

NMC Extension Policy Update: Extension of Merchant Mariner Credentials and Medical Certificates

The National Maritime Center (NMC) is expanding the existing extension policy outlined in [Update #3: Mitigation Efforts – Extensions](#), dated April 22, 2026, for merchant mariner credentials (MMCs) and medical certificates impacted by the 2026 lapse in appropriations and continued processing delays.

Effective immediately, MMCs (National endorsements only) and medical certificates (National and Pilot expiration dates only) that expire between January 1, 2026, and July 31, 2026, will remain valid through August 31, 2026. Mariners who are actively working on expired credentials that meet the expiration criteria must carry the expired credential AND a copy of the attached letter while sailing under the authority of those credentials. The NMC will not issue separate or replacement MMCs or medical certificates reflecting the extension.

This extension is intended to support continued maritime operations while the NMC works through increased application volumes and processing backlogs following the lapse.

Key Information:

- Applications will continue to be processed on a **first-in, first-out basis**.
- Mariners are **strongly encouraged** to apply early via the [ASAP Tool](#) due to ongoing processing delays. Paper submission, because of manual handling, may delay issuance of mariner credentials and medical certifications.
- All other extension policies and measures outlined in [Update #3: Mitigation Efforts – Extensions](#), dated April 22, 2026, remain in effect unless otherwise superseded or rescinded. Mariners should refer to that bulletin for full details.

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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**U.S. Department of
Homeland Security**

**United States
Coast Guard**



Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard
National Maritime Center

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Martinsburg, WV 25404
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E-mail: IASKNMC@uscg.mil

5354
May 26, 2026

Dear U.S. Mariner,

Due to the government shutdown, the U.S. Coast Guard is currently unable to process applications for mariner credentials. To provide relief to affected mariners, consistent with the authority of 46 United States Code §7507 and §7508, the Coast Guard is granting an extension, effective immediately, to merchant mariner credentials (MMCs) (National endorsements only) and medical certificates (National and Pilot expiration dates only). This extension is valid through August 31, 2026, for mariners whose credentials expire between January 1 and July 31, 2026.

All mariners sailing under the authority of their National endorsement(s) should print and retain a copy of this letter with their MMC and medical certificate to present upon request by the U.S. Coast Guard, other agencies or officials. The National Maritime Center (NMC) does not intend to issue separate or replacement MMCs or medical certificates reflecting this extension. Additionally, this extension applies only to domestic operations and does not apply to Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) endorsements.

Applications submitted before or during the government shutdown will be held and processed once the NMC reopens and is legally authorized to resume operations.

If you have questions, visit the NMC website or contact the NMC Customer Service Center by using the NMC online chat system, by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick A. Drayer".

Patrick A. Drayer
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Officer in Charge, Marine Inspections