

Charting your course for service in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

NEW MEMBER HANDBOOK



PLEASE NOTE: Publications maintained by the Human Resources Directorate are currently under review for accuracy, etc. If you have questions regarding the contents of this publication or approved Auxiliary changes not reflected in this document, please contact your Human Resources (HR) staff officer, per the Chain of Leadership and Management.

Human Resources Directorate

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1. Your Part in the Auxiliary

The Prologue to the Membership Pledge states that you have been brought into: “. . . *an organization dedicated to the promotion of boating safety and providing assistance to the Coast Guard in the fulfillment of its civil functions. You accept this membership as a volunteer, but as a member you are charged with certain responsibilities and obligations. These include your willingness to support the Coast Guard Auxiliary and its purposes and to participate in its authorized programs to the best of your ability and to the extent that time and circumstances permit.*”

a. MEETINGS

Your attendance at flotilla meetings is very important. At our meetings we will share information regarding:

Division activities • Commander's report • Communications Staff Officer Reports • Old Business • New Business • In-Flotilla training • Fellowship

Attending these meetings will keep you up to date on all of the flotilla's activities. It will also enable you to meet and interact with other members in the flotilla. It is your right and responsibility to VOTE at these meetings.

Staff Meetings may also be scheduled for elected and appointed officers, as well as committee chairpersons. All members are welcome to attend these meetings.

b. UNIFORMS

The Auxiliary uniform is similar to the Coast Guard uniform and needs to be worn when on any mission where you represent the Auxiliary or the Coast Guard. It is the responsibility of members to purchase and maintain a uniform appropriate to the activities in which they participate. All uniform purchases are tax deductible.

As a new member you should consider purchasing the **Tropical Blue Uniform**. This basic uniform can be worn for most Auxiliary activities. This uniform, as well as the **Service Dress Blue, Operational Dress Uniform**, and all other options of uniform selection and their appropriate use, is outlined in detail in Chapter 10 of your Auxiliary Manual. The **Flotilla**

Human Resources Officer (FSO-HR) will be able to help you order the clothing for your uniform and the **Flotilla Materials Officer (FSO-MA)** can order the insignia and devices needed to make it complete.

c. MANUALS

You have already received your Auxiliary Manual (available on your New Member CD). This is the first of many manuals and other publications that you will obtain as a member of the Auxiliary. Your membership in this organization will be enhanced by the information contained in them. *It is important for all members to read their manuals and keep them updated.*

d. ACRONYMS

What in the world is an AUXOP, DCDR, or FSO-? One of the first puzzles for a new member is the shorthand (acronyms) with which we sprinkle our conversations and writing. It's the "insider" Auxiliary language, just like other insider languages. Acronyms are a part of the game. Don't become frustrated; no one knows them all. Ask a fellow Auxiliarist or look them up in your Auxiliary Manual or on the Auxiliary website at: www.cgaux.org.

- PE—Public Education VSC—Vessel Safety Check OP—Operations
- MT—Member Training BS&S—Boating Skills & Seamanship

e. MEMBER NUMBER

You have been given an Employee Identification Number (EMPLID). From this point on, your status, activities and accomplishments will be recorded in the Auxiliary Data System (AUXDATA) using that number. The Coast Guard has provided you with an Identification Card. A space for your EMPLID is provided on your card. It is important that you know and understand your EMPLID.

Each year you will receive a notice when dues are payable. Your total dues are divided into four parts: flotilla, division, district, and national. You pay your total to the flotilla and the Flotilla Finance Officer (FSO-FN), in turn, sends the appropriate portions of your dues to the other levels of the organization. Our dues help to support Auxiliary activities at all levels of the organization and are tax deductible.

f. REPORTING

The status, qualifications, and activities of all members and units in the Auxiliary are tracked in the Auxiliary Data System (AUXDATA) utilizing the member number. Since the Auxiliary plays a significant part in Coast Guard accomplishments, it has a direct bearing on Coast Guard funding. Reporting is very important to you, your flotilla and division and the Coast Guard.

