

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2010—Subsec. (b)(2)(B). Pub. L. 111-281 amended subpar. (B) generally. Prior to amendment, subpar. (B) read as follows: "who performs regularly-assigned duties while engaged as a master, officer, or crewman on a vessel operating on the navigable waters of more than one State."

2000—Pub. L. 106-489 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a), inserted heading, and added subsec. (b).

1984—Pub. L. 98-364 substituted "an individual employed on a fishing vessel or any fish processing vessel" for "a fisherman employed on a fishing vessel".

§ 11109. Attachment of wages

(a) Wages due or accruing to a master or seaman are not subject to attachment or arrestment from any court, except for an order of a court about the payment by a master or seaman of any part of the master's or seaman's wages for the support and maintenance of the spouse or minor children of the master or seaman, or both. A payment of wages to a master or seaman is valid, notwithstanding any prior sale or assignment of wages or any attachment, encumbrance, or arrestment of the wages.

(b) An assignment or sale of wages or salvage made before the payment of wages does not bind the party making it, except allotments authorized by section 10315 of this title.

(c) This section applies to an individual employed on a fishing vessel or any fish processing vessel.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 580; Pub. L. 98-364, title IV, §402(15), July 17, 1984, 98 Stat. 450.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 1: 11109, 46:601

Section 11109 limits the attachment of a seaman's wages and establishes certain rules for the assignment of a seaman's wages. It also applies to fishermen on fishing vessels.

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AMENDMENTS

1984—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 98-364 substituted "an individual employed on a fishing vessel or any fish processing vessel" for "a fisherman on a fishing vessel".

§ 11110. Seamen's clothing

The clothing of a seaman is exempt from attachments and liens. A person detaining a seaman's clothing shall be fined not more than \$500, imprisoned for not more than 6 months, or both.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 580.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 1: 11110, 46:563

Section 11110 exempts seamen's clothing from attachments and liens. It also provides a penalty for violations.

§ 11111. Limit on amount recoverable on voyage

When a seaman is on a voyage on which a written agreement is required under this part,

not more than \$1 is recoverable from the seaman by a person for a debt incurred by the seaman during the voyage for which the seaman is signed on until the voyage is ended.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 581.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 2 columns: Revised section, Source section (U.S. Code). Row 1: 11111, 46:602

Section 11111 limits the amount of money recoverable from a seaman for a debt incurred while on a voyage on which a shipping agreement is required.

§ 11112. Master's lien for wages

The master of a documented vessel has the same lien against the vessel for the master's wages and the same priority as any other seaman serving on the vessel.

(Added Pub. L. 99-307, §1(19)(B), May 19, 1986, 100 Stat. 446.)

§ 11113. Treatment of abandoned seafarers

(a) ABANDONED SEAFARERS FUND.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a separate account to be known as the Abandoned Seafarers Fund.

(2) AUTHORIZED USES.—Amounts in the Fund may be appropriated to the Secretary for use—

(A) to pay necessary support of a seafarer—

(i) who—

(I) was paroled into the United States under section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5)), or for whom the Secretary has requested parole under such section; and

(II) is involved in an investigation, reporting, documentation, or adjudication of any matter that is related to the administration or enforcement of law by the Coast Guard; or

(ii) who—

(I) is physically present in the United States;

(II) the Secretary determines was abandoned in the United States; and

(III) has not applied for asylum under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.); and

(B) to reimburse a vessel owner or operator for the costs of necessary support of a seafarer who has been paroled into the United States to facilitate an investigation, reporting, documentation, or adjudication of any matter that is related to the administration or enforcement of law by the Coast Guard, if—

(i) the vessel owner or operator is not convicted of a criminal offense related to such matter; or

(ii) the Secretary determines that reimbursement is appropriate.

(3) CREDITING OF AMOUNTS TO FUND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), there shall be credited to the Fund the following:

(i) Penalties deposited in the Fund under section 9 of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1908).

(ii) Amounts reimbursed or recovered under subsection (c).

(B) LIMITATION.—Amounts may be credited to the Fund under subparagraph (A) only if the unobligated balance of the Fund is less than \$5,000,000.

(4) REPORT REQUIRED.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), on the date on which the President submits each budget for a fiscal year pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that describes—

(A) the amounts credited to the Fund under paragraph (3) for the preceding fiscal year; and

(B) amounts in the Fund that were expended for the preceding fiscal year.

(5) NO REPORT REQUIRED.—A report under paragraph (4) shall not be required if there were no expenditures from the Fund in the preceding fiscal year. The Commandant shall notify Congress in the event a report is not required under paragraph (4) by reason of this paragraph.

(b) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed—

(1) to create a private right of action or any other right, benefit, or entitlement to necessary support for any person; or

(2) to compel the Secretary to pay or reimburse the cost of necessary support.

(c) REIMBURSEMENT; RECOVERY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A vessel owner or operator shall reimburse the Fund an amount equal to the total amount paid from the Fund for necessary support of a seafarer, if—

(A) the vessel owner or operator—

(i) during the course of an investigation, reporting, documentation, or adjudication of any matter that the Coast Guard referred to a United States attorney or the Attorney General, fails to provide necessary support of a seafarer who was paroled into the United States to facilitate the investigation, reporting, documentation, or adjudication; and

(ii) subsequently is—

(I) convicted of a criminal offense related to such matter; or

(II) required to reimburse the Fund pursuant to a court order or negotiated settlement related to such matter; or

(B) the vessel owner or operator abandons a seafarer in the United States, as determined by the Secretary based on substantial evidence.

(2) ENFORCEMENT.—If a vessel owner or operator fails to reimburse the Fund under paragraph (1) within 60 days after receiving a written, itemized description of reimbursable expenses and a demand for payment, the Secretary may—

(A) proceed in rem against the vessel on which the seafarer served in the Federal district court for the district in which the vessel is found; and

(B) withhold or revoke the clearance required under section 60105 for the vessel and any other vessel operated by the same operator (as that term is defined in section 2(a)(9)(A)¹ of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 U.S.C. 1901(a)(9)(A))² as the vessel on which the seafarer served.

(3) OBTAINING CLEARANCE.—A vessel may obtain clearance from the Secretary after it is withheld or revoked under paragraph (2)(B) if the vessel owner or operator—

(A) reimburses the Fund the amount required under paragraph (1); or

(B) provides a bond, or other evidence of financial responsibility, sufficient to meet the amount required to be reimbursed under paragraph (1).

(4) NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall notify the vessel at least 72 hours before taking any action under paragraph (2)(B).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ABANDONS; ABANDONED.—Each of the terms “abandons” and “abandoned” means—

(A) a vessel owner’s or operator’s unilateral severance of ties with a seafarer; or

(B) a vessel owner’s or operator’s failure to provide necessary support of a seafarer.

(2) FUND.—The term “Fund” means the Abandoned Seafarers Fund established under this section.

(3) NECESSARY SUPPORT.—The term “necessary support” means normal wages and expenses the Secretary considers reasonable for lodging, subsistence, clothing, medical care (including hospitalization), repatriation, and any other support the Secretary considers to be appropriate.

(4) SEAFARER.—The term “seafarer” means an alien crew member who is employed or engaged in any capacity on board a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(5) VESSEL SUBJECT TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES.—The term “vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States” has the meaning given that term in section 70502(c), except that it does not include a vessel that is—

(A) owned, or operated under a bareboat charter, by the United States, a State or political subdivision thereof, or a foreign nation; and

(B) not engaged in commerce.

(Added Pub. L. 113–281, title III, §320(a), Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 3051; amended Pub. L. 114–120, title III, §306(a)(7), Feb. 8, 2016, 130 Stat. 54; Pub. L. 115–232, div. C, title XXXV, §3546(i), Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 2326; Pub. L. 116–283, div. G, title LVXXXII [LXXXII], §8240(d), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4667.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Immigration and Nationality Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2)(A)(ii)(III), is act June 27, 1952, ch. 477, 66 Stat. 163, which is classified principally to chapter 12

¹ So in original. Probably should be “2(a)(9)(a)”.

² So in original. Probably should be “33 U.S.C. 1901(a)(9)(a))”.

(§1101 et seq.) of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1101 of Title 8 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 116-283, §8240(d)(1), substituted “Except as provided in paragraph (5), on the date” for “On the date” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (a)(5). Pub. L. 116-283, §8240(d)(2), added par. (5).

