Sea Service

What counts as sea service?
What counts as a day?
When can I claim time-and-a-half credit?
How do I document sea service?

Completing the Form 719-S (Small Vessel Sea Service Form)

Sea Service Letters (Samples/Instructions):

  General Sea Service Letter
  Tankerman PIC Sea Service & Transfer Letter
  Tankerman PIC (Barge) Sea Service & Transfer Letter
  Qualified Instructor Letter
**DISCLAIMER:** This tool is not a formal evaluation or a guarantee of how sea service will be ultimately credited after a Coast Guard evaluation. This information is meant as an aid in preparing a mariner credential application.

**What counts as sea service?**

- Sea service is a measure of a mariner’s lifetime experience on boats, whether recreational, commercial, or military. It may be counted from the day a mariner turns age 16 and accumulates over his or her lifetime.
- A day of sea service is any day that a mariner served upon a vessel in an assigned position in either the deck or engineering department of a vessel (not a passenger). The position may include duties such as: handling lines, being a lookout, steering the boat, and other navigational or propulsion functions.
- Sea service never expires and may be reused when applying for new endorsements. It is the mariner’s responsibility to keep copies of all sea service records.

**What counts as a “day”?**

- A “day,” as defined by the regulations, is 8 hours of watch-standing or day-working, not to include overtime.
- **Only on vessels of less than 100 gross registered tons (GRT):** Credit for a full day will **only** be given for service of 4 hours or more (See 46 CFR 10.107, definition of “Day”). No credit will ever be given for days in which less than 4 hours were served.
- For the purposes of defining sea service requirements, the Coast Guard considers 1 month as 30 days, and 1 year as 12 months (or 360 days).
When can I claim time-and-a-half credit?

- For most vessels, no additional credit may be received for periods served over 8 hours. However, on vessels authorized by 46 U.S.C. 8104, 46 CFR 15.705, and the vessel’s manning requirements to operate a two-watch system, a 12-hour working day may in some cases be creditable as 1 1/2 days of service.

- If you work on a vessel operating with a Coast Guard authorized six-on-six-off watch system with only two watch standing officers (i.e., certain crew boats, supply boats, towboats and some commercial fishing boats), you may claim 1 1/2 days for each 12-hour day worked.

- For more information on this topic, please see 12 Hour Day / Time-and-a-Half Credit.

How do I document sea service?

- To document service aboard vessels of less than 200 GRT: Applicants may use the CG 719-S (Small Vessel Sea Service Form) or they may submit a letter which includes the same information required on the Small Vessel Sea Service Form.
  - Remember that you must complete a separate Small Vessel Sea Service Form for each vessel you served aboard.
  - If you are the owner of a vessel on which you are claiming service, you must also submit proof of ownership for that vessel. Acceptable proof of ownership may include:
    1. Title
    2. Registration (state registered vessels)
    3. Certificate of Documentation (U.S. Coast Guard registered vessels)
    4. Proof of insurance (which clearly identifies the vessel)
    5. Bill(s) of sale.
  - If you are signing as the owner of a corporation that owns the vessel, you must include a copy of proof of ownership of the company, such as a copy of the articles of incorporation. (See 46 CFR 10.232.)
  - Photographs or imagery of vessels are not acceptable as proof of ownership.
  - If you are not the owner of the vessel, someone with knowledge of your service must attest to its accuracy and validity in the proper location on the form by signing it and completing the associated required information.
• **To document service on any vessel of over 200 GRT:** Applicants may submit any of the following documents **signed** by an appropriate official, an individual holding an officer endorsement, an owner or an employer **who is not the applicant seeking the credit** (see 46 CFR 10.232):

  1. Certificates of discharge
  2. Letters on official letterhead indicating the vessel details, dates of service, waters of service, and position(s) served in
  3. Other official documents such as service logs or discharge books from marine companies.
COMPLETING THE FORM 719-S
(Small Vessel Sea Service Form)

Below is an outline of the Small Vessel Sea Service Form. Please read the form carefully. Be sure to complete all sections, as required. Failure to complete the required information will result in rejection of the form and the sea service credit sought on that form.

