

Instructions and Background Information for Southeast Alaska Pilots' Association Trainee Applicants

This information is provided to assist potential applicants in their understanding of the Southeast Alaska Pilots' Association (SEAPA) and the requirements for becoming a State of Alaska licensed marine pilot in Southeast Alaska.

SEAPA was established in 1971 and has its office in Ketchikan, Alaska. Our pilots are charged by the state to protect life, property, and the marine environment in Southeast Alaska. We typically pilot cruise ships, bulk cargo vessels, and large yachts. Cruise vessels comprise the vast majority of our traffic; cruising in Alaska is very popular with approximately 1.4 million cruise passengers expected to move through the region in 2020. These ships are in the region from May through September, and accordingly all of our pilots work full-time through the summer.

SEAPA's region stretches from Dixon Entrance to Cape Spencer plus Yakutat Bay, an area with 11,000 nautical miles of shoreline including National Parks, National Forest, National Monuments, and critical habitat areas. Southeast Alaska experiences large tides and tidal currents, dramatic weather with strong winds any time of year, and frequently reduced visibility. As with most of Alaska our working grounds are generally remote from civilization and support resources.

SEAPA pilots are independent contractors who operate in association to facilitate dispatch, safety, and efficiency in the provision of pilotage services. Pilots are responsible for their own business licensing and other expenses, retirement, and medical insurance.

Training for new pilots is arduous, beginning with the need to obtain a Federal pilotage endorsement for the entire region, passing State examinations, and completing over 100 supervised maneuvers. The training program is unfunded. Initial training takes between two and four years depending on the status of the trainee. An additional three years' experience as a Deputy Marine Pilot is required before becoming a fully licensed Marine Pilot.

It is extremely important that potential applicants ensure that they are eligible to obtain Federal Pilotage in Southeast Alaska. The specific requirements are spelled out in the pilotage package published by the USCG Officer in Charge of Marine Inspection, Southeast Alaska, which is available on the SEAPA website.

Pilotage in Alaska is governed by Alaska statute AS 08.62 and administrative code 12 AAC 56. Applicants are encouraged to review and familiarize themselves with these requirements, as well as the SEAPA training manuals available on this web page.

Applicants should pay close attention to the qualifying criteria and documentation requirements. Incomplete applications will be returned with a letter explaining the deficiencies. Applications will only be accepted on the SEAPA application form, including all required documentation and the application fee. All applications must be emailed on or before February 15, 2020 to seapa.training@gmail.com. Applicants are responsible for all costs associated with completion and submission of applications. An investigation of applicant background history will be conducted. The application fee of \$50.00 is for the processing of applications, background checks, experience verification, etcetera, and is non-refundable.

An applicant meeting the qualifying criteria will be informed of their status as a trainee candidate, and be kept informed of details concerning the selection exams. The agility test, written examination, and bridge simulations will be conducted during the week of April 6, 2020 at Pacific Maritime Institute in Seattle, Washington. Potential candidates must be available during the entire week. The costs of the agility test and the simulation exams will be borne by the candidate, as well as travel expenses required to attend the exams. The actual cost for the simulation exam will be conveyed to the candidates once it is known how many people are taking the test.

Questions should be directed in writing to seapa.training@gmail.com. Responses will be posted on the SEAPA website under frequently asked questions (FAQ), and available for all applicants to view.

In accordance with AS 08.62.175(c)(4) and 12 AAC 56.310(c)(2), the Association's policy is to follow a uniform, fair, open, and non-discriminatory process of trainee selection.