

**Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Estonia No. 51 of 16.03.2005**

**Entry into force 1 April 2005**

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**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STATE OF HEALTH, THE PROCEDURE FOR THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND THE FORMAT OF HEALTH CERTIFICATES OF PERSONS WISHING TO ENTER INTO A SEAFARER'S CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT, CREW MEMBERS, AND PERSONS WHO STUDY AND PERSONS WHO COMMENCE STUDIES AT A MARITIME EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN THE FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

The Regulation has been adopted on the basis of subsection (7) of § 26 of the Maritime Safety Act of the Republic of Estonia

**Chapter 1 REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE OF HEALTH**

**§ 1 General requirements for state of health**

The persons wishing to enter into a seafarer's contract of employment, crew members and persons who study (*hereinafter seafarers*) and persons who commence studies (*hereinafter student applicants*) at a maritime educational institution in the formal educational system shall be physically and mentally capable of performing routine and emergency duties and shall not have health disorders or states of health which may endanger their own or other persons' life and health.

**§ 2 Hearing standards**

- (1) The examination of the hearing of seafarers and student applicants shall be made by a pure tone audiometer. Each ear shall be examined separately.
- (2) In the medical examination of deck officers, engineer officers, deck or engine ratings, radio operators and student applicants for these specialties, one of the following requirements shall be applied:
  - 1) hearing loss should not exceed 30 dB within the frequencies 500–2000 Hz and 40 dB within the frequencies 3000–4000 Hz (good hearing);
  - 2) the arithmetic mean of hearing loss within the frequencies 500, 1000, 2000 and 3000 Hz should not exceed 30 dB in the better ear and 40 dB in the less good ear (good hearing).
- (3) If a seafarer specified in subsection (2) has worked in that position for over five years, hearing loss should not exceed 30 dB within the frequencies 500–2000 Hz and 40 dB within the frequencies 3000–4000 Hz in the better ear, and 40 dB within the frequencies 500–2000 Hz and 60 dB within the frequencies 3000–4000 Hz in the less good ear (average hearing). Considering the seafarer's age and length of service, he/she may continue to work by the decision of the person conducting the medical examination, if

the arithmetic mean of hearing loss within the frequencies 500, 1000 and 2000 Hz does not exceed 30 dB in the better ear and 40 dB in the less good ear.

- (4) For seafarers not specified in subsection (2), hearing loss in the better ear should not exceed 40 dB within the frequencies 500–2000 Hz and 60 dB within the frequencies 3000–4000 Hz (weak hearing).
- (5) Considering the seafarer's age and length of service, the hearing loss to a level of social interaction (speech-hearing distance of 2,5 metres) discovered at a regular medical examination of a seafarer, except for deck officers, deck ratings and radio operators, is acceptable by the decision of the person conducting the medical examination.

### **§ 3 Vision standards**

- (1) The uncorrected visual acuity of deck officers and student applicants for this specialty and persons in navigational watch shall be 5/20 or better in the better eye and 5/30 or better in the less good eye, and corrected visual acuity with both eyes 5/5 or better.
- (2) If the deck officer or person in navigational watch has been working in this position for over five years and he/she is over 40 years of age, his/her uncorrected visual acuity with both eyes shall be 5/30 or better and corrected visual acuity with both eyes 5/6,6 or better.
- (3) In cases specified in subsections (1) and (2), normal fields of vision, colour vision and night vision shall be required.
- (4) In case of seafarers not specified in subsection (1) and student applicants, the uncorrected visual acuity shall be 5/30 or better if they have monocular vision, and the corrected visual acuity shall be 5/10 or better if they have monocular or binocular vision.
- (5) If a seafarer needs glasses or contact lenses, he/she shall have a spare pair or pairs available on board the ship.

