

PILOT TRAINEE APPLICANT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

HOW TO BECOME A PILOT TRAINEE - COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Q: What Coast Guard license do I need?
A: Master on 1600-ton ships or above, with unlimited radar endorsement. The license must be current.
- Q: If I am a pilot in another port, does that count towards meeting the command experience requirement?
A: Piloting experience cannot be used to meet the two years' command requirement, but piloting experience that meets the requirements of Section 213(e)(4)(C) may be used to fulfill the recency requirement and may also count towards experience points. (Detailed requirements are in Section 213(e) and (f).)
- Q: I have sailed as a master on ships for a number of years but came ashore two years ago to take the position of a ship's superintendent, a position I have held continuously since that time. As ship's superintendent, I am responsible for the operation of my company's ships. Does the time as ship's superintendent qualify for meeting your recency requirements?
A: The recency requirement for at least one year's command time in the past three years may be waived by such experience if otherwise qualifying and adequately documented, but you will still need to show that you had at least two years' command time within the last five years. (See 213(e)(4)(D).)
- Q: Do I need to have my pilotage endorsements for San Francisco Bay prior to application?
A: No. Having local pilotage endorsements will permit you to begin handling ships earlier in the training program if admitted but it is not a prerequisite for entry into the program.
- Q: Can you recommend any reading materials to help me prepare for the written examination?
A: Yes. A list of textbooks and other resources used to prepare the written examination can be found in the Pilot Trainee Applicant Information Handbook posted on the Board's website.
- Q: I have a physical condition that is well controlled with medication. Do I need to take a physical before I apply or take the written examination?
A: You do not have to pass a physical in order to take the written examination or the simulator exercise. However, you do have to pass a physical examination performed by a physician appointed by the Pilot Commission prior to entering the training program, and you will have to pass annual Coast Guard and state physical examinations, and report all prescription medication to the examining physician, once you have been licensed as a pilot. If you have any doubt whether you can pass those examinations, it would be in your interest to have a physical examination by a physician who is familiar with the Coast Guard and state standards before you invest in the time and effort needed to compete successfully for entrance into the training program.