

Inspector General of the Marine Corps



Commander's Request Mast Program

Updated August 2019



Mast Overview

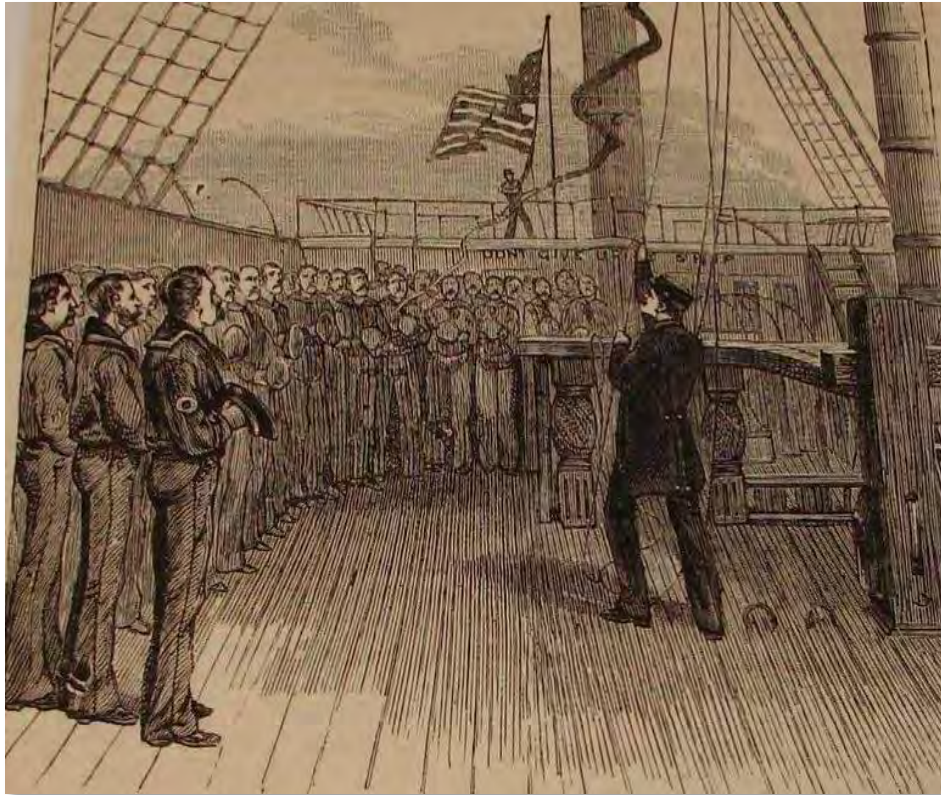


- History & purpose of Mast
- Policy for Requesting Mast
- Procedures for Requesting Mast
- Most common findings/failures



The History of Mast

- Naval tradition
- Commander's interaction with ship's crew
- Dispense punishment
- Present awards
- Accept grievances
- Ship's crew had guaranteed right to speak to their Commander
- Solutions were not assured





Purpose of Mast

- Convey grievances directly to the Commander
- Provides a personal audience with Commander*
- Expedite processing of urgent concerns
- Should employ the entire Chain of Command to assist
- Should not dismiss the “Chain of Concern”
- Should not replace established staff functions
- Should never supplant informal discourse

* Appearance with Commander should not present a conflict of interest or affect neutrality





Request Mast Policy

According to Marine Corps Order 1700.23G, it is "the right of all Marines to directly seek assistance from, or communicate grievances to, their commanding officers." A Marine has "the opportunity to communicate not only with his or her immediate commanding officer, but also with commanders up to and including a Commanding General (CG) within the chain of command at the same base or immediate geographical location."

