

2016—Pub. L. 114-120, title III, §315(b)(2), Feb. 8, 2016, 130 Stat. 62, added item 7116.

2010—Pub. L. 111-281, title II, §210(c), Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 2914, added item 7115.

1990—Pub. L. 101-380, title IV, §4102(e)(2), Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 510, substituted “Review of criminal records” for “Renewal of licenses” in item 7109.

1984—Pub. L. 98-364, title IV, §402(8)(A), July 17, 1984, 98 Stat. 447, substituted “Oral examinations for licenses” for “Licenses for fishing vessels not subject to inspection” in item 7111.

**§ 7101. Issuing and classifying licenses and certificates of registry**

(a) Licenses and certificates of registry are established for individuals who are required to hold licenses or certificates under this subtitle.

(b) Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, the Secretary—

- (1) issues the licenses and certificates of registry; and
- (2) may classify the licenses and certificates of registry as provided in subsections (c) and (f) of this section, based on—
  - (A) the tonnage, means of propulsion, and horsepower of machine-propelled vessels;
  - (B) the waters on which vessels are to be operated; or
  - (C) other reasonable standards.

(c) The Secretary may issue licenses in the following classes to applicants found qualified as to age, character, habits of life, experience, professional qualifications, and physical fitness:

- (1) masters, mates, and engineers.
- (2) pilots.
- (3) operators.
- (4) radio officers.

(d) In classifying individuals under subsection (c)(1) of this section, the Secretary shall establish, when possible, suitable career patterns and service and other qualifying requirements appropriate to the particular service or industry in which the individuals are engaged.

(e) An individual may be issued a license under subsection (c)(2) of this section only if the applicant—

- (1) is at least 21 years of age;
- (2) is of sound health and has no physical limitations that would hinder or prevent the performance of a pilot’s duties;
- (3) has a thorough physical examination each year while holding the license, except that this requirement does not apply to an individual who will serve as a pilot only on a vessel of less than 1,600 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title;
- (4) demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Secretary, that the applicant has the requisite general knowledge and skill to hold the license;
- (5) demonstrates proficiency in the use of electronic aids to navigation;
- (6) maintains adequate knowledge of the waters to be navigated and knowledge of regulations for the prevention of collisions in those waters;
- (7) has sufficient experience, as decided by the Secretary, to evidence ability to handle

any vessel of the type and size which the applicant may be authorized to pilot; and

(8) meets any other requirement the Secretary considers reasonable and necessary.

(f) The Secretary may issue certificates of registry in the following classes to applicants found qualified as to character, knowledge, skill, and experience:

- (1) pursers.
- (2) medical doctors.
- (3) professional nurses.

(g) The Secretary may not issue a license or certificate of registry under this section unless an individual applying for the license or certificate makes available to the Secretary, under section 206(b)(7) of the National Driver Register Act of 1982 (23 U.S.C. 401 note), any information contained in the National Driver Register related to an offense described in section 205(a)(3)(A) or (B) of that Act committed by the individual.

(h) The Secretary may review the criminal record of an individual who applies for a license or certificate of registry under this section.

(i) The Secretary shall require the testing of an individual who applies for issuance or renewal of a license or certificate of registry under this chapter for use of a dangerous drug in violation of law or Federal regulation.

(j) The Secretary may issue a license under this section in a class under subsection (c) to an applicant that—

- (1) has at least 3 months of qualifying service on vessels of the uniformed services (as that term is defined in section 101(a) of title 10) of appropriate tonnage or horsepower within the 7-year period immediately preceding the date of application; and
- (2) satisfies all other requirements for such a license.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 539; Pub. L. 98-557, §29(a), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2873; Pub. L. 101-380, title IV, §4101(a), Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 509; Pub. L. 104-324, title VII, §720, Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3938; Pub. L. 113-281, title III, §305(a), Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 3043.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
7101 .....	46:214
	46:224
	46:226
	46:228
	46:229
	46:229a
	46:229b
	46:242
	46:243
	46:244
	46:247

Section 7101(a) provides the authority for the establishment of licenses and certificates of registry for officers and individuals operating vessels who are required to hold them under Subtitle II.

Subsection (b) authorizes the Secretary to issue licenses and certificates of registry based on tonnage, means of propulsion, horsepower, vessel operating area, and other reasonable standards.

