

**Motor Vehicle Procedure Manual**  
**Registration**  
 Vessel Registrations Exemptions

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**Legal Authority**

[Section 328.48\(1\)\(a\), Florida Statutes](#), provides that a registration is not required for any vessel that is not used on the waters of this state.

[Section 328.48\(2\), Florida Statutes](#), provides that each vessel operated, used, or stored on the waters of this state must be registered as a commercial or recreational vessel as defined in this chapter and [Section 327.02, Florida Statutes](#), unless it meets one of the exemptions in section II.

**Description and Use**

This procedure is provided to assist tax collector employees, license plate agents and the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles in understanding vessel registration exemptions.

**Registration Exemptions**

- A. A vessel operated, used, and stored exclusively on private lakes and ponds.
- B. A vessel owned by the United States Government.
- C. A vessel used EXCLUSIVELY as a ship’s lifeboat.
- D. A non-motor-powered vessel less than 16 feet in length or a non-motor-powered canoe, kayak, racing shell or rowing scull, regardless of length.

EXCEPTION: [Section 379.361\(2\)\(c\), Florida Statutes](#), provides that any vessel (even non-motor powered), harvesting restricted species in excess of any bag limit or when fishing under a commercial quota or in commercial quantities shall have a commercial vessel registration.

## Revision (s) to Procedure

10/10/22 Added the procedure to the new format.

Statutory Review. Added links to statutes and Historical Revisions section.

1/13/10: Updated “Description and Use” section, added, and updated applicable statutes and language in sections I and II, and corrected statute cited in Exception.