- MCO 1700.23G
- NAVMC 11296 (form)
- Are there better avenues of redress?
- Not appropriate for Mast:
 - Nuisance requests
 - Matters dealing w/ UCMJ or ADSEP
 - Contemplated, pending, in progress, or final
 - Administrative Actions
 - Performance Evaluation





The Chain of Command



- **Only Officers with NJP Authority**
may be I&I, OIC, or Acting
- **Up to First General Officer**
or designated O-6 with GCMCA
- **Marine should forward Mast via the chain of command**
- **All Commanders must offer to resolve grievances.** *Marine is not required to accept*
- **Petitioner may withdraw request or accept resolution at any level**
- **To be opened by CG's only**
must be explained in writing usually facilitated by CIGs
- **Denials by designated Commander**
submit denial reports via Chain to CG
In-person explanations not required



Request Mast Procedure

- **NAVMC 11296 (5-19)**
 - *Filled out, signed, & dated*
- **Role of the Applicant**
 - *Be a truthful provider of facts*
 - *Forward via the chain of command*
- **Role of the “Chain of Concern”**
 - *Expedite request*
 - *Do not stop Mast and try to resolve it*
- **Role of the Chain of Command**
 - *Expedite audience with the Commander*
 - *Try to resolve at the lowest level of command*
 - *Explain disposition, delays, and denials*
 - *Forward-up if required*
 - *Report to CG any denials within five working days*
 - *If there is a denial, it must be explained to the Applicant*
 - *Personal explanations not required (especially if a conflict of interest exists; consult with SJA)*

The image shows a stack of three NAVMC 11296 (5-19) Request Mast forms. The top form is clearly visible and contains various sections for the applicant to fill out, including a header with the form number and title, a section for the applicant's name and address, a section for the commanding officer's name and address, and a large section for the request itself. The form is titled "MARINE CORPS REQUEST MAST" and includes instructions for the applicant to fill out the form and submit it to the chain of command.



Request Mast Procedure

PART I: REQUEST: COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT		
1. NAME: (Last, First, MI)	2. RANK:	3. EDIPI:
4. UNIT:		
5. I REQUEST MAST WITH: (The Commander with whom you desire to communicate)		
5a. NAME OF COMMANDER (Rank, Full Name)	5b. COMMAND:	
6. SUBJECT MATTER: (Describe your grievance or problem. Include details and facts about the matter. Provide dates and names of any individuals involved, possible witnesses, and to whom this matter may have been previously reported. Attach additional sheets, as needed).		
7. REQUESTED RESOLUTION: (Clearly describe the resolution you seek from the Commander named in block 5a.)		
8. AFFIDAVIT: I, _____, certify the statements in blocks 6 and 7 are true.		
Signature: _____		Date: _____

Personal, contact, and biographical data.

What Commander is requested?

What is the problem?

What is the desired "solution"?

Legal affidavit must be signed and dated.
"Starts the Clock"



Request Mast Procedure

PART II: COMMANDERS' ENGAGEMENT: COMPLETED BY COMMANDER WITHIN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

9. REQUEST MAST: (While disclosure of the grievance/problem is strictly voluntary, every Commander in the chain of command must provide an Applicant a personal audience. Commanders must acknowledge their engagement below. Only the Commander ultimately responsible for the disposition and closure will complete block 10.)

9a. FIRST COMMANDER IN CHAIN OF COMMAND:	Print Name	Rank	Billet	Unit Name

Subject Matter Disclosed? ☐ Yes ☐ No Forward? ☐ Yes ☐ No Denied (if named in 5a.)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Remarks: (Detail attempts to process or resolve)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Each Commander's data.

Answer

- Commander should document any attempt to resolve grievance or engagement with applicant as well as amplify answers to above questions.
- The date and time the commander and SNM met should be documented.

Commander must be signed and dated.

- Commanders NOT taking final disposition shall complete part II.
- If Marine accepts a subordinate commander from the commander in block 5a, accepted commander can skip Part II and go to Part III.



Request Mast Procedure

PART III: FINAL DISPOSITION: ONLY BY THE COMMANDER ULTIMATELY SELECTED BY THE APPLICANT

10. FINAL DISPOSITION: (Detail any actions or attempts to resolve the grievance/problem. Include any referrals for further personnel actions. If an inquiry or investigation was conducted, provide relevant findings. If the request was denied by the Commander specified in block 5a, explain why the matter was inappropriate for Mast.)

To uphold faith in the system, we get the Marine quickly before their Commander.

Actually resolving the issue correctly may take time, and must be tracked.

