

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD,

Complainant,

vs.

GRAYSON ALLEN FORD,

Respondent.

Docket Number 2024-0076
Enforcement Activity No. 7831797

DEFAULT ORDER

Issued: May 22, 2024

By Administrative Law Judge: Honorable Timothy G. Stueve

Appearances:

**Eric Bauer
USCG S&R National Center of Expertise**

For the Coast Guard

Grayson Allen Ford, **pro se**

For Respondent

Background

On February 5, 2024, the Coast Guard filed a Complaint against Grayson Allen Ford (Respondent). The Return of Service for Complaint filed by the Coast Guard indicates the Complaint was delivered to Respondent's residence by Express Courier Service and signed for by a person of suitable age and discretion residing at the residence on February 8, 2024 (Attachment A)¹.

On March 26, 2024, the Coast Guard filed a Motion for Default Order (Motion), explaining Respondent failed to file an Answer, and the response time has passed. See 33 C.F.R. § 20.308. The Return of Service for Motion for Default states the Motion was delivered to Respondent's residence by Federal Express and signed for by a person of suitable age and discretion residing at the residence on April 2, 2024 (Attachment B)². The Chief Administrative Law Judge assigned the matter to me on May 22, 2024.

Discussion

The applicable regulations require a respondent to "file a written answer to the complaint 20 days or less after service of the complaint." 33 C.F.R. § 20.308(a). An administrative law judge (ALJ) may find a respondent in default "upon failure to file a timely answer to the complaint or, after motion, upon failure to appear at a conference or hearing without good cause shown." 33 C.F.R. § 20.310(a). Default constitutes an admission of all facts alleged in a complaint and a waiver of respondent's right to a hearing on those facts. 33 C.F.R. § 20.310(c).

¹ The Coast Guard's Certificate of Service for the Complaint indicates that Respondent signed for receipt of the document from the Express Courier; the Fedex proof of service attached to the Return of Service for the Complaint shows that "R. Ford" signed for the document.

² The Fedex Proof of Service attached to the Return of Service for the Motion for Default Order indicates that "R. Ford" signed for the document.

The Complaint filed by the Coast Guard and properly served on Respondent contained instructions that clearly stated “YOU MUST RESPOND TO THIS COMPLAINT WITHIN 20 DAYS” and provided the applicable regulatory provision, 33 C.F.R. § 20.308. The instructions also informed Respondent an extension of time could be requested “within 20 days” of receipt. Respondent failed to respond to the Complaint or the Motion for Default Order.

Accordingly, I find Respondent in default pursuant to 33 C.F.R. § 20.310(a). Default constitutes an admission of all facts alleged in the Complaint and a waiver of the right to a hearing. 33 C.F.R. § 20.310(c). See Appeal Decision 2682 (REEVES) (2008).

Turning to the allegations in the Complaint, the Coast Guard alleges on February 5, 2024, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) determined Respondent does not meet the security threat assessment standards described in 49 C.F.R. § 1572.5, poses an imminent security threat in accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 1572.21(d)(3), and revoked Respondent’s TWIC in accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 1572.5(b). As a result of TSA’s actions, the Coast Guard asserts Respondent is a security risk as described by 46 U.S.C. § 7703(5).

Having concluded Respondent admitted TSA revoked his TWIC, and all other facts in the Complaint, I agree TSA’s determination that Respondent is not eligible to hold a TWIC is proof that a mariner is not eligible to hold an MMC. See 46 C.F.R. §§ 10.235(h) and 10.235(i). Based on these admissions, I find these facts as admitted are legally sufficient to find the single charge that Respondent is a security risk as described in 46 U.S.C. § 7703(5) **PROVED. Id.**

I find the facts alleged in the Complaint sufficient to warrant the suggested sanction of **REVOCATION.** See 46 C.F.R. §§ 10.235(h) and 10.235(i).

WHEREFORE,

ORDER

Upon consideration of the record, I find Respondent in **DEFAULT**.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, in accordance with 33 C.F.R. § 20.310, I find the allegations set forth in the Complaint **PROVED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, all of Respondent's Coast Guard issued credentials, including Respondent's Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC), are **REVOKED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, Respondent shall immediately deliver all Coast Guard issued credentials, licenses, certificates, or documents, including the MMC, by mail, courier service, or in person to: USCG Suspension & Revocation National Center of Expertise, 100 Forbes Drive, Martinsburg, WV 25404. In accordance with 18 U.S.C. § 2197, if **Respondent knowingly continues to use the Coast Guard issued MMC, Respondent may be subject to criminal prosecution.**

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, pursuant to 33 C.F.R. § 20.310(e), for good cause shown, an ALJ may set aside a finding of default. A motion to set aside a finding of default may be filed with the ALJ Docketing Center in Baltimore. The motion may be sent to the U.S. Coast Guard Administrative Law Judge Docketing Center; Attention: Hearing Docket Clerk; Room 412; 40 S. Gay Street; Baltimore, MD 21201-4022.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, service of this Default Order on the parties serves as notice of appeal rights set forth in 33 C.F.R. § 20.1001-20.1004 (Attachment C).

SO ORDERED.

Done and dated May 22, 2024, at
Alameda, California



Hon. Timothy G. Stueve
Administrative Law Judge
U.S. Coast Guard