



FIT AND PROPER PERSON GUIDELINES

Maritime Cook Islands | 2025



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1. Purpose

“Fit and proper person” is a common term that describes an assessment of an individual’s competence and suitability for a specific occupation or privilege.

A fit and proper person check is required in accordance with the [Maritime Transport Act 2008](#) (Part 4) as part of an approval process for everyone who wishes to hold a maritime document and recognition of documents issued by Maritime Cook Islands (MCI).

It is a condition of every maritime document that the holder continues to satisfy the fit and proper person criteria.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- [Cook Islands Certificate of Competency](#),
- [Certificate of Proficiency](#),
- [Endorsement of Recognition Certificate](#),
- [Seamans Discharge Book](#).

The assessment checks and considers:

- compliance history with transport regulatory requirements
- related experience within transport industry
- knowledge of applicable maritime regulatory requirements
- history of physical/mental health or serious behavioural problems
- convictions for transport safety offences or drug offences
- convictions for violence/causing danger to another or criminal damage
- evidence of transport safety offence or contravention/non-compliance with maritime rules and
- any other matters and evidence that may be relevant.

These guidelines provide information and explanations to support the implementation of the requirements set out in the Maritime Transport Act, 2008 and should be read in conjunction with those regulations.

2. How to Apply

To apply, you must complete the [Fit and Proper Person form](#), including:

- personal details
- mandatory questions
- criminal history (with official records)

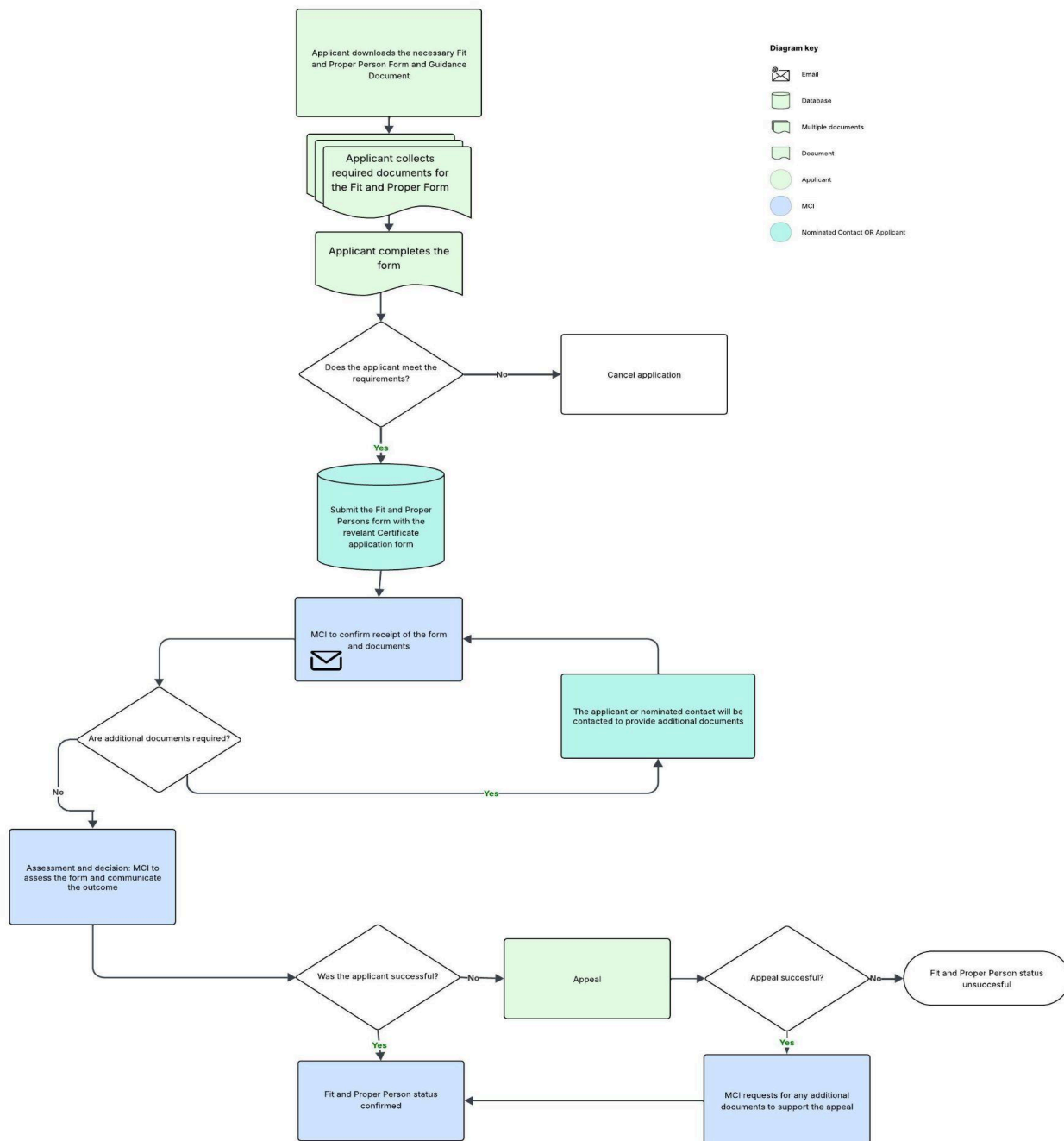
A copy of the [Fit and Proper form](#) is available on the MCI website, under the Seafarers section ([Fit and Proper page](#)).

2.1. Supporting Documents

Supporting Document	Vetting Requirement
Fit and Proper Person Form	Must be fully completed and signed.
	Must be signed and dated no more than three months before MCI STC receives the application for a maritime document.
Police Report	Attach a police report of your criminal record history, must include transport offences.
	Must include a police report from the country of which you are a national. (If you have not lived in that country at any time during the last five years, you may instead provide a police report from the country where you have resided during that period).
	Must be official, issued by a government-recognised law enforcement agency.
	Must be in English or accompanied by an English translation.
	Must be issued within the last five years, provided the applicant certifies that there has been no change in their criminal record status since the date of issue.

2.2. Fit and Proper Person Process

Flowchart Process:



Follow these steps to ensure the application is properly completed and submitted:

1. Applicant completes the form

The applicant must personally complete the Fit and Proper Person form and ensure all required documents (such as the police report) are prepared and included.

2. Check the requirements

Before submission, confirm that all eligibility requirements are met and that all supporting documents are provided as per the checklist.

3. Submit the application

The completed Fit and Proper Person form, together with all required supporting documents, must be submitted along with the relevant Cook Islands certificate application form.

Example: If the applicant is applying for a Certificate of Endorsement, the Fit and Proper Person form and supporting documents must be submitted within the Certificate of Endorsement application form.

4. Confirmation and follow-up

MCI will send a confirmation email to the nominated contact indicated in the Cook Islands certification application form. If additional documents or clarifications are required, MCI will follow up with the nominated contact.

5. Assessment and decision

Once all documents are received, MCI will assess the application. The outcome will be communicated to the nominated contact.

If the application is declined because the person is assessed as not being a fit and proper person, MCI will issue a written notice to the nominated contact. This notice will:

- Explain the decision and the grounds for it.
- Set a date by which appeal submissions may be made.
- Indicate when the proposed decision will take effect.
- Inform the person of their right of appeal; and
- Include any other relevant information

It is the responsibility of the person receiving the notice to ensure that all submissions or supporting information are provided to MCI within the specified time.

MCI may, but is not required to, consider late submissions.

After reviewing all submissions, MCI will make a final decision and notify the affected person and any relevant parties in writing of the outcome, the grounds for the decision, the date it takes effect, and any applicable rights of appeal.

Important Note: Successfully passing the Fit and Proper Person assessment does not guarantee the issuance of a Cook Islands certificate. The final decision also depends on the outcome of the full evaluation of all supporting documents submitted with the certificate application.

3. Appeals

If you do not agree with the decision regarding your Fit and Proper Person assessment, you have the right to appeal.

For further details on the process, please refer to the [Appeals page](#) on our Maritime Cook Islands website.

4. Explanatory Notes

- The Fit and Proper Person form collects personal information about the applicant, for a maritime document. The purpose of collecting this information is to determine if the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold the maritime document they are applying for. This is a requirement under the Maritime Transport Act 2008.
- The collection of this information is authorised by Part 4 of the Maritime Transport Act 2008.
- Supplying the information for the Fit and Proper Person form is voluntary. However, MCI cannot issue a maritime document unless you meet the fit and proper person criteria set out in section 33 of the Maritime Transport Act 2008. The information requested in this form is required for such an assessment. It is the applicant's duty to provide MCI with all the information and evidence necessary to demonstrate that they meet the fit and proper person criteria for a maritime document.

- MCI requires a new Fit and Proper Person form to be completed with each new application for a maritime document. This ensures that each application is assessed against the most up-to-date information. However, if multiple applications are submitted at the same time or as part of a combined application package, a single Fit and Proper Person form may be used, provided it is valid and current. Each application allows MCI to gather relevant information and assess the applicant's eligibility for the document(s) applied for.
- The intended recipients of your information are MCI and the relevant employees of MCI.
- Maritime Cook Islands (1st Floor Browne's Building, Avarua, Rarotonga, Cook Islands, PO Box 882), is the agency collecting, using and holding the information for your Fit and Proper Person application.
- You have the right, under MCI's Privacy Policy, to access and correct any personal information you supply to MCI.
- If MCI proposes to take into account any information you have provided that is, or may be, prejudicial to you as an applicant for a maritime document, you will be notified of this and given a reasonable opportunity to refute or comment on the information.
- It is an offence under Part 5 of the Maritime Transport Act 2008 to communicate false information or fail to provide relevant information, including information required by the Fit and Proper Person Form.

5. Questions and Answers

Q1. Will I fail the assessment if I disclose any criminal convictions?

Not necessarily. Each case is assessed on its own merits. The assessment is robust and fair.

Q2. How confidential is my information?

MCI is required by law to protect the confidentiality of the information you have supplied.

Q3. Is there a fee?

There is no fee required to process a fit and proper person application. The only applicable fee incurred will be for your application for a maritime document.

Q4. Can I lose my fit and proper person status?

Yes. A condition of every maritime document is that the holder of the document continues to be fit and proper. You are required to inform MCI of any matters that may affect your fit

and proper person status. The system relies on the honesty and integrity of document holders.

Q5. How long does the fit and proper person status last?

If the circumstances do not change it lasts for the life of the maritime document.

For example, the certificates of competency require revalidation after five years which means a new fit and proper person assessment is required. When applying for a new certificate of competency, you will need new fit and proper person assessments also.

Q6. Can someone submit the form on my behalf?

Yes. While you must personally complete the form, it can be submitted on your behalf by an approved Cook Islands maritime training institution, crewing agency, employer, agent or other representative. This must be declared in the form.

Q7. What if I miss submitting a required document?

MCI will contact the nominated contact if additional documents or clarifications are needed. However, it is your responsibility to ensure all required documents are submitted on time. Incomplete submissions may result in your application being delayed or declined.

Q8. What happens if my circumstances change after I have been approved?

You must inform MCI if anything arises that may affect your fit and proper person status (e.g., new criminal charges). Failure to report this may result in suspension or cancellation of your maritime document.