### **§ 4 Medical contraindications**

- (1) Health disorders or conditions that constitute absolute or relative contraindications to commencing studies at a maritime educational institution or working on a ship are listed in Annex 1.
- (2) In case a person has absolute contraindication A, he/she is unfit to commence studies at a maritime educational institution or work on a ship.
- (3) In case a person has relative contraindication B, the person conducting the medical examination shall impose a restriction on the person's specialty, position, area of navigation or, in accordance with clause 12 (5) 1), the validity period of the health certificate. Restrictions on the area of navigation are domestic voyages and navigable inland waters, the Baltic Sea area, or the navigational areas of Europe.

## **Chapter 2 PROCEDURE FOR MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

### **§ 5 Undergoing medical examination**

- (1) Persons wishing to enter into a seafarer's contract of employment and student applicants shall undergo a medical examination not earlier than three months prior to entering into a seafarer's contract of employment or commencing studies.
- (2) Regular medical examinations shall be undergone:

- 1) once a year by seafarers under 18 years of age, except for students at a maritime educational institution during a period when no seagoing practice is assigned;
  - 2) every two years by seafarers over 18 years of age;
  - 3) in case a relative contraindication is revealed during medical examination and the person conducting the medical examination so decides, but not less frequently than once a year.
- (3) In addition to the conditions specified in subsections (1) and (2), seafarers shall undergo a medical examination if they:
- 1) take up another position for which more stringent health requirements have been established;
  - 2) they have been on sick leave for 30 days or longer; or
  - 3) they have been discharged from a ship for health reasons.

## **§ 6 Persons conducting medical examination**

Medical examinations shall be conducted by medical practitioners authorised by the Health Board.

## **§ 7 Health examinations included in medical examination**

- (1) During a medical examination the following laboratory tests shall be conducted:
  - 1) a clinical blood panel – during a prior and regular examination;
  - 2) a urine test – during a prior and regular examination;
  - 3) blood sugar levels – during a prior examination;
  - 4) a Rh blood group typing, if this has not been done previously.
- (2) During a medical examination the following examinations shall be conducted:
  - 1) X-ray of lungs – during a prior examination and in case health disorders or any indications are revealed during a medical examination;
  - 2) ECG – during a prior examination, in case health disorders or any indications are revealed during medical examination of seafarers under 50 years of age, and during medical examination of seafarers over 50 years of age;
  - 3) pure tone audiometry – during a prior examination, four years after the previous test, for engineers two years after the previous test, and in case health disorders or any indications are revealed during a medical examination;
  - 4) vision testing – during a prior and regular examination;
  - 5) colour vision testing with Ishihara tests and visual fields assessment with Donders tests – during a prior examination and in case health disorders or any indications are revealed during a medical examination.
- (3) In order to specify a health disorder or assessment of a condition listed in Annex 1, the person conducting medical examination is entitled to refer the subject to health examinations not specified in subsections (1) and (2) (additional health examination).
- (4) The health examinations specified in clauses (2) 1) and 2) shall not be necessary for persons wishing to enter into a seafarer's contract of employment if the person conducting medical examination has information about the health examinations conducted during the prior examination.

## **§ 8 Time period for undergoing health examinations**

- (1) Student applicants and seafarers shall undergo health examinations within one month from the date of referral to the health examinations.
- (2) In the case provided for in subsection 7 (3), student applicants and seafarers shall pass health examinations within three months from the date of referral to the health examinations.

## **§ 9 The scope of medical examination**

- (1) The person conducting medical examination shall examine student applicants and seafarers to the extent provided for in section 7.
- (2) If more than three years have passed since the previous medical examination or the person conducting medical examination has no information about the prior medical examination of the subject, the person conducting medical examination shall conduct an examination to the extent of a prior examination.
- (3) In the case provided for in clause 5 (3) 1), the person conducting medical examination shall conduct an examination to the extent of a prior examination.
- (4) In the case provided for in clauses 5 (3) 2) and 3), the person conducting medical examination shall conduct an examination to the extent of a regular examination.

