



Frequently Asked Questions by HIN Applicants

1. Can I request a HIN for a commercial vessel?

No. NYS cannot issue a HIN for any commercial vessels not built to recreational vessel construction standards.

2. When is a state issued HIN required?

If you use a motor (electric or fuel-driven), regardless of the size of your boat or the motor, you must register your vessel. A state issued HIN is required to register your vessel with the DMV. Vessels without a motor, such as a paddle craft, do not need to be issued a HIN unless registration is desired.

3. What is the process and how long until a HIN is assigned?

Complete the HIN application ([OPS-420](#)) and mail to: NYS Parks Bureau of Marine Services, Albany NY 12238. Once received, NYS Parks will review HIN applications, which are then forwarded to your local Marine Patrol (typically County Sheriff). Law enforcement then reviews the application and issues the HIN. The processing time for NYS Parks will be a minimum of 14 days. Process time varies. We ask that you please be patient, as law enforcement will contact you as soon as possible to assign the HIN

4. What forms of “proof of purchase” are acceptable/required for inspection?

Acceptable proofs of ownership: certificate of title, a completed (**DMV 51-B**) form, signed transferrable registration, manufacturer’s statement of origin, bill from dealer listing all owners of the boat from manufacturer to present, or receipts for major components of a homemade boat.

5. What is the definition of a Homemade vessel?

Any boat made with raw materials by a person or persons for personal use and not made with the intention of building multiple boats for sale. Homemade vessels may apply for a HIN even if not fully constructed

6. How do I know if a homemade or renovated vessel is seaworthy?

A “seaworthy” vessel is a boat in good condition, not of dubious construction, structurally sound, not likely to sink or become a menace to navigation or a nuisance, and capable of getting underway and safely maneuvering over the surface of navigable waters.

7. Where should I look for a previously issued HIN on my boat?

The primary HIN should be located on the starboard side of the transom within 2” from the top. The secondary HIN, also referred to as a confidential HIN, is placed in a hidden location. There is no set standard for where these HINs are placed, therefore an officer will do a thorough search of the vessel to locate an existing HIN.

8. I'm unable read the HIN, should I scrape the paint off so it's legible?

No, don't scrape or remove the illegible HIN. Defacing or removing a HIN is forbidden by law. Follow the directions on the back of the HIN application process.

9. Do NYS Parks employees assign HINs?

No, NYS Park employees do not assign HINs. A HIN is assigned by your local law enforcement agency.