

# **The Swedish Transport Agency's Regulations (TSFS 2011:117) on Medical Certificate for Seafarers;**

decreed on 19 December 2011.

The Swedish Transport Agency prescribes the following under Sections 5 and 6 of the Ordinance (1979:38) on Medical Certificate for Seafarers.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introductory provisions**

**Section 1** These regulations concern medical examinations carried out before the issuance of such medical certificates as are referred to in the Act (1983:929) on Enlistment or the Government Ordinance (2003:438) on Ship Safety.

**Section 2** In these regulations, the word *seafarer* is used to designate the person being examined in order to obtain a medical certificate in accordance with Section 1.

**Section 3** Provisions on which medical practitioners may issue medical certificates in accordance with Section 1 are found in the Ordinance (1979:38) on Medical Certificate for Seafarers.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The medical examination**

#### **Scope of the examination**

##### *Full examination*

**Section 1** In these regulations, a medical examination which, in accordance with Section 18, second paragraph of the Act (1983:929) on Enlistment or Chapter 4, Section 18 of the Government Ordinance (2003:438) on Ship Safety, is not limited to vision and hearing capacity, will be denominated *full examination*.

A full examination shall cover:

- a) going-over of the seafarer's declaration of health,
- b) general examination,
- c) vision examination,
- d) hearing examination, and
- e) test for the possible presence of tuberculosis.

### *Limited examination*

**Section 2** In Section 18, second paragraph of the Act (1983:929) on Enlistment and Chapter 4, Section 18 of the Government Ordinance (2003:438) on Ship Safety, it is stated that the medical examination may, in some cases, be limited to vision and hearing capacity. In these regulations, such an examination is denominated *limited examination*.

### **The content and carrying out of full examinations**

**Section 3** A full examination shall take as its point of departure the written declaration of health to be submitted by the seafarer in accordance with the Ordinance (1979:38) on Medical Certificate for Seafarers.

**Section 4** A general examination shall focus on the assessment of any medical conditions or functional disorders stated in the declaration of health. If possible, the general examination shall also reveal if the seafarer has any other medical condition or functional disorder that may affect his or her fitness for service at sea.

**Section 5** A full examination shall include a vision and hearing examination. Provisions on this examination are found in Chapter 4.

**Section 6** As part of a full examination, the presence of tuberculosis shall be investigated to the extent that may be considered well-founded.

## **The content and carrying out of limited examinations**

**Section 7** Limited examinations shall include a vision and hearing examination. Provisions on this examination are found in Chapter 4.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Assessment of fitness for service**

**Section 1** An examination shall lead up to an assessment of the fitness for service. When a *full examination* is done, the assessment that the seafarer is fit for service at sea shall be based on the following:

1. The person examined does not, according to the medical practitioner's assessment, have any medical condition which may be expected to imply any danger to the health or security of other persons on board the vessel.
2. The person examined does not, according to the medical practitioner's assessment, have any medical condition which may be expected to deteriorate as a result of the service at sea, or to make him or her unfit for service at sea.
3. According to the medical practitioner's assessment, the person examined complies with the requirements regarding vision and hearing capacity that are prescribed for the intended service.

When a *limited examination* is carried out, the assessment that the seafarer is fit for service at sea shall be based on the medical practitioner's finding that the person examined complies with the requirements regarding vision and hearing capacity that are prescribed for the intended service.

**Section 2** Depending on the seafarer's state of health, the certificate of fitness for service, in the case of a full examination, may be limited to a certain position and trade.

Unless there are special reasons to use another expression, the medical practitioner shall use the expression *restricted trade* when issuing a certificate with a restriction regarding trade.

*Restricted trade* refers to traffic in European trade to the north of Brest. European trade is defined in the Ordinance (2011:1533) on Qualifications for Seafarers.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The vision and hearing examination**

#### **General provisions**

**Section 1** This chapter contains provisions on the vision and hearing capacity required for the seafarer to obtain a medical certificate in accordance with Section 18, first paragraph of the Act (1983:929) on Enlistment, or for the seafarer to obtain such medical certificate as is, in accordance with Section 18, second paragraph of the Act (1983:929) on Enlistment or Chapter 4, Section 18 of the Government Ordinance (2003:438) on Ship Safety, limited to vision and hearing capacity.

#### **Vision capacity**

**Section 2** When the vision examination is carried out, the visual acuity shall be determined in a normally lit room with no glaring sources of light within the field of vision. The examination is to be carried out using well and evenly lit eye charts, at a distance of 5 metres or, using a mirror, at a distance of 2.5 metres with the chart placed above the head of the person being examined. The seafarer shall be able to identify all the letters on the line corresponding to the visual acuity of the person being examined.

