



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

COMMANDER CAROLYN L. LEONARD-CHO

Commander Leonard-Cho currently serves as the Maritime Program Director as well as the Chief of Officer Management at the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS) in Newport, Rhode Island. Her duties at DIILS encompasses providing legal training and strategic assistance to countries around the world on a range of legal topics including law of the sea, fisheries, maritime law enforcement and security as well as environmental protection. She is also the primary legal point of contact for the Coast Guard's Model Maritime Service Code Program.



Before rotating to DIILS, CDR Leonard-Cho served as the Executive Assistant to the Coast Guard First District (D1) Commander from July 2015 to June 2017, for which her responsibilities included drafting speeches and strategic engagement planning. Prior to the D1 assignment, CDR Leonard-Cho was the Logistics Department Head at Sector Long Island Sound from 2012 to 2015, overseeing 80 staff that provided support to the Sector in the areas of finance, engineering, personnel administration, housing, healthcare and food services. She also was the Commanding Officer of Military Personnel, ensuring good order and discipline for the Sector.

From 2009 to 2012, CDR Leonard-Cho was the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate of District Eleven in Alameda, California, where she provided real-time guidance to senior leadership to ensure Coast Guard operations were conducted in accordance with applicable law, policy, and international agreements. Her practice spanned operational law, administrative law, military justice and government ethics. Previous legal assignments included serving as Chief of Claims and Litigation for the Maintenance & Logistics Command, Pacific, 2007-2009, where she worked closely with the Department of Justice to defend the United States in civil litigation. She also had a four year tour as a Coast Guard National Pollution Funds Center attorney, providing advice on the recovery of costs expended from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund as well as claims against the Fund. In addition, CDR Leonard-Cho worked as a staff attorney at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, located in Washington, D.C., in the Office of Environmental Law, 1999 – 2001, and later within the Office of Maritime and International Law, 2001-2003, where she was the U.S. Delegation Deputy Representative to the International Maritime Organization Legal Committee.

CDR Leonard-Cho graduated from The Johns Hopkins University with a Bachelors of Art degree in International Studies with an East Asian concentration. For her undergraduate senior fall semester she studied abroad at Kansai Gaidai in Osaka, Japan. Upon graduating, she spent a few years working as an environmental claims adjuster for the Travelers Insurance Company in Maryland. She then moved to New Hampshire, and in 1996 she earned her Juris Doctor degree, *cum laude*, from Suffolk University Law School as well as became a licensed attorney in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. She worked at the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution until she joined the U.S. Coast Guard as a Direct Commission Lawyer in 1999.

Commander Leonard-Cho is married and has two children.