



5000

26 MAY 2020

Dear Coast Guard Family Members:

The Maritime Law Enforcement Academy (MLEA) is preparing for the 2020 hurricane season, which runs 01 June through 30 November. As part of our unit preparations, we encourage our personnel and their families to prepare for the possibility of all types of severe weather.

Hurricanes interrupted MLEA operations during each of the last four years: Matthew in 2016; Irma in 2017; Florence in 2018; and Dorian in 2019. The last two hurricanes required full evacuations of our staff and students and proved that severe weather preparedness is not optional for those residing in the greater Charleston area. Rather, these experiences have demonstrated that severe weather preparedness must be a part of our daily routines.

The Commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District in Miami is responsible for authorizing entitlements for the evacuation of Coast Guard personnel assigned to MLEA and the Southeast Regional Fisheries Training Center. Evacuation expenses of active duty members, civilian employees, and dependents are subject to full reimbursement only if these personnel evacuate to a safe haven or within a safe haven distance designated by the Seventh District Commander. For example, during Hurricane Dorian, full entitlements were available to those traveling to Atlanta, Georgia (the designated safe haven), or to a distance that did not exceed the distance from Charleston, SC to Atlanta, GA (327 miles). Please note, safe haven designations change based on each storm's predicted path or intensity.

The MLEA is unique among Charleston-area Coast Guard commands, because it is a training unit integrated with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC). Accordingly, FLETC will determine whether to suspend training in the event of severe weather, while the Seventh District Commander retains the authority to provide evacuation entitlements of all Charleston-area Coast Guard personnel. In addition, if State or local authorities order an evacuation of your area (to include the Joint Base Charleston Commander for personnel and dependents who reside on base), you must comply—regardless of whether the Seventh District Commander has authorized entitlements or FLETC has suspended training. You can expect message traffic confirming authorizing reimbursement for expenses to be forthcoming. To reiterate: Coast Guard personnel residing in areas identified by federal, state, or local evacuation orders must comply with those evacuation orders. The sole exception is for personnel directed by the command to serve on the ride-out crew.

The Seventh District evacuation policy, as well as other useful hurricane preparedness information, is available at MLEA's website at this link: <https://www.forcecom.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/FORCECOM-UNITS/MLEA/Hurricane-Information/>

Additionally, the MLEA's new Ombudsman, Mrs. Brigitte Wilson, is available to answer any questions concerning severe weather preparedness and evacuation policies. I encourage you to

reach out to her at (843) 608-8161 or MLEAombudsman@gmail.com if you have any inquiries regarding severe weather preparedness or evacuation procedures. Information from sources outside of MLEA may be inaccurate or inapplicable to MLEA, so please consider the MLEA command and Brigitte as your source for definitive information. Accordingly, if you haven't already registered your e-mail address with Brigitte (or her predecessor, Mrs. Stephanie Krauss), I encourage you to contact her and do so now.

In event of an ordered evacuation: The MLEA will send information and periodic updates to active duty and civilian personnel via the Alert Warning System (AWS), which delivers automated messages through telephone, text, and e-mail. Consequently, all MLEA personnel must ensure their contact information is current in all databases, i.e., Direct Access at <https://hcm.direct-access.us/>; CGPAAS at <https://cgpaas.uscg.mil>; the Active Directory at <https://edms.uscg.mil/selfservice>; and the Defense Manpower Data Center at <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/>. The MLEA will also provide updates via its Facebook page.

In the event of lost communications with the MLEA, evacuated personnel must contact the District Seven Personnel Support Team (PST) at the telephone number that will be specified in message traffic authorizing reimbursements for evacuations. Personnel may be expected to provide the PST accountability for themselves and their dependents.

The MLEA (or the PST) will provide information on funding, assistance, and guidance on when to return to the Charleston area and to duty.

Post-Storm Procedures: All MLEA staff should report accountability for themselves and their dependents within 12 hours of storm passage. Accountability is typically achieved through "CGPAAS," which sends out an automated query that allows staff to report their status. This automated system, as well as AWS, is only effective if contact information is up to date! Personnel who are unable to access CGPAAS or receive CGPAAS alerts during a storm should report accountability by contacting their supervisor.

All MLEA staff should expect to return to work as soon as safely possible following the passage of a storm. The MLEA will begin the recall of personnel utilizing the AWS and will provide specific instructions on return schedules. The MLEA will also provide these instructions to the PST and Ombudsman to provide an additional information source for MLEA personnel. This process can be expected to begin within 12 hours of storm passage, depending on damage assessments and the projected resumption of training operations at FLETC. Any personnel that have not been contacted within 18 hours of storm passage should contact their supervisor, the MLEA, or the PST, for instructions.

Thank you for your shared commitment to severe weather preparedness. Your safety and well-being is of utmost importance to me and to the success of MLEA.

Sincerely,



J. H. D. SOLOMON