

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Mariner Credentialing Program Impacts – Update #1

The Coast Guard published [Marine Safety Information Bulletin \(MSIB\) 08-20](#) announcing several updates based on the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective March 19, 2020, the Coast Guard's 17 Regional Examination Centers (REC) and 3 Monitoring Units (MU) are ***closed to the public until further notice***.

All REC/MU customer walk-in service is suspended and all scheduled examinations and appointments are cancelled. REC appointment calendars are closed. The National Maritime Center (NMC) will closely monitor the situation and restore these services as soon as possible.

In an effort to minimize customer service disruptions:

- The Customer Service Center call center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. You may reach the call center at 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662) and IASKNMC@uscg.mil. Mariners are asked to not try to reschedule appointments until the NMC re-opens the appointment calendars. The NMC will provide notice when the calendars are available.
- The [NMC website](http://www.uscg.mil/nmc) (www.uscg.mil/nmc) will provide updates on REC/MU operating status.
- For improved service and security, use the electronic submission process. Guidance and REC/MU e-mail addresses are located on the [NMC website](#). Be advised that electronic submissions will only be accepted in PDF format. Other formats such as .zip files and camera captured images will **not** be accepted.
- National Endorsements: Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC) and Medical Certificates (National Endorsements only) that expire between March 1, 2020, and July 31, 2020, are extended until October 31, 2020. Mariners actively working on expired credentials that meet the expiration criteria must carry the expired credential with a copy of [MSIB 08-20](#).
- STCW Endorsements: MMCs with STCW endorsements that expire between March 1, 2020, and July 31, 2020, are extended until October 31, 2020. Mariners who are actively working on expired credentials that meet the expiration criteria must carry the expired credential with a copy of [MSIB 08-20](#).

- STCW Medical Certificates: STCW Medical Certificates are valid for 3 months from the expiration date in accordance with STCW Regulation I/9. Mariners who are actively working on expired Medical Certificates that meet the expiration criteria must carry the expired certificate with a copy of [MSIB 08-20](#).
- Additional Administrative Measures: The following items that expire between March 1, 2020, and July 31, 2020, are extended until October 31, 2020: Additional Information letters, Qualified Assessor letters, Designated Examiner letters, Proctor Approval letters, Approved to Test letters, Mariner Training course completion certificates.
- Pilot Annual Physical Examinations: 46 USC 7101(e)(3) requires that pilots undergo an annual physical examination each year while holding a credential. The Coast Guard does not intend to enforce this requirement given the current national emergency and the lack of medical care. This measure **ONLY** relaxes the requirement for an annual physical and not the actual medical standards.

At this time, NMC operations in Martinsburg, WV, are being minimally impacted by COVID-19. This is a dynamic situation and updates will be provided as needed. The NMC understands this reduction in service may affect our industry customers and stakeholders, and we apologize for any potential inconvenience.

Sincerely,

/K. R. Martin/

Kirsten R. Martin
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Commanding Officer