

Sea-time for Engineering Licenses

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License or Certificate	Sea-time (8-hour days) 3-watch System	Sea-time (12-hour days) 2-watch System
Watchstanding Q.M.E.D. - Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch ³	6 months ¹ of “approved seagoing service under training”.	4 months ¹ of “approved seagoing service under training”.
Designated Duty Engineer - <1,000 H.P. ⁴	12 months (6 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)	8 months (4 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)
Designated Duty Engineer - <4,000 H.P. ⁴	24 months (12 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)	16 months (8 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)
Designated Duty Engineer - Any H.P. ⁵	36 months (18 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)	24 months (12 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)
Assistant Engineer - Limited (Oceans) ⁶	36 months ² (18 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)	24 months ² (12 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent)
Chief Engineer - Limited (Near Coastal) ⁶	48 months ² (24 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent & 12 months as a licensed engineer)	32 months ² (16 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent & 8 months as a licensed engineer)
Chief Engineer - Limited (Oceans) ⁶	60 months ² (30 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent & 24 months as a licensed engineer)	40 months ² (20 months as Q.M.E.D. or equivalent & 16 months as a licensed engineer)

Note 1: this service time **must** have been on vessels of over 1,000 h.p.

Note 2: half of the service **must** be on vessels of 4,000 h.p. or more, or a h.p. limitation will apply. See 46 CFR 10.503 for h.p. limitations.

Note 3: this is an STCW Convention designation.

Note 4: limited to vessels of ≤500 GRT on Near Coastal, Great Lakes and Inland waters (as specified in 46 CFR § 10.501).

Note 5: limited to vessels of ≤500 GRT on **any** waters (as specified in 46 CFR § 10.501).

Note 6: may serve on vessels of any gross tons on Inland waters and limited to vessels of ≤1,600 GRT on Ocean, Near Coastal or Great Lakes waters.

The table above shows the minimum sea-time required to qualify for the licenses contained in Title 46, Chapter I, Part 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (specifically, 46 CFR § 10.518 thru 10.524). These regulations are based on standing eight hours of engineering watch per day in a three-watch system and, because of

this, they don't reflect the reality of working on the vast majority of towing vessels, which operate nearly exclusively on the two-watch system. To remedy that the column for 12-hour days in the two-watch system has been provided for comparison.

This table shows the minimum amount of actual *elapsed* calendar time, which factors in both the time spent at work and the time spent at home between work tours, needed to qualify to test for Q.M.E.D. and all of the different licenses based upon the industry-standard "equal-time" schedule of one day off for each day worked. This often takes the form of a 2 weeks-on / 2 weeks-off schedule, although schedules of 3 weeks-on / 3 weeks-off or even 30 days-on / 30 days-off are also used. Also included is the "two for one" schedule of working two days to earn one day off, or 2:1, that is prevalent in the Gulf of Mexico and Gulf Coast region. This typically takes the form of a four weeks-on / two weeks-off schedule.

License or Certificate	Equal-time Schedule	Two-for-one Schedule
Watchstanding Q.M.E.D. - Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch ⁷	8 months	6 months
Designated Duty Engineer - <1,000 H.P.	1 year & 4 months (including 8 months as Q.M.E.D.)	11 months (including 6 months as Q.M.E.D.)
Designated Duty Engineer - <4,000 H.P.	2 years & 8 months (including 1 year & 4 months as Q.M.E.D.)	1 year & 10 months (including 11 months as Q.M.E.D.)
Designated Duty Engineer - Any H.P.	4 years (including 2 years as Q.M.E.D.)	2 years & 8 months (including 1 year & 4 months as Q.M.E.D.)
Assistant Engineer - Limited (Oceans)	4 years (including 2 years as Q.M.E.D.)	2 years & 8 months (including 1 year & 4 months as Q.M.E.D.)
Chief Engineer - Limited (Near Coastal)	5 years & 4 months (including 2 years & 8 months as Q.M.E.D.)	3 years & 7 months (including 1 year & 10 months as Q.M.E.D.)
Chief Engineer - Limited (Oceans)	6 years & 8 months (including 3 years & 4 months as Q.M.E.D.)	4 years & 6 months (including 2 years & 3 months as Q.M.E.D.)

Note 7: this is an STCW Convention designation.