2. Who We Are ...

a. TEAM COAST GUARD

The Auxiliary is the uniformed, volunteer arm of TEAM COAST GUARD, working alongside the Active Duty Coast Guard and Reserve within the sphere of the Coast Guard's civil functions. The word "volunteer" makes a big difference. Auxiliary authority isn't like the military or business authority. Although we have rules and regulations to follow, we depend completely on support and cooperation. Your leaders are volunteers too, and cooperation is a two-way street.



HOW USCGAUX IS LIKE USCG:

- We represent the federal government
- We qualify through training
- We wear uniforms, observe military "good" manners
- We do not take sides in political activities to raise funds
- Our activities are limited to approved programs



HOW USCGAUX DIFFERS:

- We aren't paid with money
- We don't enforce the laws
- We elect our leaders
- We furnish and maintain our own equipment
- We can choose to participate
- We work where we live instead of living where we work

b. POLICY MAKING

Only the Coast Guard Commandant and the National Board make policies; the rest carry out these policies. Within the parameters of these policies, districts may create their own policy manuals. The members decide, by vote, within which areas and at what level the flotilla will participate.

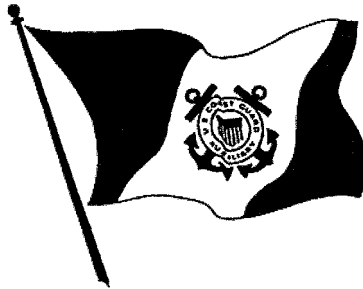
c. FLOTILLA LEADERS

A complete description of the duties of the elected and appointed officers can be found in the **Flotilla Procedures Manual**. The Flotilla Commander has a copy of this publication. Names and addresses of your flotilla officers can be found in the Flotilla Roster.

Flotilla elections are held in the fall of the year, after the division elections. At that time we elect our **Flotilla Commander (FC)** and **Flotilla Vice Commander (VFC)** to serve for one year. The FC then appoints the Staff Officers (FSOs) who also serve for one year, beginning 1 January. Staff Officers are responsible for reporting on a monthly basis to the VFC and to their corresponding Division Staff Officer on activities in their area of concentration. A member may hold more than one office, but no one may hold more than one elected office at a time.

The FC also appoints Flotilla Committees for Fellowship, Nominations, Historian, Audit, etc. FC also serves on the Division Board and helps to elect the Division Commander (DCDR) and Division Vice Commander (VCDR).

Should you desire to seek elected office at some time in your career as an Auxiliarist, you should talk to the **Member Training Officer (FSO-MT)** about completing the required **Administrative Procedures Course (APC)** or the **Flotilla Leadership Course (FLC)**. All qualifications for elected office can be found in your Auxiliary Manual. Should you be interested in serving as a Flotilla Staff Officer, be sure to discuss the requirements with your Flotilla Commander.



d. ELECTED OFFICERS are elected by the members of the flotilla.

Flotilla Commander (FC): Represents the flotilla. Presides at flotilla meetings. Appoints FSOs and committee chairpersons.

Flotilla Vice Commander (VFC): Alternate for FC. Chief of Staff. Presides at staff meetings.

e. FLOTILLA STAFF OFFICERS are appointed by the Flotilla Commander.

The Flotilla Staff Officers organize activities in the following program areas:

Navigation Systems Officer (FSO-NS): Updates charts. Plan chart patrols.

Communications Officer (FSO-CM): Conducts radio facility inspections and provides radio support of Coast Guard Auxiliary patrols.

Communication Services Officer (FSO-CS): Designs and maintains flotilla's web site and reports information posted on the Auxiliary website.

Finance Officer (FSO-FN): Maintains records on budget, expenditures, dues. Pays bills.

Information Systems Officer (FSO-IS): Enters forms into AUXDATA and maintains official activity records.

Member Training Officer (FSO-MT): Organizes training sessions for all Auxiliary program qualifications and specialty courses.

Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Officer (FSO-MS): Supervises flotilla programs associated with marine environmental awareness.

Operations Officer (FSO-OP): Schedules and organizes on-water patrols and Coast Guard support missions.

Human Resources Officer (FSO-HR): Oversees member resources, recruiting, retention, and fellowship activities.

Program Visitor Officer (FSO-PV): Distributes safety and PE material to marine dealers.

Public Affairs Officer (FSO-PA): Organizes publicity, posters, public speaking, safety booths.

