

MARAD



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**
Maritime Administration

STUDENT INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM



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Photo provided by Maine Maritime Academy



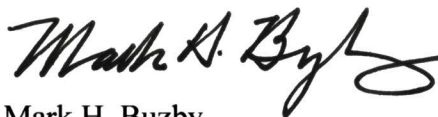
Photo provided by the State University of New York Maritime College

Message From the Maritime Administrator

Future Mariners,

Thank you for your interest in the Student Incentive Payment (SIP) Program. As you may have heard, maritime education provides exceptional career opportunities and boundless growth potential and leadership opportunities both within and outside the industry. I am a proud graduate of a merchant marine academy, and my own life is a true testimonial to this. If becoming a licensed merchant mariner is your calling, the Federal government will help offset your college expenses partially through SIP funds distributed over the course of the four-year program. There are only a limited number of such offers available annually for each State Maritime Academy, and if selected, in return, you will have an obligation to serve the nation as a Strategic Sealift Officer. Additional details are discussed in the SIP Handbook and I hope you will review this carefully prior to making your decision.

Wishing you the very best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark H. Buzby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Mark H. Buzby
Maritime Administrator

STUDENT INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Purpose and Intent

The Student Incentive Payment (SIP)¹ Program is a Federal Program in which the Maritime Administration (MARAD) provides subsistence in Federal funds to students attending one of six State Maritime Academies (SMAs) to become licensed officers in the United States Merchant Marine. SIP Program payments must be used for tuition, uniforms, books and subsistence. MARAD has flexibility in distributing SIP payments. The SIP Program enrollment allocations are limited to the annual fiscal year funding appropriated by Congress for the program. MARAD distributes the enrollment allocations to the SMAs prior to each academic year. The SIP Program funding shall not exceed the program total maximum of \$32,000 in four consecutive academic years.

Each of the six qualified SMAs have a course curriculum in which students can earn a bachelor's degree and the necessary training and skills to qualify to take the examination to become U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) credentialed merchant marine officers. The SMAs are:

California Maritime Academy in Vallejo, CA
Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City, MI
Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, ME
Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay, MA
State University of New York Maritime College in Throgs Neck, NY
Texas A&M Maritime Academy in Galveston, TX

Each SMA has a SIP Program Point of Contact (POC). In addition, the Department of Naval Science (DNS) can also assist you with SIP enrollment.



Photo provided by Great Lakes Maritime Academy

¹ The SIP Program is governed by 46 U.S.C. § 51509 and 46 C.F.R. § 310.7

SIP ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the SIP Program, the SMA cadet must:

- Be a U.S. Citizen.
- Meet the medical and physical standards specified by the USCG for original credentialing as a merchant marine officer.
- Meet the medical and physical standards specified by the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB) to qualify for appointment as a midshipmen in the United States Navy Reserve.
- Be at least 17 years of age and not have passed their 25th birthday on the day of enrollment at the SMA.
- Possess a secondary school education or equivalent, satisfactory for admission as an undergraduate to college under control of the State in which the maritime academy is located.
- Meet the requirements established by the SMA in regard to secondary school grades, rank in graduating class, aptitude, achievement, and qualities of leadership.
- Be in good standing in the SMA.
- Apply for, be offered, and have accepted Midshipman status in the U.S. Navy Reserve Strategic Sealift Officer Program (SSOP) or USCG Reserve and simultaneously have applied and been accepted for enlisted reserve status.

APPLYING FOR SIP

The SMAs accept applications from cadets qualified to apply for enrollment in the SIP Program. The cadet and the SMA should maintain a copy of the application for their records.

A SIP Program POC at each SMA will provide details on when and how to apply, including a due date for submitting the application. The SIP forms are available at the SMAs and on the MARAD website at (<https://mcs.marad.dot.gov>) under the heading *State Maritime Academy Information, SIP Enrollment Forms*. The forms must be submitted to MARAD by the SMA SIP POC. After you have applied to the SIP Program, the SMA's DNS Officer In Charge (OIC) will inform you of the process required for enrollment in the Strategic Sealift Officer/Midshipman Program, the requirements of that program, and the process to complete the medical requirements. The DNS will provide a timetable for completion of all required forms and physical examinations. Once the SMA forwards MARAD the below listed forms (the SIP Program application) and the applicant has successfully completed all requirements for the SSOP, passed the DoDMERB physical, passed the USCG medical and physical examinations, and received the USCG Medical Certificate, MARAD begins the enrollment process. If an applicant previously attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, thereby utilizing federal funds, or attended another SMA and participated in the SIP Program, his/her SIP application will be reviewed based on the reason for disenrollment. In all such cases, MARAD's decision shall be final and binding.

