



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20593-0001

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To the Men and Women of the United States Coast Guard,

Across the Nation, we continue to see the dramatic impacts of the novel coronavirus outbreak. The Coast Guard is not immune to the pandemic—members of our workforce and their families have been infected, units have been impacted, and our normal routines have been disrupted. In the coming days and weeks, our Coast Guard family will be further impacted, and by all indications those impacts will become increasingly challenging and potentially more personal. These are unprecedented times, but I am encouraged by the creative actions and insightful decisions being made across the Coast Guard to protect and preserve our workforce while maintaining mission readiness. We are proving, once again, that we are resilient.

This resiliency has enabled us to continue to save lives; protect our ports and waterways, enabling the flow of vital commerce through our Marine Transportation System; support the broader national contingency response efforts; and enforce our Nation's laws. Leaders at all levels are focusing on both our Coast Guardsmen and their families and our operational priorities, carefully evaluating risk, and ensuring we are ready to deliver the mission excellence the Nation has come to expect.

I want to thank you for the professionalism you have demonstrated on and off duty. These uniquely challenging times have only reinforced the critical contributions of each segment of our Mission Ready Total Workforce – our Active Duty, Reserve, civilian, and Auxiliary members – to our overall success. The American public will continue to look at us as models of leadership and strength in the communities where we serve. That focus will only grow, and I am confident that we will continue to lead the way.

The outbreak's uncertain duration reinforces the maxim that *workforce preservation equates to mission readiness*. Our CGHQ Coronavirus Coordination Team (CCT) is working hard to improve productivity, share information, and remove unnecessary burdens. Their efforts include increased remote connectivity capacity, relaxed grooming standards, consolidated mental health resources, extended periodic medical assessments, amended leave and travel policies, and other initiatives to better enable our collective effort. The CCT is regularly updating <https://www.uscg.mil/coronavirus/> to make sure you and your families have the most current policy and guidance to keep you safe and informed of the resources and support you have available. We will continue to update the site with videos, articles, and messages, so visit regularly to stay connected.

The enduring nature and complexity of this national challenge means we will all have to make important decisions in a sub-optimal information environment. I expect our leaders to continue to make the best choices/decisions you can with the available information, and remain ready to quickly revisit your position to adjust as conditions change. Lastly, transparent communications with your chain of command and intrusive leadership remain paramount to our collective effectiveness moving forward. While there's uncertainty along our trackline, what I am certain about is our ability as a Service to endure and continue to serve the Nation. *Semper Paratus!*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Karl L. Schultz".

Karl L. Schultz
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard