

Chat Services Update

On June 3, 2015, the National Maritime Center (NMC) published a [bulletin](#) introducing its plan to test online chat services in two phases. Phase one, the use of a ticketing system, has progressed well with a somewhat limited customer volume but very good reviews. Therefore, the NMC will move forward to phase two of the test. Beginning July 1, 2015, the live online chat functionality will be available for use.

Customers will know when agents are available based on the button located on the upper right section of every [NMC webpage](#). If the button reads **Live Chat**, you will know that agents are online and available to take your request. If the button reads **Get Help**, it indicates that there are no agents online and that the ticketing system is active. For additional information on chat services, visit the [NMC Live Chat System](#) webpage. The NMC Live Chat System page can be accessed by clicking the red **Live Chat** button located under **Important Links** on the [NMC homepage](#).

While the chat system software is hosted by a third-party vendor, the agents responding to your queries remain the same. One unique feature of the live chat that we think customers will appreciate is the ability to upload files to the NMC during the chat. As we evaluate the system, we encourage customers to initially limit live chat requests to more routine questions such as mariner application status checks. The NMC will publish additional bulletins during the test to update you regarding our progress. We will evaluate the success of the chat system on or around October 1, 2015, to determine whether or not to continue its use.

Use of the chat system is strictly voluntary. Our e-mail address and toll-free number remain the same. We are pleased to offer this tool as an option for our customers. Additional information regarding the chat system can be found on the [NMC Live Chat System](#) webpage. We look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,

/J. P. Novotny/

Jeffrey P. Novotny
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer