



## “Guide to US Entry”

### Before Arrival

#### **Step 1 - Visas and Passports**

Whether arriving with passengers, owners, or crew, EVERYONE entering the United States is required to have a valid Passport. Crew must also have a valid B1/B2 for the US, specific to the vessel they are entering and employed upon, in addition to a valid Passport (not due to expire before the vessel is due to leave). Generally, Embassies do not like to issue visas to applicants who are not a resident of the country where the Embassy is located, as they don't feel they have enough knowledge of the applicant's history. So, it's best if the application is made in their home country. If they don't have a Visa, they must have an I-94. A Visa Waiver will NOT allow a non-US citizen or Legal Resident entry except by commercial carrier (airline).

To obtain a US Visa, send your crewmember to a US Embassy with a letter of employment on yacht letterhead stating:

- Their name, position and brief duties
- The name of the yacht
- The yacht's flag and official number
- Where the yacht will cruise
- The reason they will need the visa

We suggest they also take a copy of the MIA SF Letter when they apply for their visa, to help them get the B1/B2 instead of a C1/D. The letter is available at <http://yachtchangers.com/departments/yacht-agent/>

#### **Step 2 – TWIC – Transportation Worker Identification Credential**

From January 13, 2009, the Maritime Transportation Security Act requires that ‘anyone needing unescorted access to a secure area of a port or facility must carry a biometric ID card.’ However, from September 25, 2008, all mariners will require the TWIC in order for their USCG license to remain valid. The cost is \$132.50. For complete info, go to [www.tsa.gov/twic](http://www.tsa.gov/twic)

#### **Step 3 – Advance Notice of Arrival (Section 160.202, 160.203 available at <https://enoad.nvmc.uscg.gov/>)**

**Time Sensitivity:** If the voyage is less than 96 hours in duration, but greater than 24 hours, you must report before leaving the foreign port. If the voyage is less than 24 hours, you must report 24 hours prior to arrival. If weather causes a delay more than 6 hours, you must report the change. If NOA is not filed, USCG may require the vessel to remain outside US waters until sufficient information is provided.

#### **Applicability:**

All ‘Commercial’ vessels and vessels over 300GRT entering the US must electronically report an Advance Notice of Arrival to the National Vessel Movement Center, which fulfills vessel reporting requirements for both the USCG and Customs and Border Protection, via <http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov>. To file electronically, the master, owner, agent, or person in charge of the vessel must create an account, so have all your vessel documents and crew passports handy, and expect to spend some time setting it up the first time. (Note – filing electronically, regardless of whether you are required to file electronically, is the way to go. Once your profile is set up on NVMC, it is much easier than filing locally, but [here are the forms](#) in MS Excel format if you prefer.)

Also, all foreign registered vessels entering the USCG 7<sup>th</sup> District (Key West to Fort Pierce, Florida) MUST report NOA.

US recreational vessels are exempt from filing. For the USCG, ‘Recreational’ means if under 100T, carrying a maximum of 6 passengers; if over 100T, carrying a maximum of 12 passengers. US registered vessels that exceed those limits are considered ‘Commercial’.



#### **Step 4 - Water Pollution Certificate (300GRT+)**

All vessels over 300GRT must prove that they have insurance in case of damage due to pollution, etc, by obtaining a Water Pollution Certificate from the National Pollution Fund Center. (<https://npfc.uscg.mil/COFR/default.aspx>) The application is \$150US and the certificate is \$80US.

### **Upon Arrival**

#### **Step 5 - Call Customs and Border Protection**

Immediately upon entry to US waters (within 6 hours of arrival) you must call **(800) 432-1216** or **(305) 536-4758**, ext. 213 (south Florida entries) to report your entry to Customs and obtain an arrival number. You will need the yacht registration info as well as guest and passenger passport info on hand.

