
Medical Certificate

Frequently Asked Questions

As of January 24, 2014, the Coast Guard began issuing medical certificates to all mariners holding valid international endorsements, per the Final Rule titled, Implementation of the Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW), as Amended, and Changes to National Endorsements.

All medical examinations, diagnostic tests and demonstrations of physical ability must be performed and witnessed or reviewed by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner licensed in the United States or one of the U.S. territories. Examinations, tests and demonstrations of physical ability witnessed or reviewed by chiropractors or naturopathic doctors, and holders of foreign medical licenses, chiropractors or naturopathic doctors are not accepted under current regulations. Examinations based solely on documentary and/or patient history reviews are also unacceptable.

QUESTION: What is a medical certificate?

A medical certificate is a document that serves as proof that a mariner meets the required medical and physical standards, per the publication of the Federal Register (FR).

The medical certificate is the Coast Guard's authorization that mariners have met the following requirements:

- Have the physical capability to fulfill all the requirements of basic training as required by Section A-VI/1 of STCW.
- Demonstrate adequate hearing and speech to communicate effectively and detect any audible alarms.
- Have no medical condition, disorder or impairment that will prevent the effective and safe conduct of the seafarer's routine and emergency duties.
- Are not suffering from any medical condition likely to be aggravated by service at sea or to render the seafarer unfit for service or to endanger the health and safety of other personnel on board.
- Are not taking medication that has side effects that will impair judgment, balance or any
- other requirements for effective and safe performance of routine and emergency duties on board.

QUESTION: How do I request a duplicate medical certificate?

Submit your request for a duplicate medical certificate to the National Maritime Center (NMC) via phone (888) 427-5662 or e-mail (IASKNMC@uscg.mil). Your request must include: full name, mariner reference number, reason for the request, and desired mailing address.

QUESTION: What do I do with the medical certificate when I receive it?

The medical certificate folds in half, to be placed in the plastic sleeve located in the back of your MMC booklet.

**** VERY IMPORTANT: It is not to be taped, glued, laminated, peeled, or detached. ****

- Use a blue or black ballpoint pen to sign your certificate as soon as you receive it.
- Do not separate the pages of your certificate.
- Note your expiration dates; they coincide with the type of service you are engaged in (STCW, National, or Pilot).
- You are required to keep your certificate in the plastic sleeve at the back of your MMC.
- If your certificate indicates that you have a medical waiver, you must comply with the requirements of the accompanying waiver letter.
- In addition to a valid medical certificate, the waiver letter must be carried with you when you sail under the authority of your MMC. As a result of the waiver, your certificate may also carry a limited expiration date of 1 or 2 years.

QUESTION: Is there a cost for the medical certificate?

There is no cost for a medical certificate. Normal fees still apply to MMC transactions consistent with 46 CFR Table 10.219(a). A medical certificate will not negate nor increase the normal MMC fees.

QUESTION: How do I submit an application?

For a medical certificate only, the preferred way to submit your CG-719K (medical certificate applications) along with any supplemental medical information is via e-mail to MEDAIP@uscg.mil. Please include your full name in the subject line. Please ensure the applications are in PDF format, as picture formats (JPG, GIF, etc.) often cannot be opened.

QUESTION: What if I do not have e-mail? Can I submit an application by fax or mail?

Yes. You can submit via fax or mail, but the processing time will be longer because your documents must be scanned.

- Fax: (304) 433-3407. Please include your full name in the subject line.
- United States Postal Service (USPS)

National Maritime Center

Medical Evaluation Division

100 Forbes Drive

Martinsburg, WV 25404

QUESTION: Can I submit a scan and e-mail of a handwritten CG-719K?

Yes, as long as it can be read and understood by our staff. Your full name and contact information is critical. This will allow us to reach you if any item needs correction.

QUESTION: Can I submit a renewal application for a medical certificate that has expired?

Yes. Send e-mail to MEDAIP@uscg.mil. Make sure to include your name and mariner reference number in the subject line. Please ensure the applications are in PDF format, as picture formats (JPG, GIF, etc.) often cannot be opened.

QUESTION: How will I know if the NMC has received my application mailed by the USPS or faxed directly to the NMC?

Please allow 1 week for USPS delivery and 3 days for faxed applications. Then contact the NMC Customer Service Center at (888) 427-5662 for confirmation of receipt.

QUESTION: How long will it take for me to receive my medical certificate from the NMC?

Processing times will vary depending on the medical condition(s) reported and supplemental information provided. If your application is not filled out properly or if we require additional information to complete your evaluation, the processing will be delayed. On average, the majority of applications are processed and certificates are mailed in less than 3 working days.

QUESTION: What are dates of examination and expiration?

Date of Examination

The Coast Guard considers the date of examination to be the date that it approves the issuance of a medical certificate. It will not coincide with the date the medical practitioner signed the CG-719K; nor will it necessarily coincide with the issuance date of the medical certificate or MMC.

Dates of Expiration

Expiration for national mariners: Medical certificates issued to national mariners will be issued for a maximum of 5 years.

QUESTION: What about Medical Waivers?

The Coast Guard may grant a waiver if an applicant for an MMC does not possess the vision, hearing or general physical condition necessary and extenuating circumstances warrant special consideration.

DISCLAIMER:

USCG practices, with respect to the physical and medical evaluation process, continually evolve to align with current medical standards of care and current safety standards. Although the current NVIC 04-08 details specific medical conditions and the recommended data for evaluation of these conditions, it is not all inclusive or definitive and may be subject to further review.

For the most current medical information available, please contact the National Maritime Center Medical Helpdesk, marinermedical@uscg.mil, 1-888-IASKNMC (1-888-427-5662).