Final disposition; issue may not be resolved immediately

Final Commander to engage with Applicant. Sign & date, stops the clock

Signature: _____



Request Mast Procedure

Applicant selects one acknowledgement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FINAL DISPOSITION		
11. Applicants must select one acknowledgement or if they wish to voluntarily withdraw their request.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Disposition by the requested subordinate Commander: Without any intimidation, coercion, or fear of retaliation, I voluntarily disclosed my Request Mast to a Commander who was subordinate to the Commander I originally requested in block 5a and I accept and fully understand the disposition of my grievance.		
Name:	<input type="text"/>	Command: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Disposition by the requested Commander: My Request Mast was granted and I communicated directly with the Commander specifically named in block 5a. I fully understand the disposition Final Disposition by the requested Commander.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Request Denied: I understand my Request Mast was denied by the Commander I specifically named in block 5a.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Request Withdrawn: Without any intimidation, coercion, or fear of retaliation, I voluntarily withdraw my Request Mast.		
Applicant Signature: <input type="text"/>		Date: <input type="text"/>
Witness Signature: <input type="text"/>		Date: <input type="text"/>
Print Name (Witness)	Rank	Command/Unit
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Applicant and witness sign and date.

If a subordinate commander, to the commander in block 5a, is accepted by the Marine and resolves the issue that subordinate commander is acknowledged in Part III and the Request for Mast is NOT forwarded any higher. ONLY Commanders can be acknowledged in Part III.



Request Mast Procedure

PART IV: APPLICANT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FINAL DISPOSITION		
11. Applicants must sign the acknowledgement of final disposition or if they wish to voluntarily withdraw their request.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final Disposition by a selected subordinate Commander: Without any intimidation, coercion, or fear of retaliation, I voluntarily disclosed my Request Mast to a Commander who was subordinate to the Commander I originally requested in block 5a and I accept and fully understand the disposition of my grievance.		
Name:	<input type="text"/>	Command: <input type="text"/>
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Applicant Signature:	<input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
Witness Signature:	<input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
Print Name (Witness)	Rank	Command/Unit Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Used when a Marine sees and discloses to a subordinate commander and accepts and understands the disposition.



Request Mast Procedure

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Used when the Marine has seen the Commander designated in 8a and understands the disposition of the complaint.



Request Mast Procedure

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Print Name (Witness)	Rank	Command/Unit Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Commanders should make every attempt to hear the Marine's presentation of matters before making a decision to deny a request mast. The commander shall explain to the Marine why the request mast is denied and if appropriate, what procedure must be followed to resolve the issue.



Request Mast Procedure

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Applicant Signature:	<input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
Witness Signature:	<input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
Print Name (Witness)	Rank	Command/Unit Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Used when the Marine wishes to withdraw the Request Mast of without persuasion. It is a best practice to understand why the Marine is withdrawing the Mast.



Legal Requirements

Commanders Must:

- Hold accountable anyone who interferes with the Request Mast process.
- Ensure no adverse or prejudicial action is taken against a Marine as a result of exercising the right to request mast.





Request Mast Follow-Up

Commanders Request Mast Tracker and Follow-Up Procedures

Date of Affidavit	Applicant's Rank & Name	Cmdr in Block 5a	Date of Appearance with CO	Date Forwarded (if required)	Date of Final Disposition	Follow up Date	Remarks

Commanders must establish and monitor follow-up procedures to ensure each Request Mast issue is resolved in a timely manner and no adverse or prejudicial action to the interests of the Marine, and disposition from the Marine's Request Mast executed.



Most Common Discrepancies in Request Mast Programs

- Providing details of any actions or attempts to resolve the grievance/problem in block 10 of NAVMC 11286.
 - “On this date, discussed final disposition with SNM.”
- Lack of tracking system for follow up
 - Use a tracker; print out contact e-mails and keep them on file
- Lack of evidence of any command training
 - Keep class rosters and class materials on file
- Failure to destroy Request Mast applications on file after two-years
- Failure to keep Request Mast files in a protected/locked file that only select individuals have access to
- Commanders accepting inappropriate Requests for Mast that involve ADSEPs, Military Justice, bad FITREPs, etc.
 - “I still want to stay in the Marine Corps in spite of my involuntary separation...”
 - “Second-hand smoke caused my ‘pop’...”
 - “PMO should never have pulled me over...”
 - “I deserved a way better FITREP...”



Questions