2018—Subsec. (a)(4)(A). Pub. L. 115-232, §3546(i)(1), substituted “paragraph (3)” for “paragraph (2)”.

Subsec. (c)(2)(B). Pub. L. 115-232, §3546(i)(2), substituted “section 2(a)(9)(A)” for “section 2(9)(a)” and “33 U.S.C. 1901(a)(9)(A)” for “33 U.S.C. 1901(9)(a)”.

2016—Subsec. (c)(1)(A)(i). Pub. L. 114-120 struck out “under this Act” after “any matter”.

CHAPTER 112—MERCHANT MARINER BENEFITS

Sec.	
11201.	Eligibility for veterans’ burial and cemetery benefits.
11202.	Qualified service.
11203.	Documentation of qualified service.
11204.	Processing fees.

§ 11201. Eligibility for veterans’ burial and cemetery benefits

(a) ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The qualified service of an individual referred to in paragraph (2) shall be considered to be active duty in the Armed Forces during a period of war for purposes of eligibility for benefits under the following provisions of title 38:

(A) Chapter 23 (relating to burial benefits).

(B) Chapter 24 (relating to interment in national cemeteries).

(2) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—Paragraph (1) applies to an individual who—

(A) receives an honorable service certificate under section 11203 of this title; and

(B) is not eligible under any other provision of law for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(b) REIMBURSEMENT FOR BENEFITS PROVIDED.—The Secretary shall reimburse the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the value of benefits that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides for an individual by reason of eligibility under this section.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) GENERAL RULE.—Benefits may be provided under the provisions of law referred to in subsection (a)(1) by reason of this chapter only for deaths occurring after the date of the enactment of this chapter.

(2) BURIALS, ETC. IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), in the case of an initial burial or columbarium placement after the date of the enactment of this chapter, benefits may be provided under chapter 24 of title 38 by reason of this chapter (regardless of the date of death), and in such a case benefits may be provided under section 2306 of such title.

(Added Pub. L. 105-368, title IV, §402(a), Nov. 11, 1998, 112 Stat. 3336; amended Pub. L. 116-283, div. G, title LVXXXV [LXXXV], §8505(b)(11), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4751.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The date of the enactment of this chapter, referred to in subsec. (c), is the date of enactment of Pub. L. 105-368, which was approved Nov. 11, 1998.

AMENDMENTS

2021—Pub. L. 116-283 substituted “an individual” for “a person” wherever appearing.

§ 11202. Qualified service

For purposes of this chapter, an individual shall be considered to have engaged in qualified service if, between August 16, 1945, and December 31, 1946, the individual—

(1) was a member of the United States merchant marine (including the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service) serving as a crewmember of a vessel that was—

(A) operated by the War Shipping Administration or the Office of Defense Transportation (or an agent of the Administration or Office);

(B) operated in waters other than inland waters, the Great Lakes, and other lakes, bays, and harbors of the United States;

(C) under contract or charter to, or property of, the Government of the United States; and

(D) serving the Armed Forces; and

(2) while so serving, was licensed or otherwise documented for service as a crewmember of such a vessel by an officer or employee of the United States authorized to license or document the individual for such service.

(Added Pub. L. 105-368, title IV, §402(a), Nov. 11, 1998, 112 Stat. 3336; amended Pub. L. 116-283, div. G, title LVXXXV [LXXXV], §8505(b)(12), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4752.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2021—Pub. L. 116-283 substituted “an individual” for “a person” in introductory provisions and “the individual” for “the person” in introductory provisions and in par. (2).

§ 11203. Documentation of qualified service

(a) RECORD OF SERVICE.—The Secretary, or in the case of personnel of the Army Transport Service or the Naval Transport Service, the Secretary of Defense, shall, upon application—

(1) issue a certificate of honorable service to an individual who, as determined by that Secretary, engaged in qualified service of a nature and duration that warrants issuance of the certificate; and

(2) correct, or request the appropriate official of the Federal Government to correct, the service records of that individual to the extent necessary to reflect the qualified service and the issuance of the certificate of honorable service.

(b) TIMING OF DOCUMENTATION.—A Secretary receiving an application under subsection (a) shall act on the application not later than 1 year after the date of that receipt.

(c) STANDARDS RELATING TO SERVICE.—In making a determination under subsection (a)(1), the