

WAC 296-115-050 General requirements. (1) Where an existing charter vessel does not meet a particular requirement of this section, the assistant director may grant:

(a) A temporary variance to allow time for modifications to be made.

(b) A permanent variance if the degree of protection afforded is judged to be adequate for the service in which the vessel is used.

(2) Lifesaving equipment required by this section must be approved by the USCG.

(3) The following lifesaving equipment is required:

(a) All vessels carrying passengers must carry life floats or buoyant apparatus for all persons on board.

(i) All life floats or buoyant apparatus must be international orange in color.

(ii) Vessels operating not more than one mile from land are not required to carry life floats or buoyant apparatus.

(iii) Lifeboats, life rafts, dinghies, dories, skiffs, or similar type craft may be substituted for the required life floats or buoyant apparatus if the substitution is approved by the assistant director.

(iv) Life floats, buoyant apparatus, or any authorized substitute must be U.S. Coast Guard approved and have the following equipment:

(A) Two paddles or oars not less than four feet in length.

(B) A painter of at least one-half inch diameter and 30 feet in length.

(b) All vessels must have a USCG-approved adult life preserver for the number of people the vessel is certified to carry, with at least 10 percent additional of a type suitable for children or greater number to provide a life jacket for each child-sized person on board.

(i) Life preservers must be stowed in readily accessible places in the upper part of the vessel; and

(ii) Each life preserver must be marked with the vessel's name.

(c) All vessels must carry in a readily accessible location at least one ring life buoy of an approved type with 60 feet of buoyant line attached. The ring life buoy must:

(i) Be ready to cast loose at any time; and

(ii) Have a floating water light, unless operation is limited to daytime.

(4) Fire protection general.

(a) The general construction of a vessel must minimize fire hazards.

(b) Internal combustion engine exhausts, boiler and galley uptakes, and similar sources of ignition must be kept clear of and suitably insulated from woodwork or other combustible material.

(c) Lamp, paint, and oil lockers and similar storage areas for flammable liquids must be constructed of metal or lined with metal.

(5) Fire protection equipment. Equipment required to be of an approved type must be approved by the USCG or other agency acceptable to the director.

(a) Fire pumps.

(i) All vessels carrying more than 49 passengers must carry an approved power fire pump capable of reaching any part of the vessel.

(ii) All other vessels must carry an approved hand fire pump. These pumps must be provided with a suitable suction and discharge hose, and may also serve as bilge pumps.

(b) Fixed fire extinguishing system.

(i) The following vessels must have a fixed fire extinguishing system to protect the machinery and fuel tank spaces:

(A) Those powered by internal combustion engines using gasoline or other fuel having a flashpoint of 110°F or lower; and

(B) Those with hulls constructed of fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP) or wood.

(ii) This system must be an approved type and have a capacity sufficient to protect the space.

(iii) Controls for the fixed system must be installed in an accessible location outside the space protected.

(iv) A device must be provided to automatically shut down power ventilation serving the protected space and engines that draw intake air from the protected space prior to release of the extinguishing agent into the space.

(c) Fire axe. A vessel of more than 19.8 meters (65 feet) in length must have at least one fire axe located in or adjacent to the primary operating station.

(d) Portable fire extinguishers.

(i) All vessels must have a minimum number of portable fire extinguishers of an approved size and type. The number required will be determined by Table 1, Portable Fire Extinguishers.

(ii) Portable fire extinguishers must be inspected at least once a month. Extinguishers found defective must be serviced or replaced.

(iii) Portable fire extinguishers must be serviced at least once a year. The required service must consist of discharging and recharging foam and dry chemical extinguishers and weighing and inspecting carbon dioxide extinguishers.

(iv) Portable fire extinguishers must be hydrostatically tested at intervals not to exceed those specified in WAC 296-800-300 in the safety and health core rules.

(v) Portable fire extinguishers of the vaporizing liquid type such as carbon tetrachloride and other toxic vaporizing liquids are prohibited and must not be carried on any vessel.

(vi) Portable fire extinguishers must be mounted in brackets or hangers near the space protected. The location must be marked in a manner satisfactory to the assistant director.

**Table 1
Portable Fire Extinguishers**

Space Protected	Minimum # Required	Type Extinguisher Permitted		
		CG Class	Medium	Minimum Size
Operating station	1	B-I, C-I	Halon CO ₂ Dry chemical	2.5 lb. 4 lb. 2 lb.
Machinery space	1 Located just outside exit	B-II, C-II	CO ₂ Dry chemical	15 lb. 10 lb.
Open vehicle deck	1 for every 10 vehicles	B-II	Foam Halon CO ₂ Dry chemical	2.5 gal. 10 lb. 15 lb. 10 lb.
Accommodation space	1 for each 2,500 sq. ft. or fraction thereof	A-II	Foam Dry chemical	2.5 gal. 10 lb.
Galley, pantry, concession stand	1	A-II, B-II	Foam Dry chemical	2.5 gal. 10 lb.

(6) Means of escape.