Public Education Officer (FSO-PE): Organizes courses and schedule instructors for adult and children's public boating classes.

Publications Officer (FSO-PB): Prepares flotilla newsletter and materials for other Auxiliary publications.

Secretary/Records Officer (FSO-SR): Records and publishes minutes; maintains records.

Vessel Examiner Officer (FSO-VE): Organizes Vessel Safety Check (VSC) program and facility inspections.

3. WHAT WE DO and HOW YOU CAN DO IT, TOO!

a. AUXILIARY MISSIONS

Recreational Boating Safety and Coast Guard Support

Vessel Safety Check Program	Program Visitation	Boat Show Participation Marine Environmental Education, Administrative and Operational Support of the Coast Guard
Aids to Navigation	Commercial Fishing Vessel Exams	
Public Education	Recruiting Assistance Program	
Chart Updating	Public Affairs	
Operations	Support National Safe Boating Week	
Auxiliary State Liaison		

b. MEMBER TRAINING

For full enjoyment and participation in these Auxiliary programs, you will need to become involved in the Member Training program. Members do not have to follow a required sequence of training. You will choose your training according to your interests. All programs are available to any member without cost. The training is available from instructors within your flotilla, division, and district.

Talk to your **Member Training Officer (FSO-MT)** and refer to the appropriate Coast Guard Auxiliary publications for more specific information on the program of interest to you. Some programs requiring preliminary study include:

(1) VESSEL SAFETY CHECK PROGRAM (VSC) - Vessel Examiner (VE)

Objective: one-on-one safety education for boat owners. Qualifications: boating course credit, study Vessel Safety Check Manual, complete course, pass open-book exam, conduct vessel exams under supervision. Reference: Vessel Safety Check Manual (COMDTINST M16796.8), Auxiliary Facilities Guide, VE forms ANSC 7003, 7008, 7012, 7038, and 7045.

(2) INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM - Instructor (IT)

Objective: teach courses on boating safety to adults and children in the general public and training courses for Auxiliary members. Qualifications: boating course credit, complete Instructor Qualifications course, pass open-book exam, prepare lesson plans, and student teach. Reference: Instructor Qualification Course COMDTPUB P16794.44 (series), Auxiliary Instructor Development Course (ANSC 5502 Rev 07).

(3) COMMUNICATIONS - Watchstander

Objective: communications missions for the Coast Guard. Qualifications: boating course credit, complete Sector or Station Communications Watchstander Qualifications Guide and training, local familiarization, knowledge of plotting.

For an Auxiliary facility: AUXCOM qualified local familiarization according to local Regional Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) policies. Reference: Auxiliary Communications Course (AUXCOM) M16794.32 (series); Auxiliary Telecommunications Qualification Standard (COMDTINST M10470.10F); per local Sector or Station requirements.

(4) NAVIGATION SYSTEMS - ATON Verifier

Objective: verify aids to navigation (ATONs), private aids to navigation (PATONs), chart updating. Qualifications: boating course credit, complete Aids to Navigation Course, Chart Updating Manual, Operations Policy Manual COMDTINST M16798.3 (series)

(5) OPERATIONS - Coxswain and Crew (CX and CR)

Objective: to provide operation/patrol support to the Coast Guard to enhance recreational boating safety. Qualification: boating course credit, complete Boat Crew Qualifications Program for level desired including ashore and on-water tasks. For Coxswain - pass closed book Navigation Rules exam. Reference: Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual COMDTINST M16798.3 (series), Auxiliary Crew and Coxswain M16798.28 (series), Boat Crew Seamanship Manual M16114.5 (series), Auxiliary Boat Crew Qualification Guide, Volume I: Crew Member M16794.52A, Auxiliary Boat Crew Qualification Guide, Volume II: Coxswain M16794.53A, Auxiliary Boat Crew Qualification Guide, Volume III: PWC Operator M1679.454A

(6) SPECIALTY COURSES

Auxiliarists who are interested in further increasing their knowledge are offered a series of **Auxiliary Operational Specialty Courses**. This is known as the AUXOP program. The **Flotilla Member Training Officer (FSO-MT)** will be able to tell you when these courses will be given:

SEAMANSHIP	NAVIGATION	COMMUNICATIONS
SEARCH & RESCUE	PATROLS	WEATHER

More detailed information on any of these specific training programs can be obtained from the FSO-MT, the Auxiliary Manual and the Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual.