SECTION I: This is where a mariner documents his or her personal information, boat information and a description of the waters on which his or her experience was obtained. Please note: Individual forms must be completed for each vessel on which service is claimed. A single form claiming service on multiple vessels will not be accepted.

- This form is only for vessels 200 GRT and less. Service on vessels of greater than 200 GRT should be reflected in an approved alternate method.
- **Official Number or State Registration Number:** An applicant **must** provide an official number or state registration number. Please do not try to “make up” a number from identifying information on a document pertaining to the vessel that you hold. This practice will result in your form being rejected. If you have questions as to what numbers are the vessel’s identifying numbers, please call our [Customer Service Center](#) for assistance.
- **Vessel Name:** If the vessel is not documented, you must provide a name and this form **must** be attested to by a party other than the applicant. If the vessel does not have a documented name, the vessel name box may be left empty.
• **Vessel Gross Tons**: To receive credit toward endorsements with tonnage limitations of over 25 GRT, the applicant must supply the GRT (water displacement) of the vessel on which they are claiming service. If unsure of the GRT of the vessel, please be sure to provide the width, length, and depth of the vessel on this form. All three measurements are required so that displacement may be calculated for you.

• **Propulsion**: For auxiliary sail endorsements, service aboard vessels with sail or auxiliary sail propulsion must be demonstrated. For service to be credited toward these endorsements, the propulsion type must be specifically listed.

• **Served As**: The applicant must indicate which department(s) he or she served in. There are only three service departments aboard a vessel: deck, steward, and engine. An applicant must not serve in a position for which manning is required by the Coast Guard without the corresponding endorsement or they will not receive credit for the service.

  If multiple departments are indicated without a specific breakdown of time served in each department, then overall service will be split equally between the departments listed. (Example: One hundred days submitted as “cook and deckhand” will result in a credit of 50 days in the steward department and 50 days in the deck department).

• **Name of Body or Bodies of Water Upon Which Vessel Was Underway**: The applicant must provide a written description of the waters on which they served. This may be a general description (i.e., “Atlantic Ocean”) but must correspond to the breakdown provided in Section III.

  To receive credit toward endorsements with Great Lakes or near coastal privileges, the applicant must supply a description of the specific waters on which they are claiming service. All descriptions of waters which do not qualify as Great Lakes or near coastal are considered “inland” for the purposes of evaluation.

**Common errors on this section:**

- Leaving required boxes blank.
- Claiming “owner” as position served.
- Claiming engineer service on a vessel without an engine room.
- Not including all requested vessel measurements.
- Claiming service on a vessel of over 200 GRT on this form.
- Claiming Great Lakes or near coastal waters credit when no matching written description is provided.
• Providing identifying information for someone other than the applicant (usually the information of a person attesting to service).

• Not providing a reference number and/or Social Security Number.

• Not listing an actual state registry number or official number of a vessel.

**SECTION II:** This is the record of underway sea service experience. The top part of this section is a worksheet to record a breakdown of the estimated days by year and calendar month. The bottom part of this section contains boxes to record totals of the information from the top of this section.

- Use this portion of the form to document the number of days in each month and the corresponding year in which you are claiming service credit.
• Take your time and complete each block individually and accurately for each year that you served. Use multiple forms for periods claimed of more than 5 years.

• Average hours underway (per day) can be **no less than 4 hours for credit to be awarded.**

• You must specify the number of days served on each route (inland, Great Lakes, and/or near coastal).

• The first box, 1, should be the total number of days claimed on this particular form. It should equal the sum of all the days indicated in the top part of this section. It should also equal the sum total of days claimed in boxes 2, 3, and 4.

• Box 2 will contain a breakdown of the number of days you are claiming service on waters of the Great Lakes.