(a) All vessels must have at least two avenues of escape from all general areas accessible to the passengers or where the crew may be

quartered or normally employed. The avenues must be located so that if one is not available the other may be. At least one of the avenues should be independent of watertight doors.

(b) One vertical means of escape is acceptable where the length of the compartment is less than 12 feet under the following conditions:

(i) There is no source of fire in the space, such as a galley stove or heater and the vertical escape is remote from the engine and fuel tank space; or

(ii) The arrangement is such that the installation of two means of escape does not materially improve the safety of the vessel or those aboard.

(7) Ventilation.

(a) All enclosed spaces within the vessel must be properly vented or ventilated. Where such openings would endanger the vessel under adverse weather conditions, means must be provided to close them.

(b) All crew and passenger space must be adequately ventilated in a manner suitable to the purpose of the space.

(8) Crew and passenger accommodations.

(a) Vessels with crew members living aboard must have suitable accommodations.

(b) Vessels carrying passengers must have fixed seating for the maximum number of passengers permitted, installed as follows:

(i) Spacing that provides for ready escape in case of fire or other casualty.

(ii) Aisles not over 15 feet long must be not less than 24 inches wide.

(iii) Aisles over 15 feet long must be not less than 30 inches wide.

(iv) Where seats are in rows the distance from seat front to seat front must be not less than 30 inches.

(v) The assistant director may grant special exception to fixed seating spacing requirements if escape over the side can be readily accomplished through windows or other openings in the way of the seats.

(c) Portable or temporary seating may be installed but must be arranged as provided for fixed seating.

(9) Toilet facilities and drinking water.

(a) Vessels must be provided with toilets and wash basins as specified in WAC 296-800-230 unless vessels are used exclusively on short runs of approximately 30 minutes or less.

(b) All toilets and wash basins must be fitted with adequate plumbing. Facilities for men and women must be in separate compartments, except in the case of vessels carrying 49 passengers and less, the assistant director may approve other arrangements.

(c) Potable drinking water must be provided for all passengers and crew according to WAC 296-800-23005.

(d) Covered trash containers must be provided in passenger areas.

(10) Rails and guards.

(a) Rails or equivalent protection must be installed near the periphery of all weather decks accessible to passengers and crews. Where space limitations make deck rails impractical for areas designed for crew only, such as at narrow catwalks in the way of deckhouse sides, hand grabs may be substituted.

(b) Rails must consist of evenly spaced courses. The spacing must not be greater than four inches except as provided in WAC 296-115-050

(10)(d). Lower rail courses may not be required if all or part of the

space below the upper rail course is fitted with a bulwark, chain link fencing, wire mesh or the equivalent.

(c) On passenger decks of vessels engaged in ferry or excursion type operation, rails must be at least 42 inches high. The top rail must be pipe, wire, chain, or wood and must withstand at least 200 pounds of side loading. The space below the top rail must be fitted with bulwarks, chain link fencing, wire mesh, or the equivalent.

(d) On vessels engaged in other than passenger service, the rails must be not less than 36 inches high. Where vessels are used in special service, the assistant director may approve other arrangements, but in no case less than 30 inches high.

(e) Suitable storm rails or hand grabs must be installed where necessary in all passageways, at deckhouse sides, and at ladders and hatches where passengers or crew might have normal access.

(f) Suitable covers, guards, or rails must be installed in the way of all exposed and hazardous places such as gears or machinery. (See chapter 296-806 WAC, Machine safety for detailed requirements.)

(11) Machinery installation.

(a) Propulsion machinery.

(i) Propulsion machinery must be suitable in type and design for the propulsion requirements of the hull of the vessel in which it is installed. Installations meeting the requirements of the USCG or USCG-recognized classification society are considered acceptable to the assistant director.

(ii) Installations using gasoline or diesel as a fuel must meet the requirements of applicable USCG standards.

(b) Auxiliary machinery and bilge systems.

(i) All vessels must be provided with a suitable bilge pump, piping, and valves for removing water from the vessel.

(ii) Vessels carrying more than 49 passengers must have a power operated bilge pump. The source of power must be independent of the propulsion machinery. Other vessels must have a hand operated bilge pump, but may have a power operated pump if it is operated by an independent power source.

(c) Steering apparatus and miscellaneous systems.

(i) All vessels must be provided with a suitable steering apparatus.

(ii) All vessels must be provided with navigation lights and shapes, whistles, fog horns, and fog bells as required by the USCG rules of navigation.

(iii) All vessels must be equipped with a suitable number of portable battery lights for emergency purposes. There should be at least two, one located at the operating station and the other at the access to the propulsion machinery.

(d) Electrical installations. The electrical installations of all vessels must be at least equal to applicable USCG standards, or as approved by the assistant director.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, 88.04.005(3), and 88.04.330. WSR 23-09-054, § 296-115-050, filed 4/18/23, effective 5/22/23. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 17-16-132, § 296-115-050, filed 8/1/17, effective 9/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and 29 C.F.R. 1910 Subpart Z. WSR 14-07-086, § 296-115-050, filed 3/18/14, effective 5/1/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, 49.17.210, and 88.04.005. WSR 08-20-123, § 296-115-050, filed 10/1/08, effective

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