



## **PACIFIC COAST MARINE FIREMEN, OILERS, WIPERS AND WATERTENDERS ASSOCIATION**

The Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association, also known as the Marine Firemen's Union, or MFOW, is a labor organization that represents unlicensed engine department merchant mariners aboard U.S.-flag ships. The MFOW was formed October 1883 in San Francisco, California. The founding members were firemen on Pacific Coast coal-burning steamships. The MFOW dispatches merchant mariners who hold the national ratings of Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, Pump Technician/Machinist, Junior Engineer, Oiler, Boiler Technician/Watertender and Wiper; and the STCW ratings of Able Seafarer-Engine (AS-E) and Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch (RFPEW).

### **ENTRY LEVEL JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

If you have mechanical and/or electrical aptitude, and would like to work on the high seas, a career working as a merchant mariner through the MFOW may be for you. Our members work all over the globe. Unlike many other fields, the U.S. Merchant Marine accepts applicants without college degrees. For those who want to jump straight into work, an entry-level position with the MFOW, as an engine department merchant mariner, is an appealing option.

### **HOW TO BECOME AN ENTRY-LEVEL WIPER**

In order to be dispatched to a job through an MFOW hiring hall, you will need the following:

- Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)
- U.S. Passport; or foreign passport if a permanent resident
- Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) endorsed with the:
  - Entry-Level National Rating of Wiper
  - STCW Basic Training (BT)
  - STCW Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties (VPDSD)
- STCW Two-Year Medical Certificate
- Printout of DOT-approved Drug Screen (within six months)

1. The first step is to acquire a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). To receive a TWIC, an applicant must pass rigorous FBI and Department of Homeland Security background checks. Information on obtaining a TWIC can be found on the Transportation Security Administration website at:

**<https://www.tsa.gov/twic/>**

2. Next, if you are a U.S. citizen, you will need a U.S. Passport. If you are not a U.S. citizen, but hold a Permanent Resident Card (PRC), you will need a foreign passport. Information on obtaining a U.S. Passport can be found on the U.S. Department of State website at:

**<https://travel.state.gov/>**

3. Third, you need to acquire an entry-level U.S. Merchant Mariner's Credential (MMC). The entry-level endorsements are Wiper (engine), Ordinary Seafarer (deck) and Food Handler (steward).

- a. To receive an entry-level MMC, you must pass a vision and physical fitness test. This is done by having a physician complete Form CG-719K/E - Application for Medical Certificate, Short Form.
- b. You must also pass a drug screening using Form CG-719P - DOT/USCG Periodic Drug Testing Form.
- c. You must also complete Form CG-719B - Application for Merchant Mariner Credential.

All of these forms and instructions can be found on the NMC website at:

**[https://www.dco.uscg.mil/national\\_maritime\\_center/](https://www.dco.uscg.mil/national_maritime_center/)**

4. There are two training courses that must be completed in order to ship out with the MFOW.

a. STCW Basic Training (BT) – This is a 40-hour course that covers First Aid and CPR, Basic Fire Fighting, Personal Survival Techniques, and Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities.

b. STCW Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties (VPDSD) – This is an 8-hour course that provides sufficient knowledge to undertake the duties assigned under a Vessel Security Plan (VSP).

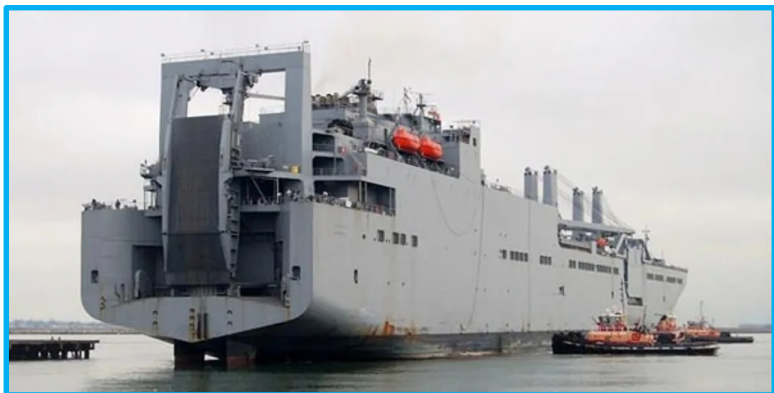
You can search Coast Guard-approved course locations at the aforementioned NMC website or at the following Maritime Institute website:

**<https://maritimeinstitute.com/>**

The approximate out-of-pocket cost to acquire all of these items are as follows:

• TWIC	=	\$	124
• U.S. Passport	=	\$	165
• Coast Guard-approved Physical Exam	=	\$	160
• DOT-approved Drug Screen	=	\$	60
• MMC	=	\$	140
• STCW BT Training	=		\$ 1,350
• STCW VPDS Training	=	\$	325
<b>Total</b>	=		<b>\$ 2,324</b>

Depending on where you take the training courses, you may also incur transportation and lodging costs. This may appear to be a lot of money to get started, but you will easily recover these costs on your first week or two on a ship.



### THE HIRING HALL

The Marine Firemen's Union dispatches members and non-seniority applicants to billets aboard vessels operated by contracted shipping

companies. The union utilizes a seniority-based rotary dispatch system. The selection and eventual membership status of non-seniority applicants is determined by the union on an as needed basis. The jobs calls are held at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the following hiring hall locations:

**San Francisco Bay Area Hiring Hall**

Marine Firemen's Union  
240 2nd Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Dispatch: 415-362-7593

**Los Angeles/Long Beach Hiring Hall**

Marine Firemen's Union  
533 N. North Marine Avenue, Suite B  
Wilmington, CA 90744  
Dispatch: 310-830-0470

**Honolulu Hiring Hall**

Marine Firemen's Union  
707 Alakea Street, Suite 102  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Dispatch: 808-538-6077

**Puget Sound Hiring Hall**

Sailors' Union of the Pacific  
4005 - 20th Avenue West, Suite 115  
Seattle, WA 98199  
Dispatch: 206-467-7944

When a sea-going billet becomes available to you, you will be sent to a medical center for a physical exam and given instructions on when and where to report for duty.

Once you become a member, you will have the opportunity to enjoy the following:

- Defined Benefit Pension
- Defined Contribution Pension
- Advancement Training
- Health Care (California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington)

For additional information, go to:

**[www.mfoww.org](http://www.mfoww.org)**

