**Overview:** The Coast Guard is facing a significant enlisted workforce shortage and they need your help. Currently less than 44% of our non-rate billets are filled and many rates are considered critical. We can’t rely on tapping into traditional pools of talent, we must instead, cast a wider net to attract other segments of our population to help fill critical vacancies. Several recent changes are designed to attract Lawful Permanent Residents (aka ‘Green Card Holders’) and non-English-speakers. The Coast Guard **needs you** to share these opportunities to communities in your local area.

**Topline Message:**

*The Coast Guard has changed two policies regarding Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs).* ***Any*** *Lawful Permanent Resident with an unexpired ‘green card’ should talk with their local recruiter to see if they qualify for enlistment. Once they join, they are entitled to expedited U.S. citizenship. We have also stood up a new language training program for non-English speakers. Qualified applicants can attend this program before bootcamp and after completion are entitled to retake their ASVAB test. Together these changes offer LPRs an opportunity to serve their country in the Coast Guard, expedite their pathway to citizenship, and help increase the diversity of the Coast Guard by bringing a larger variety of cultural, technical, and linguistic skills into the fleet.*

**High Points:**

* **Lawful Permanent Residents:** Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) are authorized to live and work in the U.S. on a permanent basis. They undergo extensive background checks with DHS and the FBI and once cleared are issued a “green card” with an expiration date. Until the recent policy change, a member’s green card had to be valid for their entire enlistment period. Since green cards are only issued for 5 or 10 years and can only be renewed when the expiration date is within 6 months, many LPR could not apply to the Coast Guard. Other services do not have this limitation; our policy is now comparable to other services.
* **Naturalization Process to Become a U.S. Citizen:** U.S. Service members, veterans, and their families are eligible for certain immigration benefits such as expedited U.S. citizenship. The recent policy change provides easier access to the creditable service certification a member needs to validate service for expedited citizenship.
* **Non-English Speakers:** The Coast Guard has several programs to help non-English speakers successfully join and succeed in the Coast Guard.
  + The minimum ASVAB test requirement can be waived for non-English speakers who can score well enough on the English Comprehension Level Exam.
  + The Coast Guard has partnered with the US Air Force’s *Defense Language Institute English Language Center* (DLIELC) at Joint Base San Antonio-Lockland, Texas. Qualified recruits are sworn in, issued uniforms, and sent to this program for up to 24 weeks to learn English. When they graduate, they are allowed to re-take the ASVAB and then go to basic training.

**Links:**

[DLIELC Article #1](https://www.mycg.uscg.mil/News/Article/3171665/coast-guard-recruits-join-dlielcs-echo-company-for-english-language-training/)

[Naturalization Policy Change Article](https://www.mycg.uscg.mil/News/Article/3319897/coast-guard-clarifies-naturalization-through-military-service-policy/)

[New Green Card Policy](https://www.mycg.uscg.mil/News/Article/3393638/new-policy-makes-it-easier-for-green-card-holders-to-enlist/)

[DLIELC Article #2](https://www.airandspaceforces.com/a-path-for-non-native-english-speakers-to-join-the-air-force/)

[ALCOAST 191/23](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHSCG/bulletins/359fceb)

[ALCOAST 025/23](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHSCG/bulletins/343af3d)