



Coast Guard City Program

Application and Recertification Guidance

Background

The Coast Guard City program recognizes communities that support local Coast Guard members. A city, municipality, or county (hereafter referred to only as “city”) earns the designation “Coast Guard City” or “Coast Guard Community” by making special efforts to acknowledge the professional work of the Coast Guard men and women assigned to their area. Coast Guard Cities regularly reach out to Coast Guard personnel and their families and make them feel at home in their “home away from home.” The city’s efforts illustrate a longstanding and enduring relationship with an emphasis on considerations the community has made for the members of the Coast Guard family.

Application Process

- The Standing Board for the Coast Guard City program will convene twice a year to consider new and recertification applications, July and December.
- All applications received from January through June will be considered during the July board meeting.
- All applications received from July through November will be considered during the December board meeting.

Application Packages

Application packages must include the following:

- A letter from the mayor, city manager, or county executive describing community-wide outreach and support of the local Coast Guard unit(s).
- Letters of support from unit and district Coast Guard offices.
- A separate 2-page minimum bulleted document listing specific examples of actions the community has taken and events it has sponsored to reach out to Coast Guard personnel welcoming them into the community and embracing them in a full community partnership.
- Letters of support from local, city, and state government offices.
- Unique examples of the city’s efforts of outreach and support.
- 5-10 photographs from community events and ceremonies.

Additionally, successful applications often include letters of support from other organizations that take part in the community’s efforts to welcome the Coast Guard. Examples include:

Chambers of Commerce; non-government organizations (e.g., Navy League); civic organizations (e.g., Lions, Kiwanis); corporate entities; police, sheriff, fire, and EMS departments; educational organizations; and prominent individuals. The applying city should collect these letters and include them in the final application package. The Coast Guard City program office will not read unsolicited letters of support.

Taken as a whole, a city's application should demonstrate a broad range of activities, programs, and actions that demonstrate an unusual and sustained level of support for local Coast Guard members and their families. Although specific examples will be unique to local needs and resources, several common examples are given below. The request should specify which groups or organizations within the community are responsible for, or participate in, the initiatives.

Strong applications include tangible examples of the city's participation in or support for many of the following:

- Support for Morale, Well-Being, and Recreation (MWR) events.
- Support for education/scholarship programs.
- Availability of community support services to Coast Guard members and their families.
- Sponsorship of Sailor of the Quarter, Sailor of the Year, Recruiter of the Year, or other similar types of awards.
- Demonstrations of sensitivity to life-altering events within the Coast Guard community including expressions of congratulations for weddings and newborns or expressions of sympathy for deaths and other family tragedies.
- Sponsorship of community patriotic events that specifically include members of the Coast Guard family. These events could include, but are not limited to, Memorial Day picnics, 4th of July picnics, Armed Forces Day events, Veterans Day observances, Coast Guard Birthday events, etc.
- Offer military or Coast Guard "days" within the business community, at local sporting events, and other entertainment events.
- City-Coast Guard partnerships in community-based projects including law enforcement, fire, and EMS projects; civic organizational projects; food drives; home building projects; educational projects; etc.
- Establishing monuments, memorials, commemorations, or other tangible forms of public recognition.

Beginning January 2019, the Coast Guard City program will no longer accept hard copy submissions. All submissions should be electronic. They should be submitted via email to Gwenda.E.Bradford@uscg.mil.

Review Process

A standing board comprised of representatives from the offices of the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Governmental and Public Affairs, Judge Advocate General and Chief Counsel, and Human Resources review all applications and make recommendations to the Commandant. The Commandant makes the final determination.

Upon the Commandant's approval, the Coast Guard will notify the appropriate congressional committees of the new designation. This step initiates a required 30-day waiting period. With no dissent from the committees, the designation "Coast Guard City" or "Coast Guard Community" becomes official. The Coast Guard will then send a signed proclamation to the local command for presentation to the city, and cities are encouraged to organize ceremonies or celebrations where official announcements may be made.

