

Lapse in Appropriations and Government Shutdown: STCW Mitigation Efforts – Dispensations

The information in [Update #2](#) dated October 15, 2025, remains in place and is valid.

The National Maritime Center (NMC) and all Regional Examination Centers (RECs) remain closed. Customer walk-in service at the RECs is suspended. Examinations and other REC appointments are cancelled. To mitigate the impact caused by the government shutdown, the NMC has implemented the following measures related to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, for Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMCs) and Medical Certificates:

- **MMCs:** Pursuant to STCW Article VIII, dispensations may be granted for continued service for mariners operating on endorsements that expired on or after October 1, 2025, provided a renewal application was submitted to the NMC and the employer applied to the Coast Guard for dispensation. STCW dispensations that are approved will expire up to March 31, 2026. Once the STCW dispensation letter is issued, mariners shall carry the letter AND a copy of this bulletin with the MMC. Requests for dispensation must be submitted via e-mail with a subject line “**STCW Dispensation**” to STCWDispensations@uscg.mil and must include the following information:
 - The ship name, IMO number, ship tonnage, mariner name, mariner reference number, capacity per STCW regulations, credential issuance and expiration dates, company name, company point of contact, and valid mariner e-mail address.
- **Medical Certificates:** In accordance with STCW Regulation I/9, when the STCW expiration date of a Medical Certificate occurs during a voyage, the certificate remains valid until the earlier of the next U.S. port of call or 3 months from the expiration date.
- For questions regarding credentialing issues related to National Defense, marine employers are advised to contact our Customer Service Center.

For updates on NMC and REC operating status, please monitor the [NMC website](#). For questions, contact our Customer Service Center via the [NMC online chat system](#), by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

Sincerely,

/P. A. Drayer/

Patrick A. Drayer

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard

Officer in Charge, Marine Inspections