

## **GENERAL — Personal Flotation Device Updates**

### **What is being considered?**

The department needs to update its regulations regarding personal flotation devices (PFDs). The United States Coast Guard updated its PFD labeling requirements so that new PFDs are no longer identified by a type code. PFD labels now include an icon to better explain intended use. However, existing PFDs marked with type codes will still meet requirements as long as they remain in serviceable condition. Thus, the department's regulations must recognize the possibility that a variety of United States Coast Guard approved PFDs may be onboard a vessel to meet requirements.

### **Why is this change necessary?**

Currently, department regulations require individuals to have either a Type I, Type II, Type III, or Type V flotation device onboard. However, in 2014, the United States Coast Guard updated its labeling requirements and no longer uses type codes. Thus, the department must update its requirements to recognize that other United States Coast Guard approved PFDs are acceptable under Maryland regulations.

### **Who will this affect?**

All boaters.

### **When will this be effective?**

The department expects this change to be effective in the winter of 2022. The department will follow our normal scoping and proposal procedures.

### **Has this change been discussed with advisory bodies?**

Yes. This change was discussed with the Boat Act Advisory Committee at its July 2022 meeting. The committee recommended moving forward with scoping.