Notification Letters

After the Board submits its recommendations, and the Commandant approves, the Coast Guard City program office will prepare letters announcing the Coast Guard's intent to approve the designation "Coast Guard City" to the city's mayor; the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. These letters will be distributed no later than 10 days after the Commandant's approval.

Acceptance Packages

The Coast Guard City program office will develop the acceptance package, which will be sent to the District POC within 15 days of the 30-day waiting period expiring with no dissent from the committees. Original hard copies will be mailed, and a PDF of the package will be emailed to the District POC.

The acceptance package will consist of the following items:

- Proclamation
 - Drafted by Coast Guard City program office and signed by Commandant
- Personal letter of congratulations to city from Commandant
 - Drafted by Coast Guard City program office and signed by Commandant
- Digest (*for USCG use only, not to be forwarded to the city*)
 - Drafted by Coast Guard City program office and contains:
 - Contact name, mailing address, email, and phone number for the new Coast Guard City's point of contact
 - 1–3 bullets on new Coast Guard City's application package
 - 1–3 bullets about the Coast Guard City program

Once the District POC receives the acceptance package, he or she will add to the package the following:

- Personal letter of congratulations to city from District Commander
 - Drafted by District and signed by District Commander

Via phone call, the District will notify the new Coast Guard City of its acceptance into the program within five days of receiving the acceptance package and will identify a mutually-acceptable date for a formal, public announcement/event where the District/local unit will present the proclamation and letters in person.

The Coast Guard City program office will send the Digest to USCG Congressional Affairs, which will draft letters of notification to be sent to local, state, and federal legislative delegations within 15 days of the 30-day waiting period expiring.

Recertification Procedures

The “Coast Guard City” designation remains effective for five years. After that time, the city must provide an updated package for recertification. The recertification process helps ensure the designation remains accurate and meaningful.

The Coast Guard will notify cities approximately 12 months before the expiration of their five-year term. To recertify, **a city must provide a recertification package on or before the first week of June of the concluding year** describing its on-going relationship with the Coast Guard with examples of recent programs and projects. The Coast Guard City board will convene and review the recertification package. If approved, the city’s status as a “Coast Guard City” will be renewed for another five-year term.

The recertification application should demonstrate a vibrant and ongoing commitment to the Coast Guard personnel in the community. The city must provide a copy of its recertification package to the local Coast Guard unit(s), which will review the request and forward it to the Coast Guard City program office with an endorsement.

A recertification application package must include the following:

- All of the same requirements for a first-time application.
- Material stating how the city intends to continue the relationship.
- Materials demonstrating how the “Coast Guard City” moniker is used to help promote the Coast Guard (as opposed to promoting the city).

If a city’s recertification package is determined not to meet the high standard set for Coast Guard Cities, a provisional denial letter will be sent to the city and the local Coast Guard unit(s). The city will have 45 days to resubmit its recertification package. If the Coast Guard does not receive an updated application after 45 days, the city will lose its designation as a “Coast Guard City.”

If the city chooses not to recertify, the designation of “Coast Guard City” will be withdrawn with 60-days’ notification to the city. Within that time the city must remove the designation from any signs, letterheads, websites, etc.

FAQs

Can more than one local jurisdiction share a “Coast Guard City” designation?

In areas with more than one local jurisdiction (such as a city, county, and township), one municipality must be selected to receive the Coast Guard City designation.

Can a Coast Guard unit nominate its host community as a Coast Guard City?

No. The application must come from the city itself. Local units may educate the host community about the program and help local leaders obtain more information on how to apply. Ultimately, the community, independent of the local command, should undertake the initiative. As part of the internal review process, the Coast Guard City board will ask local commands for their input.

My city was recently named a “Coast Guard City/Community,” and I would like to incorporate the Coast Guard emblem into signs, flags, displays, etc. Does the “Coast Guard City/Community” designation allow me full use of the logo?

No. Any use of protected Coast Guard logos, emblems, or words must be approved by Coast Guard Trademark Office. For more information, please contact the Coast Guard’s Office of Community Relations at 202-372-4640 or Trademark@uscg.mil.

For more information

If you have additional questions, please contact the Coast Guard’s Office of Community Relations at 202-372-4625.