



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 MFWOW, is a labor organization that represents unlicensed engine department merchant mariners aboard US-flag ships. The MFWOW was formed October 1883 in San Francisco, California. The founding members were firemen on Pacific Coast coal-burning steamships. The MFWOW 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 MFWOW may be for you. Our members work all over the globe. Unlike many other fields, the US Merchant Marine accepts applicants without college degrees. For those who want to jump straight into work, an entry-level position with the MFWOW, 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 MFWOW hiring hall, you will need the following:

- Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)
- US 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 US citizen, you will need a US Passport. If you are not a US citizen, but hold a Permanent Resident Card (PRC), you will need a foreign passport. Information on obtaining a US Passport can be found on the US Department of State website at:

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

3. Third, you need to acquire an entry-level US 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/

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

- 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	=	\$	125
• US Passport	=	\$	165
• Coast Guard-approved Physical Exam	=	\$	160
• DOT-approved Drug Screen	=	\$	60
• MMC	=	\$	140
• STCW BT Training	=		\$ 1,450
• STCW VPDSD Training	=	\$	325
Total	=		\$ 2,325

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 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

