Coast Guard COOL
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Contact Info

Contact the Education and Training Quota Management Command's (ETQC) voluntary credentialing office at ETQC-SMB-CGCOOL@USCG.MIL or 757-756-5300.

CG COOL Website

Where can I go to see what credentials are available?

- The Coast Guard COOL website (https://www.cool.osd.mil/uscg/index.htm) lists all available credentials a service member can pursue.
- The CG COOL website is updated on a regular basis.

What if the credential I want to earn is not on Coast Guard COOL?

- If a credential is not listed on CG COOL, submit a request to CGCOOL@USCG.MIL and include certification name and credentialing agency's website.

What if I receive approval, then the credential is removed from the CG COOL website, can I still pursue the credential if it was already approved by ETQC?

- Yes. If the request is authorized by ETQC in MyCG ED, then the credential will be reimbursed.

Coverage

What if I have a previously earned a credential, will the Voluntary Credentialing Program (VCP) Credentialing Assistance (CA) cover the renewal, membership, or fees associated with the previously earned credential?

- Yes. ETQC will fund the renewal/membership fees as long as all eligibility criteria are met IAW COMDINST 1540.10.

I previously paid for the credential, can I be reimbursed for it?

- No. Members must receive approval from ETQC prior to paying for any type of fees.
- Additional funding may be available from: CG Foundation Grant, CGMA, GI Bill.

How will I know if I am ready to take the exam?

- Some agencies require specific education, training, and/or work experience. Members must review the CG COOL website and agency website before submitting a credentialing assistance request to ensure they meet the credentialing agency's requirements.

Does Credentialing Assistance (CA) cover preparation and training material?

- No, CA will not cover preparation materials and training courses. The CG COOL site and ETQC portal provides funding options for preparation materials and training courses.
- CA does not cover courses, training, study guides, etc.

Credentialing Basics

What is the official policy document for the Voluntary Credentialing Program (VCP) Credentialing Assistance (CA)?

- COMDTINST 1540.10 (10 Jan 2020)

Are there any lifetime credit maximums or annual caps?

- No. However, CA is funded on a first come first served basis and only two per fiscal year.

Is there a point in the FY that ETQC will stop taking applications?

- Yes. ETQC will follow the established year-end guidelines for financial obligations and will post end-of-year deadlines to submit CA requests in MyCG Ed and the CG COOL sites.

What will happen if there is no longer funding for Credentialing Assistance?

- Applications will be approved on a first-come first-served basis. If there is a funding shortfall, the fleet will be notified.

Can I use Tuition Assistance (TA) and Credentialing Assistance (CA) at the same time?

- Yes. You can use both TA and CA at the same time as long as you meet the eligibility requirements for both programs.
- Tuition Assistance and Credentialing Assistance are two separate pots of money.

What is the difference between certifications on the CG COOL site and academic certificates funded by tuition assistance (TA)?

- The Credentialing Assistance (CA) program is for certifications and licensures earned through state/local/public/private organizations and agencies (not academic institutions).
- Academic certificates are funded by TA and earned at eligible academic institutions. TA does not fund credentials listed on the CG COOL website.

What documentation needs to be submitted in order to apply for CA?

- Submit application request in MyCG Ed and your ESO and ETQC will verify eligibility in Direct Access.
- In the event your "Person Profile" in Direct Access is missing information, you may be requested to submit additional documentation to verify eligibility.
- Note: Completed degrees/certificates/certifications must be reported and entered in Direct Access.

Can member apply for a credential not related to rating?

- Yes. When completing the application in MyCG ED, select the appropriate response. The credential must be related to rating, career specialty, out-of-rate assignment, collateral duty or academic degree.

What if SELRES member has a different civilian occupation than rating? Can they apply for a certification tied to their civilian occupation?

- Yes. When completing the application in MyCG Ed, select "career."

How do I apply for Credentialing Assistance?

Follow the 5 Easy Steps:
1. **Find and Select Related Credential –** At the CG COOL site https://www.cool.osd.mil/uscg/index.htm use the "Go to: Rating or Navigator" or "Full Credential Search" to see how your Coast Guard training and experience match up with civilian credentials. Learn about selected credential requirements and contact the credentialing agency to validate that you meet their eligibility criteria. Meet with your Education Services Officer (ESO) during this first step.
2. **Request Approval via MyCG Ed** - Apply for credentialing assistance (CA) via MyCG Ed at https://myeducation.netc.navy.mil. Applications for CA must be submitted 14 calendar days prior to exam date or incurring any fees.
3. **Pay for Approved Fees** - Upon receipt of CA authorization from ETQC, proceed to pay for approved credentialing fees. Once payment is made, upload a copy of the receipt, along with an electronically endorsed Request for Miscellaneous Reimbursement (OF-1164) to MyCG Ed within 30 calendar days of payment.
4. **Get your Credential -** Upon CA authorization approval and payment of fees, complete the credentialing requirements (i.e. take exam) through the credentialing agency. Provide ETQC with exam results within 90 calendar days of CA authorization.
5. **Report Results -** Upload a legible copy of your completed credential to MyCG Ed within 30 calendar days of attainment.

What if I need to make a change to the exam date or amount on the approved CA request?

