

Motor Vehicle Procedure Manual

Vessel 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 Department of 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

Statutory Review. Added links to statutes and Historical Revisions section

Historical Revision(s) to Procedure

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.