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**APPLICANT
HANDBOOK**



Director of Admissions
United States Coast Guard Academy
31 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT 06320-4195

Dear Applicant,

Preparing for any service academy, including the Coast Guard Academy, takes an extra level of commitment. This handbook has been written to answer questions and concerns you or your family may have about our application process and your role in it. I hope you will take time to read it and ask your parents to do the same.

As you will read in this handbook, the sooner you complete your application the sooner we can provide you with our selection decision. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to complete your application as soon as possible. To check the status of your application, please check your ApplyWeb personal activity page.

On behalf of the entire Admissions Team, we look forward to working with you!

Semper Paratus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephan Finton'.

Stephan Finton '81
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Director of Admissions

P.S. Keep these important dates in mind as you prepare your application:

November 1st - Early Action Application Deadline
January 14th - Early Action Decisions Mailed
February 1st - Regular Admissions Application Deadline
April 7th - Regular Admissions Decisions Mailed
April 15th - DoDMERB Medical Examination Deadline
May 1st - Appointment Acceptance/Declination Deadline
June 1st - DoDMERB Medical Qualification Deadline
June 25th - Reporting-In Day for the Class of 2016

Basis for Selecting Cadets

The Coast Guard Academy reviews the records of eligible and qualified applicants holistically. That is, we consider your whole application to gain a complete understanding of your personal, educational and professional goals; potential contributions; and ways in which you will benefit from the unique education offered by the Coast Guard Academy.

The first step in our admissions review is to verify your eligibility. The applications of students who are ineligible for admission will not be considered. An eligible applicant is:

- A U.S. citizen of sound moral character
- Unmarried with no dependents or financial debt
- 17-22 years of age on July 1st of the year of entry
- A high school graduate or GED recipient before Reporting-In Day (R-Day)
- An individual who submitted scores from the SAT Reasoning or ACT (with Writing Test) exam taken without special accommodations

Once all required application items have been received, your record will be reviewed by the Cadet Candidate Evaluation Board (CCEB). The CCEB consists of Academy faculty members, Admissions staff, and senior military officers. Each record is independently read by at least two board members who will recommend that the applicant receive an appointment, be considered for an appointment to the Coast Guard Academy Scholars (CGAS) Preparatory School Program, or not be offered an appointment to the Academy or CGAS Program. The recommendations of the CCEB are then considered by the Admissions Committee, headed by the Director of Admissions, which ultimately recommends applicants to the Superintendent for appointment. The CCEB and Admissions Committee must consider the following factors:

- An applicant's potential to develop into a leader of character grounded in strong intellectual skills and a healthy disposition
- An applicant's capacity to meet the physical demands of the Academy and Coast Guard
- How well an applicant will make use of the Academy's many resources
- An applicant's motivation to stretch to their capacity
- How an applicant will enrich campus life for the benefit of others

Early Action and Regular Admissions

Early Action: Early Action is a non-binding (applicants are not required to accept an appointment, if offered) review guaranteeing if you submit a complete application by November 1st, you'll be notified of your status no later than January 20th. Decisions are released on a rolling basis, so the earlier that you apply - the earlier that you will hear from us! If offered an appointment, Early Action applicants still have until May 1st to accept or decline their spot in the class. If not recommended for an appointment, Early Action applicants may be offered a spot on our waiting list. Applicants on the waiting list are encouraged to periodically update their file with new information to ensure they will be considered for appointment at the conclusion of Regular Admissions. Although not required for Early Action review, we strongly recommend these applicants also complete their Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB) medical exam by November 1st.

Tip: If placed on the waiting list under Early Action, update your record with your first semester transcript, improved standardized test scores, and anything else you'd like the CCEB to consider during your reevaluation. Some applicants are always appointed from the waiting list once Regular Admissions concludes!

Regular Admissions: All completed applications received after the Early Action (November 1st) deadlines will be reviewed in the order received. Regular Admissions applicants will be notified of a decision no later than April 15th, but appointments may also be offered to waiting list applicants through early June - the result of late medical disqualifications or appointment declines.

After the Regular Admissions deadline on February 1st, applicants with incomplete records will not be considered for appointment. Applicants who have not taken their DoDMERB medical exam by April 15th will also be withdrawn from further consideration. Applicants who have not been found medically qualified or been granted a medical waiver by June 1st will not receive an appointment.

Types of Admission Decisions

While we often send official correspondence via e-mail, admissions decisions are normally sent to you by mail. Therefore, be sure to keep us informed of any e-mail or mailing address changes.

