

Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC)

Overview

The **Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC)** is a mandatory identity and service document issued to Indian seafarers for employment onboard merchant ships. It serves as an internationally recognised record of a seafarer's sea service, documenting engagements and discharges from ships throughout their maritime career. Possession of a valid CDC is essential for serving onboard merchant vessels and for maintaining an authenticated record of sea service.

Issuing Authority

Continuous Discharge Certificates are issued by the Shipping Master through the Government Shipping Offices located at:

- Mumbai
- Chennai
- Kolkata

These offices function under the Directorate General of Shipping, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India.

Eligibility

An applicant is eligible for the issuance of a Continuous Discharge Certificate if he/she fulfils the following requirements:

Nationality

- Must be a citizen of India.

Medical Fitness

- Must possess a valid Medical Fitness Certificate as prescribed under the Merchant Shipping (Medical Examination) Rules.

Mandatory STCW Safety Training

The applicant must have successfully completed the following approved basic safety courses:

- Personal Survival Techniques (PST) or Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (PSCRB)
- Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (FPFF) or Advanced Fire Fighting (AFF)
- Elementary First Aid (EFA) or Medical First Aid (MFA) or Medical Care (MC)
- Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (PSSR)

- Security Training for Seafarers with Designated Security Duties (STSDSD) or Ship Security Officer (SSO)

Age

- Must be at least **18 years** of age.

Educational Qualification

- Must have passed **10th Standard (Matriculation)**.

Pre-Sea Training and CDC

A Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) is generally the first identity document required by an individual seeking employment as a seafarer. Candidates aspiring to join the merchant navy are encouraged to undergo DG Shipping-approved pre-sea training courses, which provide structured maritime education, practical training, safety awareness, and familiarisation with shipboard operations. Completion of an approved pre-sea course enhances employability and prepares candidates for a professional career at sea.

Special Relaxations

The Directorate General of Shipping has provided the following relaxations:

- **DGS Order No. 01 of 2019:** Relaxation of the educational qualification for seafarers who served on international cruise ships before the Merchant Shipping (CDC) Rules, 2017 came into force.
- **DGS Order No. 03 of 2019:** Acceptance of Matriculation Certificates issued by the Armed Forces for ex-servicemen applying for CDC.
- **DGS Order No. 05 of 2024:** Relaxation of educational qualification for Scheduled Tribe natives of Minicoy Island, Lakshadweep, for admission to approved pre-sea courses and issuance of CDC.

Fee

The prescribed fee for:

- Fresh CDC
- Renewal
- Replacement
- Duplicate

is ₹700, payable online. The fee is non-refundable.

Validity

A Continuous Discharge Certificate is valid for **10 years** from the date of issue. The certificate may be renewed upon expiry or within one year preceding the date of expiry.

Replacement / Duplicate / Renewal

Replacement CDC

Apply for a Replacement CDC in case of:

- Damaged, defaced or mutilated CDC
- Exhaustion of pages
- Mislaid CDC

Duplicate CDC

Apply for a Duplicate CDC if the CDC is lost. A copy of the FIR/Lost Report is required while applying.

Renewal CDC

Apply online for renewal to extend the validity of the existing CDC.

Cancellation / Suspension / Withdrawal

A Continuous Discharge Certificate may be suspended, withdrawn or cancelled in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act and the Merchant Shipping (Continuous Discharge Certificate) Rules.

A CDC holder who wishes to permanently discontinue sea service may apply to the issuing Government Shipping Office for cancellation of the certificate.

Important Information

- Applications for CDC are submitted through the online portal.
- CDCs are dispatched by post after successful processing of the application.
- Applicants are generally not required to visit the Government Shipping Office in person unless specifically advised.
- Seafarers are advised to ensure that all eligibility requirements and supporting documents are complete before submitting the application.
- As per DGS Order No. 12 of 2026, revision of eligibility criteria for issue of Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) and enhancement of seafarer quality standards shall come into effect from 01 August 2026.

OCI / Foreign Citizen of Indian Origin

An Indian CDC holder who subsequently acquires foreign nationality or Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) status is required to surrender the Indian CDC. Following cancellation, the cancelled CDC booklet may be returned to the holder with appropriate endorsements for record purposes.