

A decorative graphic in the top right corner featuring a white, angular shape that resembles a stylized ship or a piece of paper, with a blue and white trail behind it, set against a green and blue background.

## Deepwater port pre-application meeting guidance

12 December 2019

The United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) have issued a [new notice](#) regarding the timing and substance of deepwater port pre-application meetings. The guidance encourages potential applicants for a license to own, construct, or operate a deepwater port under the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 to meet with MARAD and USCG staff throughout the preparation of and prior to submitting an application.

The first recommended meeting should occur at least six months before submission of an application. At this early meeting, potential applicants are encouraged to provide an overview of their proposed project, discuss the details of the application and licensing process with the agencies, and introduce key personnel.

MARAD and the USCG also recommend scheduling additional meetings with the agencies periodically throughout the application process. These recommended status meetings and work sessions allow potential applicants to address questions and review progress with the agencies.

Finally, two weeks before submitting a deepwater port license application, MARAD and the USCG recommend that applicants hold a final pre-application kick-off meeting to ensure all parties understand their roles and responsibilities and are ready to initiate the application process. This kick-off meeting should include MARAD, the USCG, the potential applicant, and a third-party environmental consultant (if applicable). Parties intending to use the USCG's third-party environmental contract mechanism should do so in advance of this kick-off meeting so the third-party environmental consultant can participate. The agencies recommend the kick-off meeting include discussion of the proposed final project description; the applicant's plans for application submittal; the federal application review process, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) evaluation and risk assessment process; administrative items such as points of contact and the Federal Docket Management System; and preliminary scoping plans for purposes of NEPA and other related laws. Additional information regarding the Deepwater Port Act application and review process can be found on MARAD's [website](#).

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