Aside from the dreaded non-acceptance letter, be prepared to receive one of the following decisions:

Waiting List: Some Early Action applicants who are not selected for an appointment will be offered a spot on our waiting list. Your record will be reviewed again following the conclusion of Regular Admissions if you update your file with new information. Some applicants are always appointed from the waiting list once Regular Admissions' reviews are finished in March.

Conditional Appointment: An offer of admission that is conditional on meeting some additional requirement(s) outlined in your appointment letter. These requirements include, but are not limited to, attaining your DoDMERB medical qualification, meeting Coast Guard accession height/weight standards, or improving your PFE score. By satisfying these final requirements, and otherwise remaining eligible, you will receive a full appointment.

Full Appointment: An offer of admission to the Coast Guard Academy. Your obligation is to accept or decline by May 1st unless a later date is specified in your appointment letter.

Influencing Admissions Decisions

Besides completing your application by the Early Action or Regular Admission deadlines, there are steps you can take to improve the probability that you will be selected for an appointment.

- **Schedule and complete your medical examination as soon as possible after you receive your letter of instruction from DoDMERB.** DoDMERB acts on the Coast Guard's behalf to schedule you for a comprehensive medical exam and then review your results. This can be a time-consuming process and it's not unusual to wait over a month, from the date of your medical exam, to learn your medical qualification status. Therefore, applicants who have not taken their medical exam by April 15th will be withdrawn from further consideration. Applicants who have not been found medically qualified or been granted a medical waiver by June 1st will not receive an appointment.
- **Comply with Coast Guard accession height/weight standards.** Every branch of the military has established height/weight standards for accession or "swearing in" to the service. Applicants who weigh too much or are too short or tall will not be appointed to the Coast Guard Academy. You can check your height and weight using the table in this handbook; if you are not compliant, meet with your family physician to see how to safely manage/lower your weight. Applicants who report over the Coast Guard's maximum allowable weight will not be enrolled.

- **Update your admissions record.** Senior year is a busy time. You will probably continue to receive accolades *after* you apply, so we encourage you to update your record at *anytime*.

Important: Submit an updated copy of your transcript every time you receive semester or quarter grades. If you are not satisfied with your PFE score, please feel free to resubmit it anytime after improving your fitness level. In general, the CCEB will be looking for you to demonstrate that you're continuing to be a strong performer during your senior year.

- **Demonstrate interest.** Because we employ all our graduates, your interest in the Academy and the Coast Guard is an important consideration. There are many ways to demonstrate interest. For instance, we highly encourage you to make at least one campus visit and keep in close contact with your regional Admissions Officer. Once you complete your online application, you are eligible for an optional interview which can be completed either at the Academy or in your local area with an Academy Admissions Partner.
- **Stay in touch.** Please don't forget to update your mailing address, e-mail address, and phone numbers whenever they change. While appointment offers will always be made in writing and mailed to you, waiting list notification and other changes in your admissions status may only be reported to you via e-mail, so you could miss an opportunity if your e-mail address is inactive.

Advice for Home School Students

Each year many home school students apply for admission. Their potential success as cadets is well established and we consider ourselves a "home school friendly" institution!

Like students in traditional secondary schools, the experiences of home school students vary widely. Because the specific curriculum and nature of a home school education may not be easily understood, home school students applying to college have a greater responsibility to effectively communicate with admissions offices and staff members. In the spirit of helping you put your best foot forward, we suggest that you consider the following when you apply to any college (including the Academy):

- Clearly state the nature of your relationship with those writing your recommendations. If your parents are completing your instructor/academic evaluations, consider supplementing their letters of recommendation with some from other individuals who also know you well, with particular regard to your intellectual and leadership attributes.
- Explain why you chose to study the courses you did. As a home school student, you have much more control over your curriculum than your peers attending a traditional secondary school and that should be to your benefit! Consider writing a short paragraph describing each course and the specific nature of the work you did. Describe what type of math you learned in each course, access to and use of lab equipment, and other items which may be unique to your studies.
- Seize opportunities to independently validate your grades. These include submitting transcripts for any college course work you've completed, taking and submitting the results from Advanced Placement (AP) exams or SAT II subject exams, and requesting reports from a validation service.
- Discuss your home school experience in your admissions application/essays. Explain how your education has prepared you for college and how you can uniquely contribute to the educational experience of your future classmates!

Should I accept my appointment?

By now you've probably realized that the admission process doesn't end when you submit your application! In fact, the relief of finishing your application may be a distant memory as the anxiety of waiting for an answer sets in. You may also wonder what you can do to prepare for your decision, if an appointment offer is received.

Here are a few ideas that applicants have found helpful when making their acceptance decision.

Learn More

Consider a visit to the Coast Guard Academy or to a Coast Guard unit near your home. We offer several different visitation programs throughout the year and each offers a unique perspective on life at the Academy. The popular "Cadet for a Day" Program, available in the fall, pairs you up with a cadet escort to attend classes, observe sports practice, stay overnight in Chase Hall (the cadet barracks), and eat in the Cadet Wardroom. Once offered an appointment, you'll be invited to participate in the Academy Experience Program which takes place throughout the winter and spring. Your parents will also have the opportunity to get their questions answered during either program. Check your personal profile on www.uscga.edu to learn more about all the visitation opportunities.

Participate in chat sessions. Opportunities to chat online with current cadets, faculty, sports coaches, and Admissions staff are normally scheduled every month during the fall and spring. Contact your Admissions Officer for more information and monitor your e-mail for special invitations.

Talk to a member of the Parents Association. The Parents Association is a non-profit organization run by cadet parents. Their sole purpose is to support the Coast Guard Academy and its Corps of Cadets. The sons and daughters of its members have walked in your shoes! Chapters frequently hold social events around the country and always host a welcome reception the night before R-Day. Visit them at <http://www.uscgaparents.org> to learn more and find a chapter near you.

Get in Shape!

Many of the cadets who experience unnecessary stress during Swab Summer regret that they did not work out more before R-Day. As a Swab, you will be engaged in vigorous physical activity as soon as you arrive at the Academy. Most of the activity is designed to enhance your fitness level, but other activities will be physically demanding in different ways. For example, you will take the Physical Fitness Examination (PFE) and a basic swimming skills test, be challenged on our obstacle course, and learn survival at sea skills. In order to participate and succeed at the Academy, you must be in top physical condition.

To get in shape, we recommend a rigorous daily schedule of workouts that include warming up, stretching, running, swimming, and doing push-ups, sit-ups, and calisthenics exercises in the months prior to R-Day. Please visit our website for workout routines developed by our Health and Physical Education staff to help you prepare for Swab Summer and the PFE. The Physical Fitness Guide and additional information can be found at <http://www.uscga.edu/display.aspx?id=2926>

Remember: You must score at least 130 points on the PFE administered during the first week of Swab Summer. Failure to do so may result in immediate disenrollment.

Avoid Senioritis!

The Academy is a highly selective institution that provides its students with one of the most rigorous and rewarding college experiences in the country. The demands of cadet life are structured and fast paced. Each semester you will enroll in five academic courses, participate in a tough physical Education and training program, and become actively engaged in leadership development. In short, you will be expected to manage your time even better than you do now. So don't get lazy!

Cadets who struggle academically often regret that they did not push themselves enough during their senior year of high school. We highly recommend that you take the most challenging math course available to you during your senior year. Second - read, read, read! Strong reading skills are necessary to succeed in every course you will take at the Academy.

Being prepared will help you gain the confidence you need to enthusiastically accept an appointment if it is offered!

Medical Matters

The Academy admissions process is unique because applicants must meet the medical qualifications set by the Coast Guard to enroll as a cadet, and later, to be commissioned as an officer. For most, the medical examination quickly results in a satisfactory conclusion - you will be found medically qualified for admissions. For roughly 30 percent of our applicants, however, additional medical appointments and childhood medical records must be provided to satisfy the examiners.

The Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB) acts on behalf of the Coast Guard Academy to schedule, review, and communicate results of the medical examination and qualification process. As an applicant, you have probably already been contacted by DoDMERB to schedule your medical exam. DoDMERB works through a worldwide network of mostly contracted private physicians who administer the medical exam and forward the results to DoDMERB.

Medical professionals at DoDMERB, which is located at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, evaluate the results of the exam by comparing the physician's report to the accession standards of each military program you are applying to, including the Coast Guard Academy. Therefore, even if you are applying to several federal service academies or ROTC scholarships, you will only need to take the DoDMERB medical exam once.

Because accession standards differ somewhat based on service and type of program, it is possible for you to be medically qualified for one program, but not another. For instance, the sea services set the highest standard for color vision, due to the necessity of distinguishing between colored navigational lights at sea, but other service academies may accept individuals with some color vision deficiency.

