



# Technical Circular

No.: 066/2020

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **Subject: Panama Maritime Authority Merchant Marine Notice, MMN-03/2020 Reg Extension of Seafarers Employment Agreement and Certificates due to outbreak of COVID-19**

1. The Panama Maritime Authority vide updated Merchant Marine Notice, MMN-03/2020 has informed that in those cases where crew change is not possible due to the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Administration considers granting exemptions to the following requirements;
  - a. If the seafarers employment agreement expires or will expire soon, an exception to Standard A2.4.3 'Entitlement to leave', and Standard A2.5.1.2 (b) 'Repatriation' of the Maritime Labour Condition 2006, will be granted in order to extend it.
  - b. In those cases where the change of crew, due to expiration of the Certificate/s cannot be carried out, the Administration will consider issuance of an Exemption or Dispensation Letter based on evaluation of the nature of the case.
2. Exemption/ Dispensation as above will be granted by Panama administration through an Authorization letter.

### **A. Extension of Seafarers Employment Agreement:**

- a. Shipowners seeking Extension of seafarers employment agreement as per '2 a' above, are required to request SEGUMAR Office submitting the following requirements;
  - Email requesting the extension of the seafarers employment agreement, including the particulars of the vessel, seafarer name and position onboard,
  - Copy of Seafarer Employment Agreement of each seafarer for whom extension is requested,
  - Crew List,
  - Copy of the Registry certificate.
- b. Exception letter granted by Panama Administration under above provision will be **valid for a period of three (3) months** to continue being engaged under the Seafarers employment agreement beyond a period of 11 months and the granted extension will be reviewed by the Administration considering the condition of the COVID-19.

- c. By the end of extension provided, the concerned seafarer shall have the right to annual leave with pay and be duly repatriated as per standard A 2.4.3 and A 2.5.1.2(b).

**B. Extension of Seafarers Certificates including Certificate of Endorsement:**

- a. Shipowners seeking Extension of seafarers certificates including certificate of endorsement as per Para '2 b' above are required to request SEGUMAR Office submitting the following requirements;
- Email requesting the extension of the Certificate, including the particulars of the vessel, crew name and position onboard,
  - For extension of certificate under Regulation I/2 of the STCW'78 Convention , as amended, Copy of the Certificate issued by the Panama Maritime Authority,
  - For extension of certificate issued under Regulation I/10 of the STCW'78 Convention , as amended, Authorization letter of extension of the issuance Country and copy of the Home Country License,
  - Crew List,
  - Copy of the Registry certificate.
- b. Extension granted by Panama Administration under above provision will be **valid for a period of three (3) months** from the date of expiration of the certificate/s, and will be reviewed by the Administration to decide whether the granted extension requires additional period considering the condition of the COVID-19.

**C. Extension of the Validity of Colour Copy of Original Transitory Certificate of Seafarers (CT):**

The period of validity for the full-colour copy of the Transitory Certificate stated on Panama Circular, MMC-313 “**period no longer than thirty (30) calendar days**”, is extended for **ninety (90) calendar days**, counting from the issuing date of the CT. This CT serves as evidence of the application processing until the original document is received onboard. This extension will be reviewed considering the condition of the COVID-19.

- D. Dispensation Letter:** If any third Party member of the STCW'78 Convention, who issued the Seafarers Certificate has not extended it due to Corona Virus outbreak, Panama Administration will grant a Dispensation Letter to the capacity (rank). Shipowners seeking Dispensation Letter are required to request SEGUMAR Office submitting the following requirements;

- Copy of the Certificate/s,

- Crew List,
- Copy of the Registry certificate.

#### **E. Extension of Medical Certificate and Certificate of Proficiency:**

The Administration has informed that;

- The Administration will grant an Authorization to the seafarer who's medical certificate has expired within **January and June 2020**. Request for authorization letter can be made at - [labormar@amp.gob.pa](mailto:labormar@amp.gob.pa) by submitting the following;
  - a) Copy of the medical certificate expired within January and June 2020 issued by a medical practitioner recognized by the Panama Maritime Authority,
  - b) Passport copy.

The Authorization Letter will be **valid for a period of three (3) months** and will be issued at no cost.