AUXOP Device

b. SELECT YOUR MISSIONS

There are many other opportunities for service within the Auxiliary. Ask the **Flotilla Human Resources Officer (FSO-HR)** to explain some of the clerical, administrative, technical, and social tasks that need to be done for the Auxiliary and to assist the Coast Guard.

Select the activity that interests you the most. Our Flotilla has many interesting ways in which you can participate. **We need your help** and are looking forward to your participation.

4. What Do You Get Out of It?

The benefits of membership in the Coast Guard Auxiliary are many—some tangible and some intangible. As a member of the Auxiliary, you'll proudly wear the uniform and insignia of office and fly the Auxiliary ensign while participating in many of the activities involved in the Auxiliary's missions of Recreational Boating Safety and support of the Coast Guard. In addition to the pride and satisfaction that comes to every volunteer, Auxiliarists enjoy many valuable benefits and privileges not available to the general public. For additional information, contact your Flotilla Commander:

a. PENTAGON FEDERAL CREDIT UNION (PFCU)

The Pentagon Federal Credit Union provides all the services of a bank, but returns profits to Coast Guard members instead of stockholders. From savings and checking accounts to home equity lines of credit, the Credit Union has a lot to offer. For more information, you can call toll free: 1-800-554-4590

b. COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA) provides an emergency fund that can provide fast financial relief when a member faces an unexpected or "impossible" financial burden that would cause personal hardship if no assistance were provided. Auxiliarists may apply for CGMA loans and are considered as "Sponsor Members" under the program. If approved, CGMA loans are interest free. For information, you can call toll free: 1-800-881-2462.

c. COAST GUARD WORK-LIFE PROGRAMS

Auxiliarists can take advantage of certain Coast Guard Work-Life Programs such as:

- Family
- Wellness
- Dependent Resources
- Employee Assistance

A variety of insurance programs cover Auxiliarists when operating under Coast Guard orders. This includes medical, hospitalization, disability, and death benefits should an accident occur in the performance of your duty.

If your boat, aircraft, or other authorized Auxiliary facility is damaged or destroyed while legitimately engaged in Auxiliary operations, coverage for repairs or replacement will be provided. Liability insurance protects the Auxiliarist from third-party claims made as a result of actions that occur when the Auxiliarist is performing authorized missions and has been properly assigned to duty.

In order to maintain this coverage, all incidents and accidents must be reported to your order-issuing authority for the mission. As a caution, there must be strict adherence to all Coast Guard governing policies, or the claim may be denied.

d. EXCHANGE PRIVILEGES

Auxiliarists in uniform, with proper identification, can purchase anything sold in the Coast Guard Exchange System (CGES) Stores except liquor and cigarettes. Family members may accompany Auxiliarists to the Exchange, but may not make individual purchases. Members of the Auxiliary are also welcome at other Department of Defense Exchanges, but only uniform items or accessories may be purchased.

e. PUBLICATIONS

Members receive the quarterly Auxiliary National publication, *The Navigator*, their own District publication, and other bulletins to keep abreast of Coast Guard, Auxiliary and general boating information.

f. UNIFORMS AND AWARDS

The pride of wearing the Auxiliary uniform is amplified by awards and advancement. There are ample opportunities to receive recognition by completing Auxiliary training courses and participating in authorized programs.

g. TAX DEDUCTIONS

Uniforms, their cleaning and maintenance, and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of your duties are considered contributions for tax purposes. The foregoing is not intended to be advice on deductibility. You should consult your professional tax advisor.

Doing something useful with friends may be the benefit that will bring satisfaction to your membership. That could mean tossing a towline to a distressed boater, or tossing a salad at a flotilla picnic. It could mean being a student or an instructor, checking a boat or performing an exam, using computer skills or accounting skills ... it could mean a lot of things.

IT IS UP TO YOU ... a little or a lot, once a month or once a day—something that interests you and "as your time and circumstances permit." The personal benefits and satisfaction that you receive from your membership will depend upon your choice and level of participation.



WELCOME ABOARD!