

Commercial Marine Vessel License (CMVL) – Frequently Asked Questions

(updated: 04/14/2025)

What is a CMVL?

A CMVL is a commercial fishing license issued to an individual for a specific vessel. It allows all captain and crew onboard the licensed vessel to engage in commercial fishing, even if the captain and crew do not have their own individual CMLs.

Is CMVL optional or required if you are a vessel owner?

The CMVL is an optional license. However, without a CMVL, all persons onboard a vessel on a commercial fishing trip must have their own individual CML.

What are the requirements to obtain a CMVL?

A valid Commercial Marine License is required to obtain a CMVL. Hawai'i Administrative Rule (HAR) §13-74-23(a)

Who between owner, captain, and crew should obtain the CMVL?

The Commercial Marine License holder who obtains the CMVL is responsible for reporting the vessel's fishing activity, catch, and sales. The primary individual with this responsibility should obtain the CMVL. In most cases, this would be the owner or captain of the vessel.

Is the CMVL transferable?

No. The CMVL may not be transferred from one vessel to another or from one CML holder to another. If the CML attached to the vessel changes or if the vessel is sold, then a new CMVL will be issued to the new licensee. HAR §13-74-23(d)

Does the Commercial Marine Licensee who holds the CMVL need to be on the vessel while the vessel is fishing?

No. The Commercial Marine Licensee that the CMVL is issued to does not have to be on the vessel. The CMVL is required to be kept on the vessel at all times while the vessel is engaged in commercial fishing activities per HAR 13-74-23(i). Additionally, the Commercial Marine Licensee is still responsible for all reporting requirements and responsibilities associated with the vessel's fishing activity.

Where is the CMVL supposed to be kept?

The CMVL shall be kept aboard the vessel at all times while participating in commercial fishing activities and shall be made available for inspection upon demand. HAR §13-74-23(i)

Whom does the CMVL allow to participate in commercial marine fishing activity?

The CMVL covers all individuals on the licensed vessel involved in the commercial marine fishing activity. HAR §13-74-20(a)

Is there a limit on how many people CMVL covers?

There is no limit on how many persons can be covered under the CMVL.

Does the CMVL cover customers under my fishing charter?

No. For commercial charter operators, the CMVL only covers commercial crew on the vessel. It does not cover nonresident recreational fishers. Nonresident customers of fishing charters will need to have a Nonresident Recreational Marine Fishing License. HAR §13-74-23(g)

Where can I get the CMVL?

You may obtain it online or at your local DAR office.

What is the fee schedule for the CMVL?

- \$100 for <22' non-longline vessel
- \$200 for ≥22' non-longline vessel
- \$1,500 for longline vessel

Do I need to prove my vessel length?

You only need to select one of the categories that describes your vessel. DAR will validate most state vessel records with the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR). If we have a question, we may contact you for documentation.

What types of vessels can obtain a CMVL?

Any type of vessel may obtain a CMVL.

Do I still need to send in catch reports?

Yes, the requirement to report all fishing activities are the responsibility of the commercial marine licensee to whom the CMVL is issued. HAR §13-74-23(j)

What is the CMVL Longline Annual Report requirement?

Per HAR §13-74-23(f), each longline vessel that has a CMVL is required to submit a Longline Annual Report at the end of the license period. You may contact the DAR office for more information.

Does the CMVL also cover other licenses/permits/registrations I have?

No. The CMVL is specific to only the general commercial marine fishing activity while on a licensed vessel. Other specific activities may require everyone to have their own licenses or permits. It is best to check with DAR for specifics.

Can the CMVL be used to sell marine species?

The CMVL only allows persons without a CML to participate in the commercial take of marine species on the licensed vessel. Only persons with CMLs are allowed to sell the catch.

If CML is not valid, does it invalidate the CMVL too?

Yes. Since the CMVL expiration date is the same expiration date of the CML, if the CML expires or is invalid, so too is the CMVL. HAR §13-74-23(d)