- In urgent cases, the Administration may permit a seafarer to work without a valid medical certificate until the next port of call where a medical practitioner recognized by a State Party of the STCW'78 as amended is available. Request for Authorization Letter for same can be made to [labormar@amp.gob.pa](mailto:labormar@amp.gob.pa) by submitting the following:
  - a) The ship's particulars, crew name and position on board.
  - b) Copy of the medical certificate expired issued by a medical practitioner recognized by a State Party of the STCW'78 as amended and/or MLC, 2006 as amended.
  - c) Panama License (Certificate of Competence, Endorsement of Certificate of Competence, Seaman's Book).

The period of such authorization letter will **not exceed three (3) months**, and it will be issued at no cost.

- If the medical certificate of a seafarer expires, it shall continue in force in this exceptional circumstances **for a period of three (3) months** from its expiry date (MLC, 2006 Standard A1.2.9).
- Certificate of proficiency issued by an authorized Maritime Training Center of Panama in accordance with the regulation V and VI of the STCW, as amended

(except those issued under Regulation I/2) will be considered valid for a period of three (3) months from its expiry date.

**F. Dispensation Letter of the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA).**

- a. The Dispensation Letter to extend the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) issued by the Maritime Labour Affairs Department of the General Directorate of Seafarers shall continue to be issued. Ship owners/ operators seeking Dispensation letter are required to submit the following requirements to the e-mail address - [labormar@amp.gob.pa](mailto:labormar@amp.gob.pa)
    - Request Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) extension, including the particular of the vessel and reasons of the request.
    - Copy of Full-Term Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) expired or about to expire.
    - Registry Certificate.
    - Annual Taxes Receipt.
  - b. The Dispensation Letters issued will be **valid for a period of three (3) months**, and at no cost, solely under this exceptional circumstances.
  - c. A copy of the Dispensation Letter issued by the Directorate General of Seafarers is to be attached to the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA).
3. Measures established vide attached MMN-03/2020 would be reviewed and revised by the Administration, as required, based on the condition of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the global trade in the maritime sector.
  4. Ship owners/ operators and masters of Panama flagged ships are advised to be guided by above.
  5. **This Technical Circular supersedes and revokes our earlier Technical Circular No. 032/2020, dated 02<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.**

**Enclosure:** Panama Merchant Marine Notice, MMN-03/2020, Rev. April 2020.

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**AUTORIDAD MARÍTIMA DE PANAMÁ  
(PANAMÁ MARITIME AUTHORITY)  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE MARINA MERCANTE  
(GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF MERCHANT MARINE)  
DEPARTAMENTO DE CONTROL Y CUMPLIMIENTO  
(DEPARTMENT OF CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE)**

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**Merchant Marine Notice  
Coronavirus and Seafarers employment agreement and Certificates**

**No.: MMN-03/2020**

**February, 2020.**

1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Notice is to inform that with the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a state of global health emergency, causing massive uncertainty across the global trade, resulting in additional implication for the regular shipping operations. The coronavirus outbreak has spread rapidly extended further to several countries.
2. The effects of this outbreak are having a repercussion with the seafarers whose Certificate/s have expired or will expire soon, where the companies are facing problems because their planned disembarkation cannot be safely completed in ports affected by the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus.
3. As it has been determined with extensive travel restrictions to and within infected and non-infected countries, moving personnel has become more difficult, resulting in harsh scrutinizing seafarers who have recently visited affected areas.
4. This Administration considers appropriate to inform how to proceed in the following scenarios of crew change:
  - 4.1. If the seafarers' employment agreement expires or will expire soon, an exception to Standard A2.4.3 "Entitlement to leave", and Standard A2.5.1.2(b) "Repatriation" of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006, will be granted in order to extend it.
  - 4.2. In those cases, where the change of crew, due to expiration of the Certificate/s, cannot be carried out due to the Corona Virus outbreak, this Administration shall consider appropriate the issuance of an Extension or Dispensation Letter evaluating the nature of the case.
5. This pandemic condition is causing inevitable delays on the renewal of the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) expiring in March, April, May and June 2020, due to the travelling restrictions worldwide.
6. In this sense, this Administration has determined the following instructions for the issuance of the correspondent letter:

