



# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

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## ELIGIBILITY OF AMERICAN SAMOANS FOR A U.S. MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIAL

It has been recently determined by the U.S. Coast Guard that an American Samoan may be eligible for a U.S. Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC). Where an American Samoan has met the statutory definition of “citizen of the United States” found in 46 U.S.C. § 104, that individual (i.e., a natural person) will have satisfied the respective citizenship requirements for both Title 46 U.S.C. and Title 46 C.F.R. where merchant mariner credentialing, vessel manning, and vessel documentation are concerned. Citizenship requirements for other statutory and regulatory language in the respective 46 Titles may also be satisfied by an American Samoan who meets the definition of citizen in § 104 given that the citizenship for an American Samoan will be entered as “United States” on a seaman’s certificate of discharge.

When an American Samoan is considered to be a citizen under Title 46 U.S.C. § 104, and has met all other statutory and regulatory requirements, that individual will be eligible to apply for an MMC, serve on board a U.S. documented vessel, and make application to document a vessel. Where an American Samoan has been issued an MMC, that individual may serve in the capacity permitted by that credential. Similarly, an American Samoan may also serve in a position for which no credential is required. In either case, sea service accrued may be credited towards the service requirements for an MMC. In summary, an American Samoan, provided they are otherwise qualified, may serve in any position on board a U.S. vessel which requires U.S. citizenship.

This MSIB will apply to any American Samoan who meets the definition of citizen in 46 U.S.C. § 104. Please note that the information in this MSIB is not intended to be limited to American Samoans residing only in the geographic area surrounding American Samoa.

Any American Samoan who is interested in obtaining an MMC should contact the U.S. Coast Guard National Maritime Center. Questions regarding the service aboard a U.S. documented vessel without an MMC should contact the local U.S. Coast Guard Officer in Charge Marine Inspection (OCMI). Vessel documentation questions can be referred to the National Vessel Documentation Center. When contacting the U.S. Coast Guard to learn more about any of the opportunities just discussed, please reference CG-MMC Policy Letter No. 02-23.

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