SIP Program applicants must complete the following enrollment documents and provide the forms to the SMA SIP Program POC:

1. Maritime Administration Service Obligation Contract (SOC) for Student Incentive Payment Program (MA Form 890) *
2. The SIP Program Enrollment Form (MA Form 890-A) *
3. Direct Deposit Form (SF 1199A)
4. Enlistment or Reenlistment Agreement, Armed Forces of the United States (DD Form 4/1).
5. Copy of the USCG Medical Certificate (Issued from 719K Application)

*** FORMS 1 and 2 above MUST BE SUBMITTED AS ORIGINALS BY THE SMA POC TO MARAD ***

For any questions about the SIP Program, contact MARAD at maritime.graduate@dot.gov.

Photo provided by California Maritime Academy



SERVICE OBLIGATION

Once approved to participate in the SIP Program, the applicant must complete all the SIP service obligation requirements. The MARAD Service Obligation Contract (Form MA-890) must be signed by the applicant and MARAD. If the applicant is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must approve and sign the contract with the applicant. When the applicant reaches age 18, the applicant will re-sign without parent or guardian's signature.

The Service Obligation Contract obligates the applicant to:

1. Use the SIP funds for tuition, uniforms, books and subsistence;
2. Complete the course of instruction at a SMA and the SSOP Naval Science Courses;
3. Pass the USCG examination for a Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC), without limitation as to tonnage or horsepower, with an officer endorsement and Standards of Training,

Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) endorsement within three months of completing the courses of instruction at the SMA;

4. For at least six (6) years from the date of graduation, maintain a USCG MMC with officer endorsement, without limitation as to tonnage or horsepower, and STCW endorsements, a valid Transportation Workers Identification Credential (TWIC), and a valid USCG medical certificate;
5. Apply for an appointment as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve (Including the Strategic Sealift Officer Reserve, U.S. Navy Reserve), the USCG Reserve, or any reserve component of an armed force of the United States. If the application is accepted and a commission is offered, the applicant must accept the appointment and serve in good standing for at least eight years (six years for those who enrolled in the SIP Program prior to July 1, 2016) from the date of graduation and;
6. Maintain employment in the U.S. maritime industry for at least (3) three years from the date of graduation in the following capacities:
 - i. As a merchant marine officer serving on U.S. documented vessels (150 days annually satisfies the employment service obligation);
 - ii. As an employee in a U.S. maritime-related industry, profession or marine science as determined by MARAD, if MARAD determines that employment under paragraph i above is not available;
 - iii. As a commissioned officer on active duty in the armed forces of the United States or as a commissioned officer in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Corps or the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) as a commissioned officer;
 - iv. Shoreside, Federal Employment that serves the national security interests of the United States and is significantly maritime related;
 - v. By combining the employment options specified in paragraphs i, ii, iii and iv above - combining into one job or adding a combination of time for at least 3 years.
7. Report annually between January 1 and March 1 to MARAD on the fulfillment of your service obligation, via the MARAD website: <https://mscs.marad.dot.gov>

For those individuals who meet the service portion of their service obligation by sailing, 46 CFR § 310.7(b)(5) defines a satisfactory year of service as being the lesser of: (1) 150 days; or (2) the number of days that is at least equal to the median number of days of seafaring employment under articles achieved by deck or engine officers in the most recent calendar year for which statistics are available. MARAD has determined that **150 days** of service constitutes a satisfactory year of service.

If a SIP Program graduate signed onboard a vessel in the capacity of a crew member or working as a pilot or in a pilot training program for any portion of a day, that day would count as one day, and one day only, towards meeting the service obligation of 150 days per year of service.

This is the primary objective of the service/employment portion of the SIP Program graduate's obligation and, while a graduate may potentially satisfy his/her service obligation through other means of service/employment, sailing as an officer aboard a U.S. flagged vessel is considered the principal method of meeting your obligation.

