



Lieutenant Catherine Cavender

USCG Cruise Ship National Center of Expertise

Lieutenant Catherine Cavender reported as the National Mission Coordinator at Cruise Ship National Center of Expertise in July 2025. Hailing from west-central Illinois, she earned her bachelor's degree in marine Transportation from the US Merchant Marine Academy, graduating in 2017, along with earning a 3rd Mate Unlimited Tonnage License. Her Coast Guard career began when she reported as an Apprentice Marine Inspector at Sector San Francisco, where she quickly earned numerous inspection qualifications, including competencies in domestic and foreign vessel inspections.

In 2020, LT Cavender transitioned to Sector New Orleans as a Journeyman Marine Inspector. During her time there, she played a pivotal role on the Inspected Towing Vessel implementation team, ensuring that over 500 towing vessels met new regulatory requirements over a four-year period. She also advanced her marine inspector qualifications, earning the Hull Inspector certification. In addition to her technical roles, LT Cavender contributed to morale and community development as the unit's morale funds manager, overseeing the completion of a \$150,000 infrastructure project that brought a small outdoor gym to the unit.

Reporting to Sector Southeast Alaska in May of 2022, LT Cavender led the Waterways Management and Facilities Division, supervising a team of 8 facility inspectors, 2 civilians and 2 Aids to Navigation (ATON) units. As a strong advocate for leadership programs, she served as the local Leadership Advisory Council Chair, organizing several events to foster a positive work environment. A member of the Prevention Department, she has re-certified as a Cruise Ship Inspector and has conducted over 30 foreign cruise ship compliance exams since arriving in 2022, including traveling to Nome, AK, in support of Sector Western Alaska & US Artic.

LT Cavender's exemplary service has earned her numerous awards, including the Coast Guard Commendation Medal, Coast Guard Achievement Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, and several unit and team awards. Outside of her professional accomplishments, she embraces the Alaskan lifestyle, with a passion for gardening—winning the “Most Aesthetic Community Garden Plot” award in 2023, along with a prized green cabbage at the Juneau Community Garden. When not tending to her garden, LT Cavender enjoys hiking, and college football.