- Before command approval, you can make changes in MyCG Ed under "Review Applications" at https://myeducation.netc.navy.mil. After command approval, send an email to ETQC-SMB-CGCOOL@USCG.MIL to request changes or cancellations.

Reporting Results

Do I have to report the exam results to ETQC?

- Yes. IAW COMDTINST 1540.10, submit exam results (pass/fail) within 90 calendar days of initial CA authorization (upload in MyCG Ed or email to ETQC). Submit copy of credential within 30 calendar days of credential attainment (upload in MyCG Ed or email to ETQC).

- ETQC will enter the earned credential into Direct Access and Joint Service Transcript.

Reimbursement and Repayment

Does the member receive reimbursement or is the credentialing agency paid directly?

- After receiving approval/authorization in MyCG Ed, the member must pay the fees first and then submit receipt and OF-1164 to be reimbursed.

How long does it take to receive reimbursement?

- ETQC will forward the request and all supporting documentation to CG FINANCE Center within 3 business days of receiving the completed documents from member. It takes about two weeks for member to receive the reimbursement via direct deposit.

Do I request reimbursement for each fee?

- You should include all fees associated with the one credential in one application

Do I repay CA if I do not pass?

- No. You do not need to repay CA; however, you will not be able to use CA for the same credential again.

If I fail the exam, can I apply for CA for the same credential in the next FY?

- No. If you do not pass the exam (and receive reimbursement), you are not eligible to request CA for same credential next FY.

Is there a waiver process for Credentialing Assistance?

- Submit waiver request to Education and Training Quota Management Command at ETQC-SMB-CGCOOL@USCG.MIL for review and consideration.

What if I applied for a credential and it crossed fiscal years (FY), what year does it count for?

- It counts toward the FY the financial obligation (reimbursement) was processed.

Will the program only reimburse for CG$ logos on the CG COOL site?

- All credentials listed on CG COOL can be reimbursed if member is eligible.
- Members may request that a credential be added to CG COOL by writing the CG COOL mailbox CGCOOL@uscg.mil

Eligibility

Who is eligible for Credentialing Assistance (CA)?

- CA is available to eligible active duty <u>enlisted</u> members and <u>enlisted</u> SELRES. Review COMDINST 1540.10 for specific criteria.

I am a SELRES member and would like to use CA. Is there anything specific that I need to do?

- Yes. Upload a point statement in MyCG Ed in addition to following the 5 Easy Steps.

- Members of the SELRES who are drilling reservists and have made satisfactory progress in the current anniversary year and have met the participation standards for the previous anniversary year are eligible.

What documentation needs to be submitted in order to apply for Credentialing Assistance (CA)?

- The ESO and ETQC will verify eligibility in Direct Access.
- If your "Person Profile" in Direct Access is missing information, additional documentation may be requested to verify eligibility.
  Note: Completed degrees/certificates/certifications must be reported and entered in Direct Access IAW ACN 050/19

Are there any specific eligibility requirements for Credentialing Assistance (CA)?

- CA is available to enlisted personnel.
- SELRES members who meet partition standards including current readiness metrics for the previous 12 months. A point statement will need to be uploaded into MyCG Ed.
- Service members must be in compliance with Weight and Body Fat Standards
- Marked "Ready" or "Not Ready" on Enlisted Employee Reviews
- Members must have at least 6 months remaining on their service obligation

Are there any disqualifiers for Credentialing Assistance (CA)?

- Service members with any misconduct, to include court-martial punishment, judicial punishment, non-judicial punishment within the last 12 months.
- Service members must not be awaiting a punitive discharge, in confinement, on appellate leave, or awaiting administrative separation
- Service members convicted by foreign or domestic courts, serving sentences in foreign prisons, or administrative vice punitive discharges will be deemed ineligible for CA.

Military to Mariner (M2M)

Does the Credentialing Assistance program pay for TWIC fees?

- Yes. Submit application request in MyCG ED.

What if I have questions about M2M credentials?

- Contact the M2M program office at CGM2M@USCG.MIL to review options for military to mariner credentials.

Credentialing Resources

Where can I find more information about the Voluntary Credentialing Program (VCP) and the Credentialing Assistance (CA) process?

- CG COOL website - https://www.cool.osd.mil/uscg/index.htm

- ETQC portal page - https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/forcecom/ETQC/SitePages/Home.aspx

- VCP Policy - COMDTINST 1540.10
  https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/forcecom/ETQC/Documents/Document%20Links/COMDINST1540.10.pdf

- ALCOAST Commandant Notice (ACN) announcing the promulgation of VCP Policy -
  https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/forcecom/ETQC/Documents/Document%20Links/ACN%20008-20.txt

ESO Guidance

When should ESO's approve the member's request in MyCG Ed?

- All application requests must be approved by the ESO in MyCG ED prior to 14 days from the exam date. It is recommended that member submit their request at least 30 days in advance.

How long does it typically take ETQC to authorize the request?

- After command/ESO approval, ETQC will authorize the request within 3 business days and/or contact the member for more information. If the application is for a M2M credential, it might take longer for final authorization.

Will ESOs be required to submit a memo before signing as a command approver?

- No. As long as they are designated as ESOs, they are eligible to approve the request.

How do ESO's verify the member's eligibility?

- Review the ESO user guide at the ETQC portal site for detailed instructions.