**6.1. Extension of Seafarers Employment Agreement**

This letters to extend the Seafarers Employment Agreement shall be issued by the SEGUMAR Offices, and shall submit the following requirements:

- a) Email requesting the extension of the Certificate, including the particulars of the vessel, crew name and position on board,
- b) Copy of the Seafarer Employment Agreement (SEA) of each seafarer requesting the extension
- c) Crew List,
- d) Copy of the Registry certificate

Be informed that the given exception letter according to this Marine Notice will be for a period of three (3) months to continue being engaged f under their seafarers' employment agreements beyond a period of 11 months. The granted extension will be reviewed considering the condition of the COVID-19.

It is understood that at the end of the extension provided by this Administration, all seafarers will have the right to have their annual leave with pay, and to be duly repatriated, as prescribed by the Standard A2.4.3, and Standard A2.5.1.2(b) of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended.

## **6.2. Extension of Seafarers Certificates including Certificates of Endorsement**

This letter shall be issued for the certificates issued by the Panama Maritime Authority under the Regulation I/2, Seaman's book (for ratings) and Regulation I/10 of the STCW'78 Convention, as amended. These letters shall be issued by the SEGUMAR Offices, after receiving the following requirements:

- a) Email requesting the extension of the Certificate, including the particulars of the vessel, crew name and position on board,
- b) For extension of certificate under Regulation I/2 and Seaman's book (for ratings), Copy of the Certificate/s or Seaman's book issued by the Panama Maritime Authority.
- c) For the Extension of Certificates issued under regulation I/10, shall submitted the Authorization letter of extension of the issuance Country and copy of the Home Country License.
- d) Crew List,
- e) Copy of the Registry Certificate

Be informed that the given extension according to this Marine Notice will be for a period of three (3) months from the date of expiration of the certificate/s, and reviewed whether the granted extension shall require additional period considering the condition of the (COVID-19).

## **6.3. Dispensation Letter**

If any Third Party member of the STCW'78 Convention, who issued the Seafarers Certificate has not extended it due to Corona Virus outbreak, this Administration shall grant a Dispensation Letter to the capacity (rank) under the requirements stated in the Merchant Marine Circular No. 175 and the form

established by the circular MMC-191 “[Crew Dispensation Form](#)” shall be submitted along with the following documents:

- a) Copy of the Certificate/s,
- b) Crew List
- c) Copy of the Registry Certificate

#### **6.4. Dispensation Letter of the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA).**

This Dispensation Letter to extend the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) issued by the Maritime Labour Affairs Department of the General Directorate of Seafarers shall continue to be issued, please submit the following requirements to the e-mail address [labormar@amp.gob.pa](mailto:labormar@amp.gob.pa):

- a) Request Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) extension, including the particular of the vessel and reasons of the request.
- b) Copy of Full-Term Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) expired or about to expire.
- c) Registry Certificate.
- d) Annual Taxes Receipt.

The Dispensation Letters issued as product of the COVID-19 condition in this Marine Notice will be valid for a period of three (3) months, and at no cost, solely under this exceptional circumstances.

A copy of the Dispensation Letter issued by the Directorate General of Seafarers shall be attached to the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA).

7. Please contact the SEGUMAR Offices of your convenience to the following e-mail addresses:

<b>America</b>	
SEGUMAR Panama	<a href="mailto:msm@segumar.com">msm@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Miami	<a href="mailto:segumar.miami@segumar.com">segumar.miami@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Houston	<a href="mailto:offshore@segumar.com">offshore@segumar.com</a>
<b>Asia</b>	
SEGUMAR Tokyo	<a href="mailto:segumar@panaconsul-tokyo.com">segumar@panaconsul-tokyo.com</a>
SEGUMAR Imabari	<a href="mailto:segumar.imabari@segumar.com">segumar.imabari@segumar.com</a> <a href="mailto:rhacon@segumarimabari.jp">rhacon@segumarimabari.jp</a>