• Box 3 will contain a breakdown of the number of days you are claiming service on inland waters (i.e., **shoreward** of the boundary line).

• Box 4 will contain a breakdown of the number of days you are claiming service on near coastal waters (i.e., **seaward** of the boundary line).

**Common errors on this section:**

• Using lines, arrows, or other shorthand, instead of individually writing down days served.

• Attempting to cover periods of more than 5 years on one form.

• Claiming a greater number of days served in a month than the number of days that month has in it. (Example: Claiming 31 days of service in February.)

• Claiming the same periods of time served on forms for different vessels. Coast Guard policy allows mariners to only claim the maximum number of days in each month across all vessels served. For example, do not indicate 25 days underway for the month of March 2012 on “VESSEL A” AND 25 days underway for the month of March 2012 on “VESSEL B.” There are only 31 total days in March.
SECTION III: This is where the applicant attests to the accuracy of his/her documented service.

- Mariners **must** complete the signature and date of the applicant. If the Small Vessel Sea Service Form you are using is a newer form, this signature and verification box may be located on a second page.
- If you are the owner of the vessel, you must also submit proof of ownership with the Small Vessel Sea Service Form. For questions regarding proof of ownership, see [How do I document sea service?](#).
- If you do not own the vessel, you cannot attest to your own service—even if you are serving as master. You will need to have an owner, operator, or another master attest to the days underway by signing this section and providing their address and phone number.

