

Seafarer certificates expiring during COVID-19 – what you need to know

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With the on-going situation of New Zealand responding to COVID-19 Maritime NZ has taken steps to allow seafarers to work with expired certificates in certain circumstances.

If you hold one of the following certificates and it expired between 11 March 2020 and 30 June 2020, read on to find out more.

- Seafarer certificate of competency
- Seafarer medical certificate
- First aid ancillary certificate for national certificates

If your STCW ancillary certificate of proficiency that requires a five-yearly renewal has expired, read on to find out more.

Seafarer certificate of competency

If your seafarer certificate expired between 11 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 you are able to continue to use it for an additional three months from the date it expired.

The conditions of your expired certificate will continue to apply. This means you can continue to exercise privileges that were previously provided by the expired certificate. This includes any limitations, conditions or suspensions of the expired certificate. If your seafarer certificate is currently suspended you are unable to use it.

There are two additional conditions that apply to your certificate during this time.

- You must cease exercising privileges after the date of expiration if required to do so in writing by the Director.
- For certificates of recognition, your primary certificate must remain valid. This includes where a primary certificate has been extended by the issuing flag state.

The general exemption is from the requirements of Maritime Rules 31.25(1) and 32.10(1).

Seafarer medical certificates

If your medical certificate was either category A, A(T) or B and expired between 11 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 you are able to continue to use it for an additional three months from the date it expired.

The conditions of your expired certificate will continue to apply. This means:

- You must continue to meet any conditions of the expired medical certificate.
- If you are incapacitated by illness or injury for 30 or more days, an approved medical practitioner must re-examine you and be satisfied that you continue to meet the standard for the category of the expired certificate.

There are two additional conditions that apply to your medical certificate during this time:

- You must be able to produce your expired certificate of medical fitness when requested to do so by the Director or the master of the ship on which you are employed or engaged.
- You must obtain a new medical certificate if required to do so by the Director.

The general exemption is from the requirements in Maritime Rules 34.22(1) and 34.22(4).

First aid ancillary certificates for national certificates

If your first aid ancillary certificate expired between 11 March 2020 and 30 June 2020, you are able to continue to use it for an additional three months from the date it expired.

Ancillary certificates

If your STCW ancillary certificate of proficiency that requires a five-yearly renewal has expired, you are able to continue to use it until 28 February 2021.

These are the STCW ancillary certificates that this applies to.

- basic fire-prevention and fire-fighting
- basic personal survival
- survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats
- advanced fire-fighting
- fast rescue boats
- crowd management training
- safety training (passengers in passenger spaces)
- crisis management and human behaviour, and
- passenger safety, cargo safety and hull integrity training

The general exemption is from the requirements in Maritime Rules 31.25(2) and 32.16(1).

What happens next?

Maritime NZ is continuing to monitor the situation with COVID-19 and will update this page with any changes and additional information as and when it becomes available.

Contact us

If you have any questions please email seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz.