



**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY**

**MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-261**

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**To:** **Ship-owners/Operators, Company Security Officers, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organizations (ROs).**

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**Subject:** **Medical Certificate of Seafarers**

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**Reference:** **Circular N° DGGM-UCC-035-2017 of December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

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1. The purpose of this Circular is to reiterate all users of the Panamanian Registry the mandatory submission of the Medical Certifications of Seafarers when apply for certification or endorsement.
2. In this sense and in compliance with the national and international standards that regulate the issuance and presentation of medical Certificate for seafarers and the format in which it shall appear, it is necessary to make the following remarks:
  - 2.1 The Medical Certificates of Seafarers issued in the Republic of Panama must be provided by a qualified and recognized doctor by the Panama Maritime Authority, in the official format adopted for this purpose in accordance with the requirements stated in Regulation I/9 and Section A-I/9 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.
  - 2.2 The Medical Certificates issued abroad, must be provided by a qualified and recognized doctor by the respective competent authorities of the State Party in the formats authorized by those authorities in compliance with the requirements of Regulation I/9 and Section A-I/9 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.
  - 2.3 In relation with point 1, the format of the Medical Certificates authorized by the Panama Maritime Authority can only be used by the recognized doctors by the Panama Maritime Authority within the Republic of Panama.

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2.4 It is necessary to state that at the moment of receiving the medical certificates of seafarers, it shall be considered that the formats of foreign medical certificates may vary by the competent authority of the State Party; nevertheless, the technical officer must check that the certificates were issued by a doctor duly qualified and recognized by their respective competent authorities.

2.5 The records or lists of physicians recognized to perform recognitions to seafarers in order to issue Medical Certificates shall be available to third State Parties, companies and interested seafarers, by each competent authorities, in compliance with Section A-I/9, paragraph 4 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.

2.6 It must be ensured that these records or lists can be requested through the Private Consulate of Merchant Marine, and have them available at the Regional Documentation Offices when evaluating the medical Certificates submitted by the seafarers.

2.7 Likewise, it is expected that each State Party shall adopt its own official format of the medical Certificate; notwithstanding, in case of not having an official format, the medical Certificates at least must include the information required in Section A-I/9, paragraph 7 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, as follows:

- a. Competent authority and policies that regulate the issuance of the document.
- b. Seafarer's Information:
  - Name;
  - Date of Birth;
  - Gender; and
  - Citizenship.
- c. Declaration of the recognized physician.
- d. Details of issuing authority :
  - Official Stamp (including the name) of the issuing authority; and
  - Signature of the authorized official.
- e. Seafarer's Signature.

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2.8 Unless a shorter period is required by reason of the specific duties to be performed by the seafarer or is required in accordance with the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended:

- a. A medical certificate shall be valid for a maximum period of two years.
- b. A certification of colour vision shall be valid for a maximum period of six years.

2.9 The Medical Certificates can be issued in the official language of the issuing country. If the used language is not English, the text must have an English translation, based on Section A-I/9, paragraph 8 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.

2.10 The Republic of Panama is aware that some Companies conduct medical examinations for Company and specific industry employment purpose and that such medical examination may include more requirements and/or standards than those states in the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended or MLC Convention, 2006 provisions. Medical certificates issued following such Company or industry specific employment examinations may be accepted as far as they comply with the following:

- a. The doctors in order to do medical examinations must be approved by the Panama Maritime Authority or a competent authority of a country that has ratified the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended or MLC Convention, 2006. The document by which the physicians are authorized should mention the competent authority or authorizing country.
- b. The medical certificate must be in English and include the minimum requirements of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.
  - i. Marine's data: Name, date of birth, passport, gender and citizenship.
  - ii. Statement from the doctor about the health status of the seafarer.
  - iii. Stamp and signature of the doctor.
  - iv. Signature of the seafarer.

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c. The Medical Certificate, subject to this paragraph, will not be issued to the followings ranks: Master, Chief Engineer Officer, Chief Mate, Second Engineer, Officer in Charge of a Navigation Watch, Officer in Charge of an Engineering Watch, Electro-Technical Officer, Rating forming part of a Navigational Watch, Rating forming part of an Engineering Watch, Able Seafarer Deck, Able Seafarer Engine, and Electro-Technical Rating.

3. This Circular has enclosed the following documents:

- [Guidelines on the Medical Examinations of Seafarers](#)
- [Medical Certificate form](#)
- [Medical Examinations form](#)

The [Circular No. DGGM-UCC-035-2017 of December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017](#) is attached as reference.

**June, 2018** – New Medical Certificate form added

**December, 2017** – amendments to the followings paragraphs: 1, 2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10A. Inclusion of paragraphs 2.10B & 2.10C.

**September, 2014** – Change of email address on footer below

**June, 2013** – New point 10

**April, 2013** – Change of Contact Points below.

**April, 2013** – Addition of new form (point 13)

**April, 2013** – Inclusion of 2 additional forms (points 11 and 12)

**March, 2013** – Addition of new point 10.

**December, 2012**

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