**Common errors on this section:**

- Not signing and dating each form submitted.
- Printing the applicant’s name instead of signing as the applicant.
- The applicant signing as person attesting to experience.
- Not providing legible required contact information for the person attesting.
- Not providing an address and/or phone contact for the person attesting.
- The applicant failing to sign after obtaining the signature of someone to attest to their service.
(1) **GENERAL SEA SERVICE LETTER:** To document sea service experience in a sea service letter, read the examples below carefully and provide letters formatted consistently with the information below.

```
SAMPLE General Sea Service Letter
Company’s/Ship’s Letter Head

From: (See: 46 CFR 11.211 for specific information)
To: United States Coast Guard
    National Maritime Center (NMC)
    100 Forbes Drive
    Martinsburg, WV 25404

Subject: ACCUMULATION OF <EMPLOYEE’S> SEA SERVICE

Dear NMC:

Please be advised that <employee name> <mariner identification number> is/was employed by our company as a <position>. The following is an accumulation of <employee name>’s sea time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel Name</th>
<th>Official Number</th>
<th>Vessel Type</th>
<th>Propulsion</th>
<th>GRT</th>
<th>HP</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Begin Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Days Underway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Days Underway in the past 3 years: ____________________ Days Underway in the past 5 years: ____________________

Total Days Underway: ____________________ By documenting J2 hour day service, I am attesting that 12 hour days have been authorized by the United States Coast Guard, per each vessel’s manning requirements.

Whoever, in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States knowingly and willfully falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact, or makes any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry, shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned for not more than 5 years or both (18 U.S.C. 1001).

I certify that this statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and is in accordance with the warning notice listed above (18 U.S.C. 1001).

<SIGNATURE BY AUTHORIZED COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE>
<PRINTED NAME OF AUTHORIZED COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE>
<CONTACT NUMBER IF DIFFERS FROM LETTERHEAD>
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1. The letter **must be on letterhead** from either the company that employed you or the vessel on which you served.

2. Include the date the letter was written.

   **NOTE:** If you are presently serving on the vessel, the date indicated will be used as the end date of your service for evaluation purposes.

3. For each vessel, the letter must provide:
   - vessel name
   - official number
   - vessel type
   - propulsion type
   - tonnage
   - engine horsepower (when applicable)
   - the beginning date of service
   - the end date of service
   - number of underway days.

   This information must be provided for each vessel on which you serve and for which you are utilizing this letter to claim service.

4. **For any officer endorsement,** the letter must also supply a breakdown of the number of days of service within 3 years of the date of the letter. For **any Tankerman endorsement or renewal** of any endorsement, the letter must supply a breakdown of the number of days of service within 5 years preceding the date of the letter.

5. The letter must indicate whether the service was 12- or 8-hour days. If the service is 12-hour days, it must attest that a two-watch system has been authorized by the vessel’s Coast Guard Certificate of Inspection (COI), and the COI must actually authorize that.
(2) **TANKERMAN PIC SEA SERVICE & TRANSFER LETTER:** To document your Tankerman-PIC sea service and transfer experience in a sea service letter, read the example below carefully and complete it exactly as instructed.

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SAMPLE Tankerman PIC Sea Service and Transfer Letter
Company’s/Ship’s Letter Letter Head

Date

From: (See: 46 CFR 11.211 and 46 CFR 13.127 for specific information)

To: United States Coast Guard
National Maritime Center (NMC)
100 Forbes Drive
Martinsburg, WV 25404

Subject: <EMPLOYEE’S> ACCUMULATION OF SEA SERVICE AND TANKERMAN PERSON IN CHARGE SERVICE AND TRANSFER LETTER

Dear NMC:

Please be advised that <employee name> <mariner identification number> is/was employed by our company as a <position>. The following is an accumulation of <employee name>’s sea time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel Name</th>
<th>Official Number</th>
<th>Vessel Type</th>
<th>Propulsion</th>
<th>GRT</th>
<th>HP</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Begin Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Days Underway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The listed sea service consists of <3 or 12> hour days underway. By documenting 12 hour day service, I am attesting that 12 hour days have been authorized by the United States Coast Guard, per each vessel’s manning requirements.

1. This is to certify that <Employee’s Name> <mariner identification number> has demonstrated to my satisfaction that he/she is fully capable of supervising transfers of <Dangerous Liquid Liquefied Gas> cargo.

2. This demonstration has included the following: pre-transfer inspections, pre-transfer conferences and the execution of the Declaration of Inspection, connection of the cargo hoses and/or loading-arms, the line-up of the cargo system for loading and discharge, the start of liquid flow during loading, the start of the cargo pump and increase of pressure to normal discharge pressure, the calculation of the loading rate(s), monitoring of the loading and loading rate, topping off of cargo tanks during loading and the stripping of cargo tanks, ballasting and de-ballasting, disconnection of the cargo hoses or loading-arms and securing of the cargo systems.
```
1. The letter must indicate that the mariner has demonstrated his or her ability to supervise transfers, including the capabilities indicated in 46 CFR 13.127. The letter must also indicate the type of cargoes being transferred (i.e., Dangerous Liquids or Liquefied Gas).

   a) Documentation of transfers for a Tankerman endorsement must include:
      i. the date
      ii. the amount transferred
      iii. the name and official number of the tank vessel or the name of the tank facility from which the product is transferred
      iv. the name and official number of the vessel that the transfer occurred on
v. the printed name of the Tankerman PIC who observed the mariner’s participation in the transfer

vi. the Tankerman PIC’s signature.

b) All transfers must be completed to qualify for credit. The letter above will require you to break down transfers in which the mariner participated to demonstrate:

i. five loads

ii. five discharges

iii. two commencements of a load

iv. two completions of a load

v. two commencements of a discharge

vi. two completions of a discharge.

A common area of confusion in this complex requirement is that one entire transfer may satisfy a number of these requirements (i.e., a load, a commencement of a load, and a completion of a load). The format supplied above would require this transfer to be listed three times, once in each applicable section.

2. The letter must attest that all transfers were conducted in accordance with the requirements of 46 CFR 13.127 as shown above. Bunkering, shifting cargo from one tank to another within a vessel, and/or fueling are **not** considered transfers of dangerous liquids and cannot be used toward a Tankerman Endorsement.
3. The letter must be signed by one of the following:
   a. the owner of the vessel
   b. a senior company official with access to logbooks and records who is able to verify all service and transfers
   c. the Master of the vessel
   d. the Chief Engineer of the vessel.