You will continue to receive correspondence directly from DoDMERB until the qualification process is complete. In fact, you will most likely learn the status of your medical exam and qualification even before we do. To check the status of your medical qualification, logon to DoDMERB's secure site at <https://dodmerb.tricare.osd.mil>. Follow the "Applicant Login" prompt and enter your social security number and date of birth to create a personalized account.

The Academy Admissions Office does play a role in the medical qualification process. Our DoDMERB Liaison, and your advisor throughout the medical process, is Bill Anderson. He also manages the medical waiver process, which is discussed on Page 8, working closely with the Academy's Medical Administration staff and DoDMERB. Bill can be reached at 860-701-6776 or at William.J.Anderson@uscga.edu.

Medical Exam Outcomes

There are four potential outcomes of your initial DoDMERB medical examination:

Meets Standards: You have met accession standards. No further action is necessary.

Remedial: Additional information is needed before a decision can be made.

Does Not Meet Standards: You have not met the accession standard in one or more areas.

Does Not Meet Standards and Remedial: You have not met at least one accession standard and more information is needed before a decision can be made regarding other accession standards.

Most remedial decisions are cleared up after you provide the information DoDMERB requests or do a follow up examination, often with a specialist; however, some result in a disqualification decision.

Disqualification decisions can be very disappointing, but they are often just a bump in the road. Coast Guard Headquarters, at the recommendation of the Academy's Superintendent and Senior Medical Officer, has the authority to grant medical waivers for some disqualifying conditions.

Important: If you believe your disqualification has been made in error, contact DoDMERB directly to request a "rebuttal" of the findings.

Medical Waiver Process

All disqualified applicants are automatically considered for a waiver. The Academy is responsible for the medical waiver review process; however, any additional information needed for the review will be requested through (and should be submitted to) DoDMERB. The status of your review will be accessible to you on the DoDMERB website.

After carefully reviewing your medical records, our Senior Medical Officer will recommend whether or not a waiver should be granted. The Superintendent will then decide whether to accept or deny the recommendation and forward the waiver request to Coast Guard Headquarters. The final decision to grant a medical waiver resides solely with Coast Guard Headquarters and is not subject to appeal.

The factors which are considered by our Senior Medical Officer in a waiver review include:

- The applicant's ability to participate fully and safely in the Swab Summer Training Program
- Whether or not the applicant will meet medical standards for commissioning
- The long term risks, if any, to the member while serving in potentially isolated areas where medical attention is not readily available
- The long term risks and costs to the service of employing this member

Because the cost of medical exams not specifically requested by DoDMERB are something you must pay for, carefully consider whether or not to pursue such exams if you are disqualified for multiple conditions. You may want to consult with Bill Anderson for advice or wait until a waiver decision is made concerning your disqualification.

As you can see, scheduling and completing your medical exam early is important! Remember that responding quickly to any DoDMERB requests for additional information or testing, in the event of a remedial or disqualification decision, can often result in a favorable outcome.

Important: Medically disqualifying conditions which may be waived by one service may not be waived by another. For example, the Coast Guard Academy does not grant waivers for any degree of color vision deficiency, but other service academies have in the past.

Preparing for Reporting-In Day (R-Day)

When you receive a full appointment, we will provide additional information and instructions; however, this section should help you and your parents understand the steps you will have to take if you receive an appointment and choose to accept it.

Accepting Your Full Appointment

Complete the Statement of Acceptance and Obligation by May 1st. If offered a full appointment, you are required to accept or decline it by May 1st, unless a later date is specified in your appointment letter. The Statement of Acceptance and Obligation will fully inform you of your obligations as a cadet.

Review the Cadet Handbook and Acceptance Package. After receiving your Statement of Acceptance and Obligation, we will mail you a Cadet Handbook and an acceptance package. The handbook should answer all your questions and provide the rest of the information you need to prepare for R-Day.

If you wait until May 1st to accept, the acceptance package will arrive with little time to act on some items. Therefore, we encourage you to consider the suggestions below as soon as possible.