SEGUMAR Seoul	<a href="mailto:segumarseoul@segumar.com">segumarseoul@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Busan	<a href="mailto:segumarbusan@segumar.com">segumarbusan@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Singapore	<a href="mailto:segumar.sg@segumar.com">segumar.sg@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Shanghai	<a href="mailto:segumar.shanghai@segumar.com">segumar.shanghai@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Manila	<a href="mailto:segumar.manila@segumar.com">segumar.manila@segumar.com</a>
<b>Europe</b>	
SEGUMAR Piraeus	<a href="mailto:segumarp@segumar.com">segumarp@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Istanbul	<a href="mailto:segumarist@segumar.com">segumarist@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR Dubai	<a href="mailto:segumar.dubai@segumar.com">segumar.dubai@segumar.com</a>
SEGUMAR London	<a href="mailto:segumar.uk@segumar.com">segumar.uk@segumar.com</a>

## **8. Extension of the Validity of Color Copy of Full terms of Technical Documents onboard.**

In addition to the measures taken in the MMC-313 updated to 01<sup>st</sup> April 2020, the Panama Maritime Authority will grant an extension of the color copy of the full terms of Technical Documentation (Seaman's book, Course endorsement, Certificate of Competence, Certificate of Proficiency, Endorsement of Certificate of Competence and Endorsement of Certificate of Proficiency) for the period of ninety (90) calendar days, counting from the issuing date of the technical documentation. This document is verifiable using the QR code in the document or asking for confirmation via email to the e-mail address [verification@amp.gob.pa](mailto:verification@amp.gob.pa).

These extensions allowed will be reviewed considering the condition of the COVID-19.

## **9. Extension of the Validity of the Medical Certificates**

**9.1.** For medical certificates issued by medical practitioner recognized by the Panama Maritime Authority, this Administration will grant an Authorization to the seafarer who's medical certificate has expired within January and June 2020. This Authorization Letter will be issued by the Maritime Labor Affairs Department of the General Directorate of Seafarers, please submit your request along with the following requirements to the e-mail address [labormar@amp.gob.pa](mailto:labormar@amp.gob.pa):

- a) Copy of the medical certificate expired within January and June 2020 issued by a medical practitioner recognized by the Panama Maritime Authority,
- b) Passport copy.

Authorization Letters issued as consequence of the COVID-19 condition according to this Marine Notice will be valid for a period of three (3) months, and it will be issued at no cost.



This Authorization does not exempt from the compliance with the requirements established by the General Directorate of the Seafarers in terms of issuance of the Full Terms License.

**9.2.** In urgent cases, the Panama Maritime Authority may permit a seafarer to work without a valid medical certificate until the next port of call where a medical practitioner recognized by a State Party of the STCW'78 as amended is available. This Authorization Letter will be issued by the Maritime Labor Affairs Department of the General Directorate of Seafarers, please submit your request along with the following requirements to the e-mail address [labormar@amp.gob.pa](mailto:labormar@amp.gob.pa):

- a) Email request shall include the ship's particulars, crew name and position on board,
- b) Copy of the medical certificate expired issued by a medical practitioner recognized by a State Party of the STCW'78 as amended and/or MLC, 2006 as amended,
- c) Panama License (Certificate of Competence, Endorsement of Certificate of Competence, Seaman's Book)

The period of such authorization letter will not exceed three (3) months, and it will be issued at no cost.

**9.3.** If the Medical Certificate expires in the course of a voyage, it shall continue in force in this exceptional circumstance for a period of three (3) months from its expiry date (MLC, 2006 Standard A1.2.9).

**10.** Certificates of proficiency issued by an authorized Maritime Training Center of Panama in accordance with the regulation V and VI of the STCW amended (except those issued under regulation I/2) will be considered valid for a period of three (3) months from its expiry date.

**11.** Finally, this measure established would be revised accordingly to the condition of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the global trade in the maritime sector.

*April, 2020 - New paragraphs 8 and 9, the numbers of the paragraphs are also ordered.*

*March 25, 2020-Coronavirus Prevention Measures*

*March, 2020-Coronavirus Prevention Measures*

*February, 2020-Coronavirus Prevention Measure.*

*Inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular or any other request should be directed to:*

*Certification Department / SEGUMAR*

*General Directorate of Seafarers / General Directorate of Merchant Marine*

*Panama Maritime Authority*

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