#### **Step 6 - Clear Immigration & Passport Control at CBP**

Within 24 hours or arriving into US waters, EVERYONE on board must physically go to any Customs and Border Protection branch with their passports, visas, I-94s, etc. If you arrive into the US and cannot reach immigration at the port due to their hours or manning, you must clear immigration at the General Air Facility of the airport, or go to the Executive Airport off Commercial Boulevard. We suggest you bring the MIA SF letter with you, as it may help educate the officers, should they be unfamiliar with yacht crew traveling on the B1/B2 Visa.

#### **Step 7 - Clear Vessel at CBP**

Within two working days (48 hours) of arrival, you must also make 'formal entry' at the Marine Unit of a CBP Branch, with your arrival number, vessel documents, and CBP Form numbers listed below. If you have filed a NOA electronically, CBP will already have most of this information from you. Regardless, you can obtain these forms from CBP:

1300 – vessel manifest

1303 – ships stores declaration

1304 – crew effects

I-418 – crew and passenger list

I-529 – currency declaration

ATF Form 6 – firearms declaration

Notice – the 7<sup>th</sup> District does not clear private vessels on the weekend. This is why the time limit is two working days (48 hours) for the vessel, but only 24 hours for the crew and passengers.

#### **Step 8 - User Fee Decal**

If the vessel is US registered, or is foreign registered but does not have/qualify for a Cruising Permit/License, then a User Fee Decal must be obtained for \$19-\$37USD, depending on the vessel size.

#### **Step 9 – Cruising License/Permit (Optional)**

Most foreign registered yachts may obtain a Cruising License/Permit at the Marine Unit of CBP after making formal entry to the US. It's good for 12 months, is renewable by exiting the US for 15+ days, and makes 'formal clearance' after the first entry unnecessary, however the phone call to CBP is still required.

#### **Step 10 – Local Boater Option (Optional)**

US Citizens and Legal Residents, once registered with CBP as "Local Boaters" ([download form here](#)) can clear customs by phoning in. However, if anyone aboard is not a US Citizen or Legal Resident, they still must clear in person.



#### Resources:

##### **National Vessel Movement Center**

The NVMC provides assistance 24 hours per day, 7 days a week by phone, email, or fax.

Phone Number: (800) 708-9823 or (304) 264-2502

Email Address: [sans@nvmc.uscg.gov](mailto:sans@nvmc.uscg.gov)

Fax Number: (800) 547-8724 or (304) 264-2684

Tech Support: [techsupport@nvmc.uscg.gov](mailto:techsupport@nvmc.uscg.gov)

e-NOA <http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov>

FAQs <http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov/NVMC/Faq.aspx>

CFR160 NOA <http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov/NVMC/Regulations.aspx>

##### **DHS/Customs and Border Protection**

Branch directory <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/toolbox/contacts/ports/fl/5203.xml>

Tel for reporting entry (800) 432-1216 or (305) 536-4758, ext. 213

Tel for formal vessel clearing (954) 761-2000

Tel for Immigration (954) 761-2049

##### **Port Everglades CBP Office Address:**

1800 Eller Drive, Suite 104, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316 (East entrance for Immigration, West entrance for vessel)

##### **Hours:**

8:00am -12:00pm, then 1:00pm to 4:30pm Monday-Friday

4:00pm – 9:00pm, they have limited officers, so you may wait a while, or go elsewhere

9:00pm – 8:00am, the Port is closed so you must go elsewhere to clear immigration

**TWIC** [www.tsa.gov/twic](http://www.tsa.gov/twic)

##### **Water Pollution Certificate - National Pollution Funds Center**

Address: 4200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1000, Arlington, VA 22203-1804 USA Phone: (202) 493-6780 Fax: (202) 493-6781

Website: <https://npfc.uscg.mil/COFR/default.aspx>

**US Visas Embassy List** <http://www.usembassy.gov>

**USCG – Miami Branch** (305) 535-8736

USCG – Captain of the Port (Miami to Palm Beach) (305) 535-8701

As of September 4, 2013