Subsection (c) authorizes the Secretary to issue licenses to masters, mates, engineers, pilots, operators, and radio officers when found qualified as to age, character, habits of life, experience, professional qualifications, and physical fitness. These qualifying standards

must by necessity be reasonable and related to the rigors of the profession.

Subsection (d) requires the Secretary to establish, when possible, suitable career patterns and service for and other qualifying requirements appropriate to the particular service or industry for the individuals so engaged.

Subsection (e) sets forth the requirements that pilots must meet before being issued a license.

Subsection (f) authorizes the Secretary to issue certificates of registry to qualified individuals as pursers, medical doctors, and professional nurses.

**Editorial Notes**

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Sections 205(a)(3)(A) or (B) and 206(b)(7) of the National Driver Register Act of 1982, referred to in subsec. (g), are sections 205(a)(3)(A), (B) and 206(b)(7) of Pub. L. 97-364, which are set out as a note under section 401 of Title 23, Highways.

AMENDMENTS

2014—Subsec. (j). Pub. L. 113-281 added subsec. (j).  
1996—Subsec. (e)(3). Pub. L. 104-324 inserted “as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title” after “1,600 gross tons”.

1990—Subsecs. (g) to (i). Pub. L. 101-380 added subsecs. (g) to (i).

1984—Subsec. (e)(3). Pub. L. 98-557 inserted exemption for pilots on a vessel of less than 1,600 gross tons.

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-380 applicable to incidents occurring after Aug. 18, 1990, see section 1020 of Pub. L. 101-380, set out as an Effective Date note under section 2701 of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters.

PLAN FOR LICENSING OPERATORS OF FISHING INDUSTRY VESSELS

Pub. L. 100-424, §3, Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1590, required the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, within two years after Sept. 9, 1988, to prepare and submit to the Congress a plan for the licensing of operators of documented fishing, fish processing, and fish tender vessels.

**§ 7102. Citizenship**

Licenses and certificates of registry for individuals on documented vessels may be issued only to citizens of the United States.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 540.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
7102 .....	46:242 46:1132(a)

Section 7102 requires that any individual issued a license or certificate of registry allowing the individual to be engaged on a documented vessel must be a U.S. citizen.

**§ 7103. Licenses for radio officers**

(a) A license as radio officer may be issued only to an applicant who has a first-class or second-class radiotelegraph operator license issued by the Federal Communications Commission.

(b) Except as provided in section 7318 of this title, this part does not affect the status of radiotelegraph operators serving on board vessels operating only on the Great Lakes.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 540.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
7103 .....	46:229a 46:229b 46:229g

Section 7103 requires an applicant for a license as a radio officer to have, as a prerequisite, a first-class or second-class radiotelegraph operator license issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). It also exempts radiotelegraph operators that are engaged on Great Lakes vessels from the requirement of having to obtain a radio officer’s license.

**§ 7104. Certificates for medical doctors and nurses**

A certificate of registry as a medical doctor or professional nurse may be issued only to an applicant who has a license as a medical doctor or registered nurse, respectively, issued by a State.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 540.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
7104 .....	46:243

Section 7104 requires an applicant for a certificate of registry as a medical doctor or professional nurse to have, as a prerequisite, a license as a medical doctor or registered nurse issued by a State.

**§ 7105. Oaths**

An applicant for a license or certificate of registry shall take, before the issuance of the license or certificate, an oath, without concealment or reservation, that the applicant will perform faithfully and honestly, according to the best skill and judgment of the applicant, all the duties required by law.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 540; Pub. L. 111-281, title VI, §613, Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 2970.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
7105 .....	46:229e 46:231 46:244

Section 7105 requires all individuals who wish to be issued a license or certificate of registry to take an oath before a government official that they will perform all the duties required by law according to their best skill and judgment.

**Editorial Notes**

AMENDMENTS

2010—Pub. L. 111-281 struck out “before a designated official” after “an oath”.

**§ 7106. Duration of licenses**

(a) IN GENERAL.—A license issued under this part is valid for a 5-year period and may be renewed for additional 5-year periods; except that the validity of a license issued to a radio officer is conditioned on the continuous possession by the holder of a first-class or second-class radiotelegraph operator license issued by the Federal Communications Commission.