

retary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may—

(1) extend for not more than one year an expiring license or certificate of registry issued for an individual under chapter 71 if the Secretary determines that the extension is required to enable the Coast Guard to eliminate a backlog in processing applications for those licenses or certificates of registry or in response to a national emergency or natural disaster, as deemed necessary by the Secretary; or

(2) issue for not more than five years an expiring license or certificate of registry issued for an individual under chapter 71 for the exclusive purpose of aligning the expiration date of such license or certificate of registry with the expiration date of a merchant mariner's document.

(b) **MERCHANT MARINER DOCUMENTS.**—Notwithstanding section 7302(g), the Secretary may—

(1) extend for not more than one year an expiring merchant mariner's document issued for an individual under chapter 73 if the Secretary determines that the extension is required to enable the Coast Guard to eliminate a backlog in processing applications for those merchant mariner documents or in response to a national emergency or natural disaster, as deemed necessary by the Secretary; or

(2) issue for not more than five years an expiring merchant mariner's document issued for an individual under chapter 73 for the exclusive purpose of aligning the expiration date of such merchant mariner's document with the expiration date of a license or certificate of registry.

(c) **MANNER OF EXTENSION.**—Any extensions granted under this section may be granted to individual seamen or a specifically identified group of seamen.

(Added Pub. L. 111–281, title VI, §615(a), Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 2971; amended Pub. L. 112–213, title III, §311, Dec. 20, 2012, 126 Stat. 1569; Pub. L. 115–282, title V, §510(3), (4), Dec. 4, 2018, 132 Stat. 4274.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

2018—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 115–282, §510(3), substituted “merchant mariner documents” for “licenses or certificates of registry”.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 115–282, §510(4), substituted “license or certificate of registry.” for “merchant mariner's document.”

2012—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 112–213 substituted “chapter 71” for “chapter 73” in pars. (1) and (2).

#### § 7508. Authority to extend the duration of medical certificates

(a) **GRANTING OF EXTENSIONS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may extend for not more than one year a medical certificate issued to an individual holding a license, merchant mariner's document, or certificate of registry issued under chapter 71 or 73 if the Secretary determines that the extension is required to enable the Coast Guard to eliminate a backlog in processing applications

for medical certificates or is in response to a national emergency or natural disaster.

(b) **MANNER OF EXTENSION.**—An extension under this section may be granted to an individual or a specifically identified group of individuals.

(Added Pub. L. 112–213, title III, §306(a), Dec. 20, 2012, 126 Stat. 1565; amended Pub. L. 116–283, div. G, title LVXXXV [LXXXV], §8505(b)(6), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4751.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 116–283 substituted “an individual or a specifically identified group of individuals” for “individual seamen or a specifically identified group of seamen”.

#### § 7509. Medical certification by trusted agents

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law and pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary, a trusted agent may issue a medical certificate to an individual who—

(1) must hold such certificate to qualify for a license, certificate of registry, or merchant mariner's document, or endorsement thereto under this part; and

(2) is qualified as to sight, hearing, and physical condition to perform the duties of such license, certificate, document, or endorsement, as determined by the trusted agent.

(b) **PROCESS FOR ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES BY SECRETARY.**—A final rule implementing this section shall include a process for—

(1) the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to issue medical certificates to mariners who submit applications for such certificates to the Secretary; and

(2) a trusted agent to defer to the Secretary the issuance of a medical certificate.

(c) **TRUSTED AGENT DEFINED.**—In this section the term “trusted agent” means a medical practitioner certified by the Secretary to perform physical examinations of an individual for purposes of a license, certificate of registry, or merchant mariner's document under this part.

(Added Pub. L. 114–120, title III, §309(a), Feb. 8, 2016, 130 Stat. 56.)

#### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

##### IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE

Pub. L. 114–120, title III, §309(b), Feb. 8, 2016, 130 Stat. 57, provided that: “Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act [Feb. 8, 2016], the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall issue a final rule implementing section 7509 of title 46, United States Code, as added by this section.”

#### § 7510. Examinations for merchant mariner credentials

(a) **DISCLOSURE NOT REQUIRED.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is not required to disclose to the public—

(1) a question from any examination for a merchant mariner credential;