

**Boating Safety Unit**  
**For-Hire Operator Licensing Program**  
**Division of Boating and Waterways**

**Program Summary:**

A for-hire vessel is defined as 'any vessel propelled by machinery carrying more than three passenger's for-hire for valuable consideration, whether directly or indirectly flowing to the owner, charterer, operator, agent or any other person interested in the vessel'.

The operator of the for-hire vessel who has met the requirements of California Boating Law, Article 3, Harbors and Navigation Code 760-772 must be licensed with the department.

For-Hire licensing laws apply to operators of powered vessels carrying more than three passengers for money or other consideration on California waters not under Federal jurisdiction. Water skiers being towed by a powered vessel are considered as passengers. Waters not considered under Federal jurisdiction are those which cannot be navigated to the sea or to another state and are considered "non-navigable".

- Licensees must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
- Licensees must have one year's experience in operating the type of boat on the type of water for which the license is requested. In certain cases, other experience or training may be substituted.
- Licensees must be in good physical condition.
- Licensees must have adequate knowledge and skills necessary for safe operation of a passenger vessel. Written and practical (on-the water) examinations are given.

**Statistics:**

The Division allocated \$10,000 in funding for proctoring the For-Hire License exam. The Division issued (39) new licenses and (20) renewals. There are currently (320) active For-Hire licensees in the State. The program was facilitated by (1) Staff Services Analyst who served as the program coordinator and (1) contractor who served as the exam proctor.

**Accomplishments:**

- DBW has contracted with retired LT Doug Powell who holds a 100-ton Captain's license through the United States Coast Guard.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic we discontinued proctoring exams in the months of March, April and May. As of June, we were able to start proctoring again.
- We continue to proctor exams and practical's statewide.

**Goals and Objectives:**

- 1) To update regulations to make the program a revenue generating program.
- 2) We are currently working with the contract unit to go out to bid to acquire an exam proctor for next 3 years.

**Total Vessel Operator's: There are currently 320 active vessel for-hire operators.**