

Resumption of Services at the National Maritime Center and Regional Examination Centers

Funding for the Department of Homeland Security and US Coast Guard has been restored, and the National Maritime Center (NMC) and Regional Examination Centers (RECs) are resuming normal operations in a phased approach to prioritize the most critical functions and address the backlog of applications and examinations resulting from the lapse in appropriations.

Application Procedures and Processing Timelines

- The Application Submission Portal (ASAP) for submission of applications and supporting documentation remains active.
- Applications for merchant mariner credentials (MMCs), medical certificates, and course approvals and related requests will be processed on a **first-in/first-out basis**.
- Only applications that demonstrate a clear and documented nexus to national defense will be considered for expedited processing. Marine employers with national defense-related requests are advised to contact the NMC Customer Service Center (CSC).
- All extension policies and mitigation measures outlined in [Update #3: Mitigation Efforts – Extensions, dated April 22, 2026](#), remain in effect through their stated expiration dates. Mariners should refer to that bulletin for full details.

During the prolonged lapse, the NMC has accumulated a significant backlog of applications, currently more than 19,000 submissions and growing. Processing timelines are expected to **extend 8-12 months** from the date a completed application is received.

To avoid potential delays and disruptions to employment and operations, mariners are **strongly encouraged to apply at least 8-12 months** in advance of expiration. After submission, mariners should also allow additional time for applications to be entered into the system before checking the status online or contacting the CSC.

RECs

RECs will resume operations; however, counter (walk-in) services will remain suspended until further notice to allow staff to focus on backlog reduction and examination scheduling.

Examination Scheduling Priorities

Examination scheduling will be conducted in the following order of priority:

1. Mariners with previously scheduled examinations on or after May 1, 2026: Appointments will be honored as scheduled.
2. Mariners whose examinations were scheduled and cancelled between February 17, 2026, and May 1, 2026: Mariners will be contacted by REC staff to reschedule at the earliest available opportunity.
3. All other applicants: Scheduling will open once priority groups have been accommodated.

During the initial resumption period, the CSC will not schedule examinations. After the period for mariners whose examinations were canceled during the furlough to re-schedule is completed, the opportunity to schedule an exam for all mariners will be available through the CSC. Anticipate opening exam schedule for all other mariners shortly.

Course Approvals

Course approvals will continue to be processed on a first-in, first-out basis. Mariners are encouraged to monitor the [NMC website](#) for updates regarding processing times, REC operations, and policy adjustments as operations stabilize. For ongoing updates, sign up for the NMC list server by scanning the QR code below.

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

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