- *Obtain copies of dental bite wings and panoramic X-rays taken after January 1st.* You will be required to mail these x-rays to the Academy's Senior Dental Officer by June 1st.
- *Update your immunizations and make a certified copy of the record.* It is in your best interest to complete as many needed vaccinations as possible before R-Day. Incoming cadets will be immunized for Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) upon arrival at the Academy unless they have received two doses of the MMR vaccine or provide laboratory titers documenting proof of immunity. Vaccinations for Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and chickenpox are also given to cadets unless proof of immunity/vaccination is submitted. Finally, Coast Guard policy also requires the Yellow Fever and Meningitis vaccines be given to all new personnel within one year of entry.
- *Plan to complete orthodontic care.* Active orthodontics (braces) cannot be worn at the Academy, even if you were wearing them before or at your DoDMERB medical exam. Cadets who have completed treatment, but are still wearing fixed or removable retainers, do not need to make any special arrangements with a local orthodontist; repair or replacement of retainers will be handled by the Academy's Dental Division.
- *Decide how to handle scholarship funds.* Many cadets receive scholarships from a wide variety of organizations. Scholarship monies may be deposited in your cadet "guardian" bank account, which you will use to cover expenses while at the Academy. Check with the scholarship donor(s) to ensure that the funds may be redirected and used in this manner.
- *Obtain a passport.* Cadets travel worldwide during their summer training periods and may also have opportunities to travel abroad during the academic year. You will be required to have a current U.S. passport upon reporting to the Academy. Since the application process can take six to eight weeks, we recommend that you start it upon receiving your appointment to ensure you're ready!

What to bring on Reporting-In Day

As a new cadet, you will be provided almost everything you need to complete the Swab Summer Training Program safely and successfully. You are also allowed to bring a few personal items. An updated packing list will be included in the Cadet Handbook, but the list below (taken from the last Cadet Handbook) should give you an idea of how light you will be traveling on R-Day!

- Military ID Card (active duty/military dependents) or a state/federal government issued ID
- U.S. Tourist Passport
- Two pairs of glasses or contact lenses, if you wear them
- All prescribed and over the counter medications, or dietary supplements, you require, including prescription documentation
- Toiletries: soap, shampoo, toothpaste/toothbrush, deodorant, combs, shaving gear, etc.
- One pair of high-quality running shoes (white, gray, or dark blue)
- Undershirts, underwear, socks (white; quantity as directed)
- Digital, waterproof watch with a durable, dark colored wrist band
- \$200 (cash) to cover incidentals during Swab Summer

Coast Guard Academy Height/Weight Standards

Incoming cadets are expected to arrive on R-Day weighing no more than the maximum allowable weight listed below by height. Applicants whose weight is not compliant will normally not receive an appointment and incoming cadets whose weight is not compliant on R-Day will not be enrolled. Some exceptions are possible; consult with your Admissions Officer if in doubt. Always contact your family physician before starting a weight loss regimen.

Maximum Allowable Weight based on Height (Regardless of Age or Gender)

Height	Weight	Height	Weight	Height	Weight
58"	131	66"	170	74"	214
59"	136	67"	175	75"	220
60"	141	68"	180	76"	225
61"	145	69"	186	77"	231
62"	150	70"	191	78"	237
63"	155	71"	197	79"	244
64"	160	72"	202	80"	250
65"	165	73"	208		

Notes:

All measurements should be made in undergarments (no shoes) only. Use an accurate scale and a non-elastic tape measure. Round all measurements to the nearest inch or the nearest pound.

1. Height: Stand with your feet together, flat on the floor, take a deep breath and stretch tall.
2. Weight: Stand with your feet together, flat on the scale, arms hanging at your side.

Frequently Used Phone Numbers

Admissions Office

800-883-USCG (8724)
Local: (860) 444-8503
Admissions@uscga.edu

Admissions Officers

CDR Yardley Bailey*
Yardley.S.Bailey@uscga.edu

LTJG Mary Bitzer
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Mary.A.Bitzer@uscga.edu

LT Timothy Frazier*
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LT Steven Raynor*
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LT Kathleen Sullivan
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Kathleen.M.Sullivan@uscga.edu

LT Matthias Wholley
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Matthias.H.Wholley@uscga.edu

(Visit http://admissions.uscga.edu/i2e/academy_admission/locator2.asp to learn who your Admissions Officer is)

Campus Visitation Programs

LTJG Cosimo Cambi
(860) 701-6780
Cosimo.F.Cambi@uscga.edu

*Phone number not available at time of release;
please visit online Admissions Officer locator site

Admissions Operations Branch

Mrs. Donna Homiski
Application Questions
(860) 701-6775
Donna.T.Homiski@uscga.edu

Mr. Bill Anderson
DoDMERB/Medical Questions
(860) 701-6776
William.J.Anderson@uscga.edu

Academics

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Associate Dean of Academics
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Athletics

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DoDMERB

(719) 333-3562
<https://dodmerb.tricare.osd.mil>

Physical Fitness & PFE Preparation

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Reporting-In Day

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Swab Summer Training Program

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