The visual field is to be tested in accordance with Donder's confrontation test, which is to be carried out separately on each eye, testing each visual field quadrant. If the anamnesis or the test gives cause for suspicion of visual field defect, an examination using a perimeter is to be carried out.

For the seafarer's vision capacity to be assessed as satisfactory, he or she shall comply with the following requirements:

group	occupational group stated on the medical certificate	covering	requirements					
			distance visual acuity	near visual acuity, binocular <sup>1</sup>	colour vision	visual field	nightblindness <sup>2</sup>	double vision <sup>3</sup>
1	deck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- master</li> <li>- mate</li> <li>- helmsman</li> <li>- lookout</li> <li>- those included in the minimum safe manning and belonging to the deck department</li> </ul>	At least 0.7 for one eye and at least 0.5 for the other, with or without corrective lenses. The binocular visual acuity shall be at least 0.2 without corrective lenses.	Vision for the navigation of a vessel. <sup>4</sup>	CIE standard <sup>5</sup> 1 or 2, alternatively another, equivalent, method	normal visual field	sufficient vision to carry out all necessary functions in the dark without exception	no significant condition detected
2a	deck	other personnel who belong to the deck department but not to group 1	The binocular visual acuity shall be at least 0.5 with or without corrective lenses.	-	-	-	-	-
2b	engine	engine personnel	The binocular visual acuity shall be at least 0.5 with or without corrective lenses.	Vision required to read instruments in close proximity, to operate equipment, and to identify systems/ components as necessary.	CIE standard 1, 2 or 3, alternatively another, equivalent, method	sufficient visual field	sufficient vision to carry out all necessary functions in the dark, without exception	no significant condition detected
3	supply service/ other	other personnel	The binocular visual acuity shall be at least 0.2 with or without corrective lenses.	-	-	-	-	-
4	radio telephony personnel	radio personnel responsible for GMDSS	At least 0.4/eye with or without corrective lenses.	Vision required to read instruments in close proximity, to operate equipment, and to identify systems/ components as necessary.	CIE standard 1, 2 or 3, alternatively another, equivalent, method	sufficient visual field	sufficient vision to carry out all necessary functions in the dark, without exception	no significant condition detected

For a seafarer who has not turned 20 years of age and who is to take on a position in group 1 above for the first time, the following applies, in addition to what is required in accordance with the first paragraph: When the visual examination is carried out without corrective lenses, the visual acuity shall be at least 0.8 binocularly, and hypermetropia, if any, may not exceed 3.0 dioptres in either of the eyes.

For a seafarer in group 2 too, visual field and colour vision are to be stated in the medical certificate if the examination shows that the seafarer has sufficient vision and hearing capacity to be helmsman or lookout.

<sup>1</sup> With or without corrective lenses.

<sup>2</sup> To be tested for by a specialist if the first examination indicates nightblindness.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> Including the reading of chart and nautical publication reference, the use of bridge instruments and equipment, and identification of aids to navigation.

<sup>5</sup> As defined in *International Recommendations for Colour Vision Requirements for Transport* by the Commission Internationale de l'Eclairage (CIE-143-2001 including the following versions).

**Section 3** A seafarer who attains the prescribed visual acuity only by using corrective lenses, where testing with such lenses is permitted, shall use glasses or contact lenses while on duty. In such cases, the obligation to use necessary glasses or contact lenses while on duty is to be stated in the medical certificate.

If the seafarer, in order to attain the prescribed visual acuity, uses glasses with side pieces which do not reach around the entire back of ear, the glasses must be fitted with a fastening device preventing the glasses from falling off due to sudden movements.

If the seafarer is obliged to wear glasses or contact lenses while on duty, an extra pair of glasses and, when applicable, an extra fastening device are to be kept on board the vessel.

**Section 4** If the seafarer presents a special colour vision certificate which is not older than four years, his or her colour vision need not be tested unless the seafarer submits information giving cause for a renewed test. However, for medical certificates solely covering vision and hearing capacity, the special colour vision certificate may not be older than two years.

## Hearing capacity

**Section 5** For the seafarer's hearing capacity to be assessed as satisfactory, he or she shall comply with the following requirements:

<i>group</i>	<i>occupational group stated on the medical certificate</i>	<i>covering</i>	<i>requirements</i>
1	deck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- master</li> <li>- mate</li> <li>- helmsman</li> <li>- lookout</li> <li>- those included in the minimum safe manning and belonging to the deck department</li> </ul>	When having each of his or her ears tested separately, the seafarer shall perceive normal conversational voice well at a distance of 4 metres and normal whispered voice well at a distance of 1 metre, in both cases without hearing aid and visual aid.
2a	deck	other personnel who belong to the deck department but not to group 1	When having each of his or her ears tested separately, the seafarer shall perceive normal conversational voice well at a distance of 4 metres and normal whispered voice well at a distance of 1 metre, in both cases without hearing aid and visual aid.
2b	engine	engine personnel	When having each of his or her ears tested separately, the seafarer shall perceive normal conversational voice well at a distance of 2 metres and normal whispered voice well at a distance of 1 metre, in both cases without hearing aid and visual aid.
3	supply service/other	other personnel	With one of his or her ears, the seafarer shall perceive normal conversational voice well at a distance of 1 metre without hearing aid and visual aid.
4	radio telephony personnel	radio personnel responsible for GMDSS	When having each of his or her ears tested separately, the seafarer shall perceive normal conversational voice well at a distance of 4 metres and normal whispered voice well at a distance of 1 metre, in both cases without hearing aid and visual aid.

The hearing capacity of a seafarer who is to take on a position in group 1, 2 or 4 above shall be examined using a pure tone audiometer. For his or her hearing capacity to be considered satisfactory, the seafarer, when being examined, shall perceive signals on

- a) the frequencies 500, 1 000 and 2 000 hertz; the average of the impaired hearing, if any, on these frequencies (pure tone average) must not exceed 25 decibels in either of the ears,
- b) the frequencies 3 000, 4 000 and 6 000 hertz; the average of the impaired hearing, if any, on these frequencies (high-tone mean) must not exceed 30 decibels in either of the ears,

After an application is made, the Swedish Transport Agency may grant a temporary postponement as regards the pure tone audiometer examination requirement. In the case of

such a postponement, the hearing capacity shall be equivalent to what is required for group 1, 2 and 4 respectively, in accordance with the first paragraph.

## **Exemptions from the requirements**

**Section 6** After having consulted the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish Transport Agency may, in special cases, grant exemptions from the requirements in this chapter. An application for such an exemption is to be sent to the Swedish Transport Agency. The opinion of a specialist in eye diseases or impaired hearing, alternatively ear, nose and throat diseases, as applicable, is to be attached to the application. A certificate of the applicant's practical training at sea shall also be attached, if information about this has not been reported to the Register of Seafarers.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The medical certificate and declaration of health**

#### **Common provisions**

**Section 1** When a medical certificate is issued, the form "Medical certificate for seafarers" shall be used.

To access medical certificates for seafarers, medical practitioners shall join the Medical Practitioner's Web via the Swedish Transport Agency's web site. To do so, a data security certificate is required. This can be obtained from the Swedish Transport Agency once it has been verified that the medical practitioner is registered.

After complete examination, the seafarer shall obtain a copy of the forms *Assessment of fitness for service* and *Results of the vision and hearing examination*.

**Section 2** Medical certificates for seafarers may not be issued without the identity of the person examined being verified in a satisfactory manner. If the seafarer is not known to the



medical practitioner, the personal data shall be checked by means of an approved identity paper or a service record book.

**Section 3** Regulations on the validity periods of medical certificates are found in Section 19 of the Act (1983:29) on Enlistment and in Chapter 4, Section 18 of the Government Ordinance (2003:438) on Ship Safety. The medical practitioner may impose a stricter time limit on the certificate if more frequent health check-ups are required.

### **Specific information about the medical certificate and the form for the medical examination**

**Section 4** The declaration of health shall be completed before the examination has started and shall be signed by the seafarer.

In the case of a limited examination, no declaration of health has to be submitted.

**Section 5** If the medical practitioner considers that he or she cannot decide on whether the seafarer is fit for service or not, the medical practitioner may, in certain cases, recommend that another medical practitioner specializing in a certain field examine the seafarer.

If, in addition to the medical certificate, there are circumstances concerning the seafarer's state of health that those responsible for the medical care on board the vessel should be aware of, the medical practitioner may give the seafarer a note in writing, which he or she may hand on to the master. In consultation with the person examined, the medical practitioner may write on the medical certificate that there is such a note, if its content is relevant to the assessment of the seafarer's fitness for service.

**Section 6** If a medical practitioner gives an opinion before the expiry of the recorded period of validity of a previously issued medical certificate and the opinion is limited to only one disease or injury, this shall be stated on a new certificate form where relevant parts are to be filled out. The supplementary opinion will expire at the same time as the original certificate. However, the medical practitioner may impose a stricter time limit if more frequent health check-ups are required. The examination may be limited to a certain disease or

injury only if the medical practitioner has access to the original certificate. If this is not the case, a full examination shall be carried out.

### **Coming into force and transitional provisions**

1. This statute comes into force on 1 January 2012.
2. This statute repeals the Swedish Transport Agency's Regulations (TSFS 2009:3) on Medical Certificate for Seafarers.
3. For service on board a vessel or vessels, medical certificates for seafarers may continue to be issued under the Swedish Transport Agency's Regulations (TSFS 2009:3) on Medical Certificate for Seafarers until and including 31 December 2016. However, these certificates will be valid at the longest until and including 31 December 2016.