



NVDCINST 16713
Revised 09/2025

INITIAL VESSEL DOCUMENTATION

These are general instructions which may not cover all requirements needed to document your vessel. Please see [46 CFR Part 67](#) for detailed information.

CG-1258 Application for Initial, Exchange or Replacement of Certificate of Documentation; Redocumentation: Completed by owner(s) in eStorefront.

Supporting documents and instruments, as applicable, may be uploaded into eStorefront to accompany the application. Failure to include required documents will cause a delay in processing your request.

CG-1261 Builder's Certification and First Transfer of Title: Must be completed by the builder of the vessel. For initial documentation only. If more than one builder, each builder must complete a form. Evidence of U.S. build is required for all vessels seeking a fishery or coastwise endorsement.

CG-5397 Application for Simplified Measurement: Completed by owner, to establish tonnage calculations when CG-1261 Builder's Certification is not provided.

CG-1340 Bill of Sale: This form may not be necessary if the Builder's Certification and First Transfer of Title form is submitted and shows the applicant as "Party for Whom Built" in Block V, or as the transferee in the First Sale or Transfer in Block VII. Otherwise, submit the bill of sale, signed by or on behalf of all persons transferring an interest in the vessel. Signature(s) of seller(s) must be acknowledged by a notary public. Altered instruments may be rejected. A recorded copy of the instrument will be returned.

Simplified Method. Ownership may be established from state title or state or foreign registration. A copy of the title or registration must be provided with the bill(s) of sale from the registered owner to applicant. If the foreign registry is similar to U.S. documentation, provide a copy of the registry and evidence of removal from foreign registry in addition to the bill of sale.

- Simplified method does not apply to Coastwise vessels of over 200 ITC gross tons. In addition to U.S. build evidence; submit the complete chain of title and proof of U.S. citizenship for all past owners. Maritime Administration Form MA-899, Declaration of Citizenship for Vessel Recordation Purposes, can be used to establish citizenship.

Fees:

Fee information is available at the NVDC homepage (<http://www.uscg.mil/nvdc> >> Fee Schedule). Fees are non-refundable per 46 CFR 67.500(d).

Instructions:

1. Submit your request via the eStorefront link at <http://www.uscg.mil/nvdc>.
 - a. You may be required to attach supporting documents and instruments to complete your submission.
 - b. Fillable PDF forms, which can be completed and attached to your eStorefront application, are available at <http://www.uscg.mil/nvdc> >> Instructions and Forms.