Shoreside Federal Employment

If a SIP graduate is working in or intends to work in a shoreside position with a Federal department or agency, s/he must obtain prior MARAD approval before any time spent in that position will count towards the graduate's service obligation. Shoreside Federal maritime-related employment is authorized by 46 U.S.C. § 51509(d)(5)(C) and 46 C.F.R. §§ 310.7(b)(3)(vi)(C) and (E).

Approval of shoreside Federal employment requires that the graduate provide evidence that his or her prospective employment:

- (1) Is as a civil servant employed by the Federal Government;
- (2) Serves the national security interests of the United States; and
- (3) Is significantly maritime-related.

“Significantly” is defined by law as meaning that “a material or essential portion” of the graduate's job responsibilities are maritime-related. This does not mean that the “majority” of a graduate's responsibilities must be maritime-related, but it does mean that more than just an incidental part of their responsibilities must be maritime-related. 46 C.F.R. § 310.7(b)(3)(vi)(E).

Lastly, the graduate's employment must be as a Federal civil servant. If employed as a contractor to a Federal agency, s/he does not qualify for consideration as a shoreside Federal employee. Instead, the service is evaluated as shoreside non-Federal employment and must obtain *MARAD approval prior to accepting the employment for it to meet the graduate's service obligation.

*Note that approval is only needed for those Federal employees working in a shoreside position. **If a graduate is sailing for a Federal agency (e.g., Military Sealift Command or NOAA) as an officer s/he need not seek MARAD approval for such Federal afloat employment.**

Service in the Armed Forces, NOAA, or USPHS for Five Years

The graduate's service obligation requires completion of every element listed above. The only exception to this is individuals who, for the five (5)-year period following graduation, serve as a commissioned officer on active duty in a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces or as a commissioned officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) or the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). Those graduates who provide five (5) years of honorable active duty service shall be excused from maintaining their USCG credential and the reserve requirements of their obligation to MARAD. The graduate is required to report to MARAD annually for the five year period while on active duty, or in NOAA Corps, or the USPHS.



Photo provided by Texas A&M Maritime Academy

GRACE PERIOD FOR SERVICE OBLIGATION

The contract that applicants sign when entering the SIP Program becomes enforceable if s/he has attended an SMA for more than two academic years and received at least \$8,000 in SIP payments. An “academic year” is defined as the successful completion of two (2) semesters.

Freshman applications will therefore receive a two-year time period at the SMA to decide if they want a career in the United States Merchant Marine. During this period, participants may leave the SMA without having any obligation under their service obligation contract. For those entering the SIP as other than Freshmen, these participants become obligated upon their Junior Year and after having received at least \$8,000.

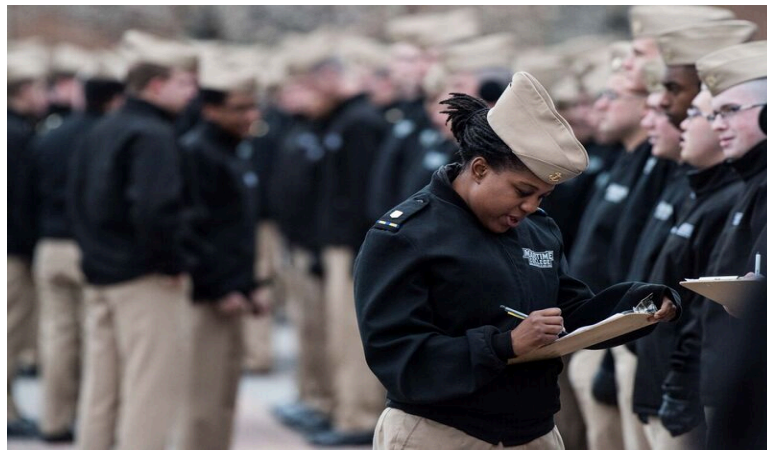


Photo provided by the State University of New York Maritime College

DISENROLLMENT FROM SIP

A SIP participant may disenroll from the SIP Program by notifying the SMA’s DNS and MARAD maritime.graduate@dot.gov, Office of Maritime Labor and Training (MAR-650). This notification must be in writing via a letter or email. If the SMA or the DNS disenrolls the participant, MARAD will be notified by Naval Service Training Command (NSTC). If the SIP participant is obligated to MARAD, once MARAD receives notification of the disenrollment, the student’s records will be reviewed. Repayment of MARAD SIP Program funds or active duty service are among the options

available to MARAD to recoup the SIP funds distributed. The student will be notified of their MARAD obligation and of their SIP Program repayment requirement.

