



## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

### 33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG-2025-0703]

RIN 1625-AA87

### Security Zones; Vessels Carrying Dangerous Cargo, Corpus Christi and La Quinta Ship Channels, Corpus Christi, TX

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Final Rule.

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**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard is establishing a security zone around vessels carrying Certain Dangerous Cargos (CDCs), for which the Captain of the Port, Corpus Christi deems enhanced security measures are necessary on a case-by-case basis. This security zone is needed to safeguard these vessels, the public, and the surrounding area from sabotage or other subversive acts, accidents, or other events of a similar nature. This rulemaking prohibits entry of vessels or person into this security zone during enforcement periods unless specifically authorized by the Captain of the Port, Corpus Christi or their designated representative.

**DATES:** This rule is effective [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** To view documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, type USCG-2025-0703 in the search box and click “Search.” Next, in the Document Type column, select “Supporting & Related Material.”

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions about this rule, call or email call or email Lieutenant Tim Cardenas, Sector Corpus Christi Waterways Management Division, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone (571) 610-4222, email Timothy.J.Cardenas@uscg.mil.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Table of Abbreviations**

CDC	Certain Dangerous Cargo
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COTP	Captain of the Port
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	<i>Federal Register</i>
NPRM	Notice of proposed rulemaking
§	Section
U.S.C.	United States Code

**II. Background and Authority**

This rule establishes a permanent security zone regulation that will be activated as necessary to protect vessels carrying CDC bound for the Port of Corpus Christi. Vessels carrying CDC within the Captain of the Port Corpus Christi Zone are potential targets of terrorist attacks, or potential launch platforms for terrorist attacks on other vessels, waterfront facilities, and adjacent population centers. In the last 2 years, the Port of Corpus Christi has seen more than 450 vessels enter or depart the port carrying CDCs, with that number projected to almost double in the next 15 years.

The Coast Guard has previously created temporary security zones for individual vessel transits, see for example 89 FR 96533, December 5, 2024. Continuing to create individual security zones will result in a significant administrative burden to the unit based on the expected number of future transits, and it will also delay public notice for individual security zone activations. Therefore, the Coast Guard is establishing this security zone to safeguard these vessels, the public, and the surrounding area from sabotage or other subversive acts, accidents, or other events of a similar nature.

On December 23, 2025, the Coast Guard published a notice of proposed

rulemaking (NPRM) titled, “Security Zones; Vessels Carrying Dangerous Cargo, Corpus Christi and La Quinta Ship Channels, Corpus Christi, TX.” In the NPRM (90 FR 60053) we stated why we issued the NPRM and invited comments on our proposed regulatory action.

Under section 46 U.S.C. 70051 and 46 U.S.C. 70124, the Sector Commander, Coast Guard Sector Corpus Christi has determined vessels carrying CDC within the Captain of the Port Corpus Christi Zone are potential targets of terrorist attacks, or potential launch platforms for terrorist attacks on other vessels, waterfront facilities, and adjacent population centers. The purpose of this rule is to safeguard the vessels, the public, and the surrounding area from sabotage or other subversive acts, accidents, or other events of a similar nature.

### **III. Discussion of Comments and the Rule**

During the comment period that ended January 22, 2026, we received no comments. There are no changes in the regulatory text of this rule from the proposed rule in the NPRM.

This rule establishes a new security zone regulation for vessels carrying CDC while transiting in the Corpus Christi and La Quinta Shipping, or when moored at a facility and loading or unloading. The rule prohibits persons and vessels from entry into the security zone during limited times when activated, unless authorized by the Captain of the Port, Sector Corpus Christi (COTP) or a designated representative.

### **IV. Regulatory Analyses**

We developed this rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders.

#### *A. Impact on Small Entities*

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (RFA), 5 U.S.C. 601-612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. Section 605 of the RFA allows an agency to certify a rule, in lieu of preparing an analysis, if the rulemaking is not expected to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

The Coast Guard certifies that, although some small entities may intend to transit the security zone above, this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. This rule will impact a small, designated area of 500-yards around a moving vessel in the Corpus Christi or La Quinta Shipping Channels over a period of six hours or less. Most vessels will be able to move around the security zone and therefore the impediment to the movement of other vessels will be minimal. Moreover, the rule allows other vessels to seek permission from the COTP to enter the zone.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-121), if this rule will affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions, contact the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section.

Small businesses may send comments to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards by calling 1-888-REG-FAIR (1-888-734-3247).

#### *B. Collection of Information*

This rule would not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

### *C. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments*

We have analyzed this rule under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in that Order.

Also, this rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

### *D. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act*

As required by The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538), the Coast Guard certifies that this rule will not result in an annual expenditure of \$100,000,000 or more (adjusted for inflation) by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector.

### *E. Environment*

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023-01, Rev. 1, associated implementing instructions, and Environmental Planning COMDTINST 5090.1 (series), which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

This rule is a security zone around vessels laden with CDC as they transit through the Corpus Christi or La Quinta Shipping Channels. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L60(a) of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 1. A Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket. For instructions on locating the docket, see

the ADDRESSES section of this preamble.

### **List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165**

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

### **PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS**

1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 46 U.S.C. 70034, 70051, 70124; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5; DHS Delegation No. 00170.1, Revision No. 01.4.

2. Add § 165.848 to read as follows:

#### **§ 165.848 Security Zones; Vessels Carrying Dangerous Cargo, Corpus Christi and La Quinta Ship Channels, Corpus Christi, TX.**

(a) *Location.* The following area is a security zone: All waters within the Corpus Christi or La Quinta Shipping Channel, from surface to bottom, encompassing a 500-yard radius around vessels loaded with certain dangerous cargo.

(b) *Definitions.* As used in this section, *designated representative* means a Coast Guard Patrol Commander, including a Coast Guard coxswain, petty officer, or other officer operating a Coast Guard vessel and a Federal, State, and local officer designated by or assisting the Captain of the Port Sector Corpus Christi (COTP) in the enforcement of the security zone.

*Certain dangerous cargo* or *CDC* means a material defined as CDC in 33 CFR 160.202.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) No vessel may approach within 500 yards of a passenger vessel or vessel carrying a CDC within the Captain of the Port Corpus Christi zone,

unless traveling at the minimum speed necessary to navigate safely.

(2) Under the general security zone regulations in subpart D of this part, no vessel or person may approach within 100 yards of a vessel carrying a CDC within the Corpus Christi or La Quinta Ship Channels, unless authorized by the COTP Sector Corpus Christi or his or her designated representative.

(3) Persons or vessels desiring to enter or pass through the zone must request permission from the COTP Sector Corpus Christi on VHF-FM channel 16 or by telephone at 1-800-874-2143. If permission is granted, all persons and vessels must comply with all lawful orders and directions of the COTP or the COTP's designated representative.

(d) *Enforcement.* When this security zone is activated for vessels carrying CDC within the location above, the COTP or a designated representative will provide notice to the public of the specific dates, times, and vessel names through Broadcast Notices to Mariners (BNMs) or Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) of the enforcement times and dates for this security zone. The COTP may also enlist the aid and cooperation of any Federal, state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency to assist in the enforcement of the regulation.

T. H. BERTHEAU,  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard,  
Captain of the Port Sector Corpus Christi.

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