

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2021—Pub. L. 116-283 substituted “individual” for “seaman” wherever appearing.

2002—Pub. L. 107-295 struck out “the thumbprint,” after “photograph.”

§ 7304. Citizenship notation on merchant mariners’ documents

An individual applying for a merchant mariner’s document shall provide satisfactory proof that the individual is a citizen of the United States before that notation is made on the document.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 542.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 7304 points to 46:643(b).

Section 7304 specifies, that before a merchant mariner’s document is noted to specify that the individual is a U.S. citizen, the individual must provide satisfactory proof that he is a citizen. This does not impose a requirement of United States citizenship as a condition for issuance of a document.

§ 7305. Oaths for holders of merchant mariners’ documents

An applicant for a merchant mariner’s document shall take, before issuance of the document, an oath that the applicant will perform faithfully and honestly all the duties required by law, and will carry out the lawful orders of superior officers.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 542.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 7305 is blank.

The requirement for an oath, drawn from a clause which had appeared in 46 U.S.C. 672(g), and administered by the Coast Guard to all applicants, was repealed in a 1980 amendment by section 4 of Public Law 96-378 (94 Stat. 1516). Since no specific comment was made regarding the elimination in 1980 and the agency has continued to administer an oath to all applicants, this provision is being reinstated. The Committee believes the oath will contribute to the discipline and order necessary in the merchant marine.

§ 7306. General requirements and classifications for able seamen

(a) To qualify for an endorsement as able seaman authorized by this section, an applicant must provide satisfactory proof that the applicant—

- (1) is at least 18 years of age;
(2) has the service required by the applicable section of this part;
(3) is qualified professionally as demonstrated by an applicable examination or educational requirements; and
(4) is qualified as to sight, hearing, and physical condition to perform the seaman’s duties.

(b) The classifications authorized for endorsement as able seaman are the following:

- (1) able seaman—unlimited.

- (2) able seaman—limited.
(3) able seaman—special.
(4) able seaman—offshore supply vessels.
(5) able seaman—sail.
(6) able seaman—fishing industry.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 542; Pub. L. 98-364, title IV, § 402(9)(C), July 17, 1984, 98 Stat. 448.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 7306 points to 46:672(b).

Section 7306(a) establishes the minimum requirements an individual must meet before being issued a merchant mariner’s document endorsed for able seamen.

Subsection (b) establishes the classifications of able seamen—unlimited, able seamen—limited, able seamen—special, able seamen—offshore supply vessels, and able seamen—sail.

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AMENDMENTS

1984—Subsec. (b)(6). Pub. L. 98-364 added par. (6).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Provisions of this section (related to able seaman—sail) effective Apr. 15, 1984, see section 2(g)(1) of Pub. L. 98-89, set out as a note under section 3101 of this title.

ACCEPTANCE OF CERTAIN SERVICES TOWARD ENDORSEMENT AS ABLE SEAMAN

Pub. L. 101-595, title VI, § 602(e)(3), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2992, provided that: “For the purposes of chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, the Secretary of Transportation shall accept the service used by an individual to qualify for an endorsement as able seaman—fishing industry as qualifying service toward an endorsement as an able seaman—

- “(A) under sections 7307 and 7309 of that title; or
“(B) if the service is on board a vessel of at least 100 gross tons, under section 7308 of that title.”

§ 7307. Able seamen—unlimited

The required service for the endorsement of able seaman—unlimited, qualified for unlimited service on a vessel on any waters, is at least 3 years’<sup>1</sup> service on deck on board vessels operating at sea or on the Great Lakes.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 543.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 7307 points to 46:672(b)(1).

Section 7307 requires individuals to have at least 3 years service on deck on vessels operating at sea or on the Great Lakes before their merchant mariner’s documents can be endorsed as able seamen—unlimited.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

TEMPORARY REDUCTION OF LENGTHS OF CERTAIN PERIODS OF SERVICE

Pub. L. 118-31, div. C, title XXXV, § 3534(j), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 833, provided that: “For the 3-year period

<sup>1</sup> See Temporary Reduction of Lengths of Certain Periods of Service note below.