BREACH OF SERVICE OBLIGATION

Before Graduation – If MARAD determines that an individual has accepted SIP funds and is obligated, such individual may be ordered to active duty to serve a period not to exceed two (2) years. MARAD reserves the right to determine that recoupment of SIP funds provided by MARAD is preferable to active duty assignment in certain cases.

After graduation, SIP Program graduates are required to fulfill employment, licensing, reserve commission, and reporting requirements. Failure to satisfy any of these requirements can result in MARAD finding the graduate in breach of the service obligation contract.

By statute, MARAD has two options in the event of a breach of the SIP Program service obligation contract. Under one option, the graduate may be ordered to active duty in one of the U.S. Armed Forces for not less than two (2) years.

Under the second option, if MARAD determines that reimbursement of the student incentive payments provided by MARAD is preferable, then MARAD will seek the return of all SIP payments made, and possibly any accrued interest and attorney's fees.

DEFERMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OBLIGATION

In exceptional cases, MARAD may grant a deferment of all or part of the service commitment for a period not to exceed two years. This deferment is available to those graduates considered to have superior academic and conduct records while at the SMA, and for the purpose of entering a marine or maritime-related graduate course of study at an accredited graduate school. The graduate's reserve obligation must remain in good standing.

WAIVER OF SERVICE OBLIGATION

MARAD may grant a waiver of all the requirements of the service obligation if it would be an undue hardship or impossible to perform all service obligations. Waivers are decided on a case-by-case basis. Waivers can be granted before or after graduation.

A waiver on the basis of undue hardship may be granted under consideration of all the following circumstances:

- (a) The hardship is of an indeterminant or extended duration such that deferment would not be practicable;
- (b) Conditions have arisen or have been aggravated to an excessive degree since enrollment in the relevant educational program
- (c) The individual has made reasonable effort to remedy the situation;
- (d) The waiver will eliminate or materially alleviate the hardship;

- (e) There are no other reasonable or practicable means of satisfying the service obligations;
and
- (f) Any other circumstances deemed relevant by the Maritime Administrator, in accordance with the Administrator's discretion.

Undue hardship does not necessarily exist solely because of altered present or expected income, family separation, or other inconveniences normally incident to the service obligations.

Circumstances that will normally not be considered undue hardship include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Purely financial or business reasons;
- (b) Personal convenience;
- (c) An inability to fulfill obligations due to legal issues;
- (d) Pregnancy. However, the Maritime Administration recognizes that pregnant women may be unable to fulfill some service obligations such as sailing during their pregnancy or immediately after giving birth due to medical and safety concerns. In such circumstance, the Maritime Administration may grant a deferment of the service obligations until the woman is able to resume fulfilling her service obligations. It is the responsibility of that individual to contact the Maritime Administration's Office of Maritime Labor and Training to make inquiries about a deferment.

An individual can also receive a partial waiver if s/he can fulfill some of the service obligations, but it would be an undue hardship or impossible to fulfill all of the service obligations. For example, if an individual develops a medical condition, such as cancer or a degenerative health condition, and can no longer serve aboard a ship, s/he may be entitled to a partial waiver of that obligation.

Requests for waivers should be submitted in writing to the Maritime Administration, Office of Labor and Maritime Training, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE OBLIGATIONS AND DEFERMENTS

If a waiver on the basis of undue hardship or impossibility is not warranted, MARAD has the authority to grant a deferment or agree to alternative service obligations. Deferments and alternative service obligations are granted on a case-by-case basis after consideration of the relevant facts, circumstances, and equities. The overall goal of a deferment or alternative service obligation is to ensure that the Federal Government receives the benefit of the bargain given in exchange for the education provided to individuals.

If you would like to inquire about alternative service obligations or a deferment, please contact the Maritime Administration, Office of Labor and Maritime Training, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.



Photo provided by Massachusetts Maritime Academy

REPORTING REQUIREMENT

After graduating from the SMA s/he will be required to report annually to MARAD utilizing the MARAD website <https://mcs.marad.dot.gov>. The Annual Compliance Reporting period is between January 1 and March 1 of each year and is normally required for a total of 9 years (7 years for those who enrolled in SIP prior to July 1, 2016) **or** until all components of your service obligation are fulfilled. This reporting information will include the following:

- Graduate's current address and email (update as necessary);
- Graduate's Reserve Commission status for 8 years (6 years for SIP participants enrolled prior to July 1, 2016);
- Whether the graduate renewed or upgraded the USCG license, and the date renewed or upgraded; and
- The graduate's employment for that prior year, required for three satisfactory years.

Submit your MARAD annual compliance electronically via the MARAD Maritime Service Compliance System (MCS) at the following website: <https://mcs.marad.dot.gov>

The first report will be due to MARAD between January 1 – March 1, following your date of graduation, and annually thereafter between January 1 – March 1 until **all** obligations are fulfilled. Graduates in the U.S. Armed Forces must report annually. If unemployed, state that in the employment section, with the appropriate dates. If a graduate has been granted a deferment of employment obligation to attend graduate school or other approved reason, s/he must **still** report annually to MARAD, indicating that s/he is actively enrolled in graduate school. At the completion of the deferment, which is a maximum of two years, the graduate is required to report to MARAD until fulfilling the service obligation.

MARAD is available to assist graduates with any questions regarding the service obligation, or if they are unable to enter compliance information via the above website. Email maritime.graduate@dot.gov or call 202 366- 7618.

Requirement for Employment Determination Request (EDR)

A MARAD Employment Determination Request (EDR) Form for SMA SIP Program participants is required to be submitted to MARAD for approval prior to accepting any position that is not that of an officer aboard a United States documented vessel or where one is an officer in the armed forces, NOAA, or USPHS. Supporting documentation that indicates the applicant actively sought compliance-fulfilling employment is required. The EDR can be submitted on the MARAD website <https://mscs.marad.dot.gov>.

Please note that MARAD approval of an EDR will be strictly limited to the specific employment for which approval was sought. This means that approval will remain in effect only as long as the graduate maintains the exact same employment as specified on the EDR. If the graduate changes positions with the existing employer, or changes employers, the graduate will need to submit a new EDR and obtain prior MARAD approval for each new position to meet the service portion of the obligation. These additional “follow-up” EDRs are necessary to allow MARAD to ensure that the graduate’s new position satisfies the legal requirements for permissible alternative employment.

Lastly, the approval of an EDR does not exempt a SIP Program participant or graduate from any other elements of the service obligation. Graduates still must comply with maintaining a current MMC with endorsements; fulfilling STCW requirements; maintaining TWIC and medical requirements and certificates; and remaining in good standing with the reserve requirements.

Should graduates require assistance in preparing and submitting an EDR, please contact the MARAD Office of Maritime Labor and Training directly.



Photo provided by Texas A&M Maritime Academy

LEAVE

Leave may be granted without loss of SIP as follows:

1. Medical leave, as authorized by the SMA, not to exceed four (4) months.
 2. Christmas and Easter leave and all legal holidays – Federal and State – as authorized by the SMA.
 3. Excused absences, as authorized by the SMA, not to exceed thirty (30) days per academic year.
- All unauthorized leave and all excused absences in excess of 30 days will result in loss of SIP Program funds.

SIP participants may be granted leave of absence without pay, as approved by the SMA President/Superintendent, for periods not to exceed one (1) academic year at a time. The SIP Program participants will only be granted a leave of absence if they continue to meet all requirements for graduation in this part, including age requirements.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q1.** Must I apply for U.S. Navy Midshipman status in order to be selected to enroll and participate in the Student Incentive Payment (SIP) Program?
- A. Yes. Only those students, who apply for, been offered and are accepted into the Navy Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO) Midshipman Program or USCG Reserve and simultaneously have applied and been accepted for enlisted reserve status, will be eligible for the SIP Program.
- Q2.** How are SIP payments paid to participants?
- A. SIP Program funding is currently provided at the beginning of each Fall and Spring semester of each academic year to the financial institution and account specified by the SIP Program participant, on their direct deposit form. The maximum SIP funding and enrollment period is for 4 consecutive years and not to exceed \$32,000.
- Q3.** When does the service obligation begin?
- A. For an individual who has signed a contract during his or her Freshman year, the service obligation begins when s/he has been in the SIP Program for more than two years, started the third year and accepted funding for that fifth semester. The total SIP funds received for the five semesters must total at least \$8,000. However, an upper classman who has signed a contract and received at least \$8,000 may be obligated. Read the specific details of the contract; all cadets are obligated by their Junior year, once they have received at least \$8,000.
- If a SIP Program participant resigns or is disenrolled after the service obligation begins, s/he will be in breach of the Service Obligation Contract and MARAD can proceed with breach proceedings.
- Q4.** What if I don't pass the physical examination given by the U.S. Navy or meet USCG physical and medical standards during the beginning of the academic year?
- A. Your SIP Program application will not be approved. Only those cadets who are physically qualified to participate in the Navy SSO Midshipman Program and are deemed eligible to obtain a USCG MMC upon graduation and qualify for a commission will be eligible for the SIP Program. While awaiting physical approvals s/he may be on a waiting list until medically qualified if the SMA has a slot set aside for the applicant. The maximum approval period for physicals cannot exceed one academic year.
- Q5.** What happens if I resign or become disenrolled from school after entering the MARAD period of obligation?

- A. SIP applicants should notify MARAD in writing, maritime.graduate@dot.gov, and the SMA. MARAD will then review the records and the circumstances of the disenrollment or resignation to determine if s/he has breached the service obligation. If it is determined that an applicant has breached the agreement, MARAD may forward that name to the Secretary of Defense recommending active duty involuntarily, or MARAD may recoup all SIP funds provided, possibly with attorney fees and interest.
- Q6.** Once I disenroll or resign from school, may I re-enroll in the SIP Program and claim my SIP payments upon subsequent re-enrollment at another SMA?
- A. No. Once disenrolled or resigned from school, you may not claim your SIP upon subsequent reenrollment at the same school from which you previously resigned or were disenrolled. However, you may be granted a leave of absence without pay from the SIP Program if approved by the SMA Superintendent or President. See Leave, page 8 above. (46 C.F.R. § 310.8(b)). If you disenroll or resign after becoming obligated, you will not be eligible for SIP, regardless of whether you transfer or enroll at a new SMA.
- Q7.** Once in the SIP Program at a state maritime academy, may I transfer to another state maritime and remain in the SIP Program?
- A. Transfers may be reviewed by MARAD, after review and recommendations from the State Maritime Academies, on a case by case basis. There is no guarantee of acceptance into the SIP Program at another State Maritime Academy.

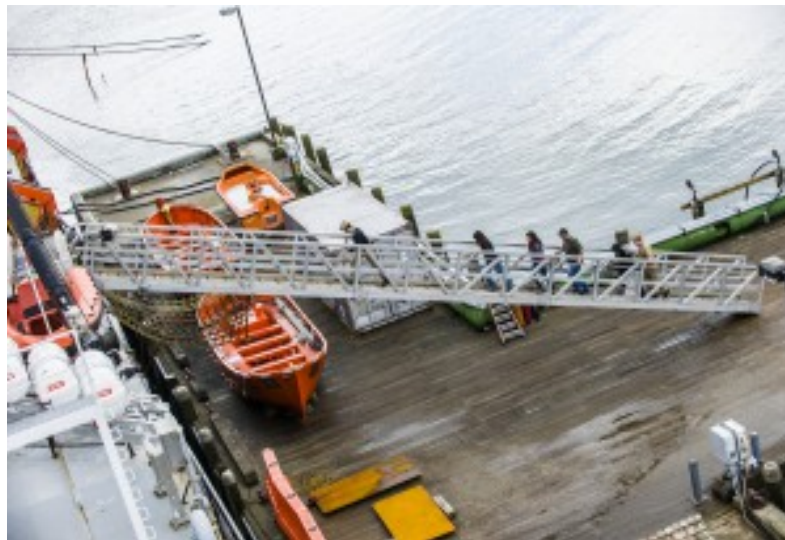


Photo provided by Maine Maritime Academy

- Q8.** What types of jobs will satisfy the employment obligation once I graduate?
- A. Graduates' first obligation is to seek employment as a U.S. Merchant Marine Officer sailing on U.S. flag vessels. **The key component of the service obligation is that for a specified period of time following graduation, SIP graduates' primary goal is to sail as a merchant marine**

officer aboard a U.S. flag vessel. For SMA SIP graduates, the service/ employment requirement is three (3) years.

Q9. Can I fulfill my service obligation in any way other than sailing as an officer aboard a U.S. flag vessel?

A. Yes, but there are some regulatory and procedural constraints that you need to be aware of.

The laws and MARAD regulations that govern the service obligation do allow graduates to fulfill the service/employment portion of the obligation in several alternative ways. These alternatives are broken down into two main categories of service: (i) service that DOES NOT require MARAD approval to qualify as obligation-fulfilling; and (ii) service that DOES require MARAD approval to qualify as obligation-fulfilling.

i. Service that DOES NOT require MARAD approval to qualify

By and large, MARAD approval is required before an alternative means of employment will be considered as satisfying your service obligation. The sole exceptions are:

- (a) as a commissioned officer on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces; or
- (b) as a commissioned officer in NOAA or USPHS Corps.

Currently graduates from the SIP Program proudly serve in all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and the NOAA and USPHS Corps and this is an excellent way to fulfill your service obligation while contributing directly to the nation's security. Five (5) years of honorable active duty service satisfies all portions of your MARAD service obligation, once the graduate submits their Annual MARAD Reports. If the SIP graduate completes at least five (5) years of honorable active duty service, s/he will have fulfilled the **MARAD service obligation**. Graduates will need to maintain a reserve commission for the remaining portion of the reserve obligation specified in their contract with the U.S. Armed Forces they have chosen, which is independent from the MARAD service obligation.

Please note all SIP graduates must continue to submit all the required Annual Reports. This includes providing employment information (duty station, address, etc.).

If a graduate is on active duty service for less than five (5) years, s/he will still be responsible for the other components of the service obligation.

To reiterate, unless you sail as an officer aboard a U.S.-flag vessel, or serve as a commissioned officer on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces or with NOAA or USPHS, your employment does not count towards your service obligation unless MARAD has approved your alternative employment. ***All other alternative categories of employment must be approved by MARAD before any service in such employment will count towards the service you owe under your service obligation.***

ii. Service that **DOES** require MARAD approval to qualify

The potential alternative categories of employment are:

- (a) As a merchant mariner in an unlicensed position aboard a U.S.-flag vessel;
- (b) As an officer aboard a foreign-flag vessel;
- (c) As an employee of the Federal Government in a shoreside position that is significantly maritime-related, and which serves the national security interests of the country; or
- (d) As an employee of a private company in a shoreside position that is maritime-related.
Note this will only be approved if a determination has been made by MARAD that you first conscientiously sought an afloat position as an officer aboard a U.S. flag vessel and that afloat employment is not available to you.

Q10. How do I obtain MARAD approval of my alternative employment?

- A. To obtain MARAD approval for any alternative service options you must complete and submit an Employment Determination Request (EDR) and provide the information and documentation required by your particular category of employment. A PDF copy of the EDR form can be downloaded from MARAD's Maritime Service Compliance System (MSCS) <https://mscs.marad.dot.gov>.

Anything other than the position listed earlier in Q8 and Q9(i), **must be submitted in an EDR and approved by MARAD prior to accepting the position.** MARAD will review the EDR and make a determination if you have provided documentation that you have actively sought U.S. afloat employment. Maritime ashore employment even with Federal and State agencies must be significantly **maritime-related, and an EDR must be submitted to MARAD.** Examples: vessel chartering, cargo terminal operations, naval architecture, shipbuilding and repair, state port authorities and marine engineering.

This includes, but is not limited to, service on any of the following types of vessels – provided that they are U.S.-flagged: Ocean going; Military Sealift Command; coastal and inland; tugs and towboats; passenger; and offshore energy vessels, platforms and drilling units.

Photo provided by Great Lakes Maritime Academy



Lastly, **report annually** all components of your service obligation to MARAD through its website <https://mcs.marad.dot.gov>.

MARAD is available to assist with any questions regarding the graduate's service obligation or if s/he are unable to enter the information via the above website. Email maritime_graduate@dot.gov or call 202 366-7618, Service Obligation.

**Maritime Administration
Office of Maritime Labor Training and Safety (MAR-650)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington DC 20590**

**** NOTE ** MARAD CAREER SERVICES** - MARAD has contracted with a company to assist SIP Program cadets and SIP graduates with employment in the maritime industry.

On behalf of MARAD, the contractor will provide career services to assist with fulfillment of maritime service obligation related afloat employment. They will also provide job leads, mentoring support, management of employment portfolios and related support services. SIP participants can consult the MARAD website <https://mcs.marad.dot.gov>.

Photo provided by Massachusetts Maritime Academy



Photo provided by California Maritime Academy