## **§ 10 The conduct of medical examination of seafarers**

- (1) Before undergoing medical examination, a seafarer shall present to the person conducting medical examination an identity document and fill in Part 1 of the record in the form provided in Annex 2. If necessary, the person conducting medical examination shall fill it in on the basis of the information received from the seafarer. The seafarer shall confirm the accuracy of the data in Part 1 of the record by his signature.
- (2) The person conducting medical examination shall conduct a medical examination of the seafarer, perform or arrange for any additional health examinations that may be required and, if necessary, consult other medical specialists, and document the results of the medical examination and, if appropriate, the results of the health examinations in Part 2 of the medical record. Records of the results of health examinations shall be kept with the seafarer's medical record.
- (3) The person conducting medical examination shall determine whether or not the seafarer is fit to work on a ship, taking into account the compliance of his/her state of health with the health requirements established. Depending on the seafarer's state of health, the person conducting medical examination may impose restrictions in accordance with subsection 4 (3).
- (4) In addition to the decision referred to in subsection (3), the person conducting medical examination shall determine whether the seafarer is or is not fit for a navigational watch.
- (5) The person conducting medical examination shall document the decisions taken on the basis of the medical examination in Part 3 of the seafarer's medical record.
- (6) The person conducting medical examination shall present and explain to the seafarer the results of his/her medical examination and health examinations and the decisions taken on the basis of those, and obtain the seafarer's signature on his/her health record.

## **§ 11 The conduct of medical examination of student applicants**

- (1) The provisions of subsections (1), (2), (5) and (6) of § 10 shall apply to the conduct of medical examination of student applicants, taking account of the specifications of student applicants and the specifications arising from this section.
- (2) Before undergoing medical examination, a student applicant shall present to the person conducting medical examination an identity document, after which the person conducting medical examination shall fill in Part 1 of the record in the form provided in Annex 3.
- (3) The person conducting medical examination shall determine whether or not the student applicant is suitable for studies at a maritime educational institution, taking into account the compliance of his/her status of health with the health requirements established.

## **§ 12 Formalisation and issue of health certificates**

- (1) On the basis of the medical records, the person conducting medical examination shall prepare a health certificate in the A4 format for student applicants and in the A5 format for seafarers.
- (2) The person conducting medical examination shall issue:
  - 1) a health certificate in accordance with the form set out in Annex 4 to seafarers working on vessels on domestic voyages and in navigable inland waters;
  - 2) a health certificate in accordance with the form set out in Annex 5 to seafarers working on vessels on international voyages;
  - 3) a health certificate in accordance with the form set out in Annex 6 to student applicants.
- (3) The health certificates referred to in clauses 1) and 2) of subsection (2) shall be prepared up in duplicate. The original shall be issued to the seafarer and the copy shall be kept by the person conducting medical examination.
- (4) The person conducting medical examination shall issue to the seafarer a health certificate in accordance with the form set out in Annex 4, if the restriction of domestic voyages and navigable inland waters as the area of navigation is imposed on the seafarer.
- (5) The person conducting medical examination shall issue a health certificate with a period of validity of:
  - 1) up to one year, if during the seafarer's medical examination a relative contraindication is discovered;
  - 2) one year to seafarers under 18 years of age;
  - 3) two years to seafarers over 18 years of age.

## **§ 13 Preservation of medical records**

- (1) The health care provider shall preserve medical records and records of health examinations in paper or electronic form for 75 years from the date of birth of the subject.
- (2) The copy of the health certificate specified in subsection 12 (2) shall be preserved by the health care provider for at least five years.

### **Chapter 3 IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS**

#### **§ 14 Validity of health certificates issued prior to entry into force of this Regulation**

A seafarer's health certificate issued prior to entry into force of this Regulation shall be valid until the date of expiry marked on the certificate.

#### **§ 15 Entry into force of medical contraindications**

The indices of obesity and obesity with complications referred to in Annex 1 shall be applied from 1 January 2007.

Annex 1. List of medical contraindications

Annex 2. Medical record of a seafarer

Annex 3. Medical record of a person commencing studies at a maritime educational institution

Annex 4. Medical certificate for seafarers working on vessels on domestic voyages and in navigable inland waters

[Annex 5.](#) Medical certificate for employees on board ship

Annex 6. Medical certificate for student applicants at a maritime educational institution