)

11. When will I know where I get assigned?

- a. At OCS, the CEC detailer will contact you by email or phone, and based on your input and the needs of the Navy, you'll be given your first assignment before you graduate from OCS.

12. What is the housing like for a CEC officer?

- a. While in training at OCS and CECOS you will likely live in officer barracks similar to a college dormitory.
- b. At your permanent duty station you may be able to choose to live in military base housing or on the local economy off-base. Officers are authorized a housing allowance rate based on location, rank, and family situation. If you choose base housing, your entire housing allowance covers the cost of rent. If you choose to live off-base, you may keep the difference between your housing allowance and the cost of your rent or mortgage – except if you live off-base overseas, in which case you may not retain the difference between your housing allowance and your rent or mortgage.

13. What training will I get as a CEC officer?

- a. You will first attend Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, Rhode Island, which is a 13 week basic training program for officers. After OCS, new CEC officers attend the Basic Course at the Civil Engineer Corps Officer School (CECOS, pronounced like 'seacoast') in Port Hueneme, CA. The 16-week Basic Course consists of courses on NAVFAC operations, Seabee operations, project management, construction quality control, occupational safety, and contracting.

- b. Throughout a CEC officer's career, you will have innumerable opportunities for additional training and certifications. Professional development is institutionalized by tying continuous learning certifications to promotion eligibility. You will have access to informal leadership training and mentorship programs, as well as formal classroom and hands-on training on technical subjects related to engineering, project management, federal contracting, financial management, and Seabee operations.

14. What opportunities for Graduate School will I get as a CEC officer?

- a. The Navy sends all career-minded CEC officers to fully-funded graduate school. That means that tuition is paid AND the officer receives all of his/her pay to go to school full time without any additional duties. Normally officers are selected to go to graduate school after they have been in the Navy at least six years but before they have reached ten years of service. Deciding which school to attend and degree type is left to each individual officer, subject to Navy approval. There is an additional obligation (typically about three years) associated with going to graduate school.

15. Can I get a Professional Engineer or Registered Architect license while in the Civil Engineer Corps?

- a. Yes. Not only does the CEC encourage professional licensure – it is required for promotion at a certain point. Professional licensure among the CEC reflects professional credibility as technical experts for the Navy. The CEC offers mentorship from licensed senior officers, reimbursement for prep classes, and study materials to encourage its junior officers to pursue licensure. All states and territories recognize service in the CEC as valid experience toward professional registration as a PE or RA, though each state/jurisdiction requires different documentation. Architects in the CEC are able to gain the requisite hours of experience via NAVFAC's Intern-Architect Development Program in which the

officer serves in a 12-18 month internship under the direct supervision of a registered architect. Refer to the CEC Architect Fact Sheet for additional details.

16. Will I design things in the Civil Engineer Corps?

- a. Despite the importance of professional licensure, CEC officers generally do not create or stamp engineering designs. CEC officers are managers, responsible for establishing project requirements and executing design plans. Most design is performed by NAVFAC civilian engineers or contracted design firms. In the Seabees, where there are no civilians, CEC officers may influence designs, but they tend to be “on-the-job” design revisions that reflect the time-sensitive nature of the Seabees’ mission.

17. How do I learn more about pay, promotions, time off, and how long the commitment is?

- a. Search online, or contact a Navy recruiter. Search “Navy Recruiting” online or call 1-800-USA-NAVY and you will be directed to the closest Navy Recruiting Office in your area.

18. Where can I see things that NAVFAC and the Seabees do?

- a. <https://www.facebook.com/navfac>
- b. <https://www.facebook.com/NavyExpeditionaryCombatCommand>
- c. <https://www.facebook.com/NMCB3>
- d. <https://www.facebook.com/NMCB4>
- e. <https://www.facebook.com/NMCB5>
- f. <https://www.facebook.com/NMCB01>
- g. <https://www.facebook.com/NMCB11>
- h. <https://www.facebook.com/NMCB133>