Common errors on this section:

- Transfers must be completed on vessels documented as either Tank Ships or self-propelled tank vessels certified to carry the type of cargo that the mariner is applying for.
  - Service on Cargo Vessels, Container Ships, Lift boats, Offshore Supply Vessels (OSVs), and non-self-propelled tank barges may not be used toward an endorsement as Tankerman PIC, Tankerman Assistant, or Tankerman Engineer.

- Transfers must be completed in accordance with 46 CFR 13.127.
(3) **TANKERMAN PIC (BARGE) SEA SERVICE & TRANSFER LETTER:** To document Tankerman-PIC (Barge) sea service and transfer experience in a sea service letter, read the example below carefully and complete it exactly as instructed.

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**SAMPLE Tankerman PIC (Barge) Sea Service/Employment and Transfer Letter**

**Company's/Ship's Letter Head**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel Name</th>
<th>Official Number</th>
<th>Vessel Type</th>
<th>Propulsion</th>
<th>GRT</th>
<th>HP</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Begin Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Days Underway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Date

From: (See: 46 CFR 11.211 and 46 CFR 13.127 for specific information)

To: United States Coast Guard

National Maritime Center (NMC)

100 Forbes Drive

Martinsburg, WV 25404

Subject: <EMPLOYEE'S> ACCUMULATION OF SEA SERVICE AND TANKERMAN PERSON IN CHARGE BARGE SERVICE LETTER

Dear NMC:

Please be advised that <employee name> <mariner identification number> is/was employed by our company as a <position>. The following is an accumulation of <employee name>’s sea time.

1. The listed sea service consists of <3 or 12> hour days underway. By documenting 12 hour day service, I am attesting that 12 hour days have been authorized by the United States Coast Guard, per each vessel’s manning requirements; or

   <employee’s Name> has served at least _______ days/months of closely related service directly involved with tank barges appropriate to the endorsement applied for.

2. This is to certify that <Employee’s Name> <mariner identification number> has demonstrated to my satisfaction that he/she is fully capable of supervising transfers of <Dangerous Liquid/Liquified Gas> cargo.

   This demonstration has included the following: pre-transfer inspections, pre-transfer conferences and the execution of the Declaration of Inspection, connection of the cargo hoses and/or loading arms, the line-up of the cargo system for loading and discharge, the start of liquid flow during loading, the start of the cargo pump and increase of pressure to normal discharge pressure, the calculation of the loading rate(s), monitoring of the loading and loading rate, topping off of cargo tanks during loading and the stripping of cargo tanks, ballasting and de-ballasting, disconnection of the cargo hoses or loading-arms and securing of the cargo systems.
1. A service letter must clearly indicate the barges on which the mariner served. Service on Towing Vessels is not directly creditable for use toward a Tankerman PIC (Barge) endorsement. If the mariner's service was on a towing vessel, the letter must specify the number of days of closely related service where the towing vessel was directly involved with ferrying tank barges.

Common errors on this section:

- Not including the vessel information (Official Number, cargo classification) of the barge that the transfers occurred on when service is on towing vessels directly involved with tank barges.

- Listing only the number of days of service on towing vessels and not breaking down the number of days directly involved with handling tank barges.

- Service must be on vessels documented as tank vessels certified to carry the type of cargo that the mariner is applying for.
  
  - Service on Cargo Vessels, Container Ships, Lift boats, and Offshore Supply Vessels (OSVs) may not be used toward an endorsement as Tankerman PIC (Barge).
(4) **QUALIFIED INSTRUCTOR LETTER:** To document qualified instructor experience in a sea service letter, read the example below carefully and complete it exactly as instructed.

![Sample Qualified Instructor Letter](image-url)
Common errors on this section:

- Letter is not on school or academy letterhead.
- Letter is not signed by an appropriate academy or school representative (a mariner may not attest to their service as an instructor).
- Letter does not indicate the course(s) and date(s) the instructor taught.