

LICENSING PROCESS FAQ

LICENCE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Q. After notifying the Gambling Control Commission of my operations am I guaranteed a licence with my application?

A. No, this application does not guarantee that you will be granted a licence. The licensing process is the next step in demonstrating your interest and intent to comply with the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission of Trinidad and Tobago regulatory requirements. Obtaining a licence is contingent upon a thorough review of your application and supporting documents which include meeting all the necessary criteria set by the Commission. We recommend you thoroughly review the licensing requirements and ensure all documentation and compliance measures are in place to improve your chances of approval.

2. Q. Who can apply for a licence at the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission?

A. The following operators can apply for a licence at the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission;

- a) A person who is eighteen years of age and older; or
- b) A company incorporated under the laws of Trinidad and Tobago is eligible to apply for a Gaming Owner's Licence, a Bookmaker's Licence or a Promoter's Licence.

3. Q. What business documents are generally required when applying for a gambling licence in Trinidad and Tobago?

A. A comprehensive list of business documents for the application of a licence is outlined under the application forms, follow the link below to application requirements. Business documents will vary depending on the category of licence being applied for.

4. Q. If I operate several branches, do I need a licence for each branch?

A. Yes, you are required to obtain a licence for each premises in operation and personnel affiliated with the entity. Based on the entity in which you operate, you will be required to apply for a Gaming Owner's Licence, a Bookmaker's Licence, a Promoter's Licence or a Personal Licence.

5. Q. Can foreign nationals or international enterprises apply for a gambling licence in Trinidad and Tobago?

A. Yes, a foreign national can apply for a gambling licence once specific regulatory requirements are met. An international company must be incorporated under the laws of Trinidad and Tobago and the licences would require a registered local individual to manage the affairs of the company.

6. Q. What occurs if I omit documents when submitting my application?

A. The applicant will be notified of omitted documents and their relevance to their application, however, omission of documents can lead to delays in processing and/or application rejection.

7. Q. If a licence is approved but later found to be missing relevant documentation, can it be suspended or revoked?

A. Yes, the gambling licence may be suspended or revoked if it is later found to be missing required documentation. The Gambling Control Commission has the authority to take disciplinary action against license holders who fail to meet compliance standards.

If a licensee has submitted an application that lacks essential documents, the Commission may:

- ***Suspend the licence** until the missing documentation is provided.*
- ***Revoke the licence** if the omission is deemed a serious violation.*
- ***Impose penalties or restrictions** based on the severity of non-compliance.*

8. Q. Will I be charged to complete this application?

A. Yes, there is a standard fee of \$500TT which is due upon submission of the application.

9. Q. Will I get a confirmation email for the submission of my application?

A. Yes, upon submission of my gambling licence application, you should receive a confirmation email acknowledging receipt of your application, and it may include further details highlighting the next steps of the application process.

10. Q. If I do not get confirmation of my application, should I email the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission?

A. Yes, it is advisable to email the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission if you do not receive a confirmation email. This acknowledges that your submission has been received to allow for processing.

11. Q. Will my licence application be made public?

A. Yes, your application will be published in at least two newspapers in daily circulation in Trinidad and Tobago, inviting the public to comment within one month from the time the notice first appears in the newspapers.

It is noted, however, that the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission takes privacy and confidentiality very seriously. All personal and sensitive information provided to the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission is securely stored and used solely for regulatory and compliance purposes.

12. Q. Who can object to the granting of a licence granted by the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission?

A. The following persons have the authority to object to the granting of a licence:

- Any resident of, or business owner in the area
- Affiliated persons of a school in the area
- Representatives of any religious groups in the area
- The Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly
- A municipal or regional corporation defined under the Municipal Corporation Act
- Any interested parties

13. Q. Will my application be subjected to criminal and legal background checks?

A. Yes, all applicants will undergo a thorough background check. Conducting thorough background checks is a crucial part of the due diligence process. This involves investigating the individuals and entities involved in the gambling operation.

14. Q. What is the duration of the licence?

A. The timeframe or duration of a gambling licence varies based on the specific licence applied for and issued by the Commission. On approval of the licence application, the terms and duration, issuance and expiry dates will be stated on the physical licence.

15. Q. What is the general timeframe for processing and issuance of a gambling licence after submission to the Commission?

A. The type of licence along with further due diligence requirements can impact on the approval process but typically it would range from 3-6 months. (This is to be determined)

16. Q. What can an applicant do if the application is rejected?

A. A written notice to the applicant specifying the grounds for denial of their application will be issued. The notice is sent promptly and includes detailed reasons for the decision; the applicant is then offered the opportunity for Denial and Right Appeal, to appeal the Commission's decision of denial within 28 days of receiving this notice. The appeal must outline their arguments and/or provide additional evidence.

17. Q. What is the renewal process for a licence upon expiration?

A. A licensee shall notify the Commission of his intention to renew his licence six (6) months before its expiration. The application for renewal shall be accompanied by:

- A copy of the licence is to be renewed.
- The renewal fee.
- Evidence is that all taxes, fees, levies and other charges have been paid to the Board of Inland Revenue, the Commission and other relevant authorities.

- Any other information or document required by the Board.

18. Q. What is the difference between Key Personal Licence and Non-Key Personal Licence?

A. The main difference between a Key Personal Licence and a Non-Key Personal Licence issued by the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission lies in the level of responsibility and influence over gambling operations:

Key Personal Licence: This licence is required for individuals who occupy senior management positions or have significant control over the operations of a licensed gambling business. These individuals make strategic decisions and are responsible for ensuring regulatory compliance and can be held accountable for any breaches.

Non-Key Personal Licence: This licence is for individuals involved in operational roles that support gambling services but do not have strategic or managerial decision-making power. This includes staff who interact with the gambling operation but do not influence its overall management or compliance strategy.

19. Q. Who can apply for a Personal Licence?

A. The following persons can apply for a Personal Licence as per section 41 of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021:

- a) a director, a beneficial owner, an associate
 - b) key employees and officers
 - c) security staff at all levels
 - d) internal compliance personnel including game supervisors and inspectors
 - e) accounting staff including cashiers, clerks, assistants and any person dealing with, or recording credit, cash chips, tokens and coins
 - f) any person involved in managing, monitoring, supervising or directing the activities
 - g) any person administering a game on behalf of the licensee, including a croupier;
 - h) any person operating any gaming equipment directly or indirectly connected to the licensed activities and
- such other persons as may be prescribed by the Minister.

20. Q. Is there a licence requirement for online gambling/gaming?

A. The Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission is legislated to licence land-based gambling ONLY. As such, remote gambling licence is currently unavailable and is a criminal offence if found to be conducting remote gambling.

21. Q. What are the ongoing obligations after receiving a licence?

A. Licensees must:

- Comply with all the conditions set out in the terms and conditions of the licence
- Submit regular reports and financial disclosures
- Implement responsible gambling measures
- Allow Commission inspections and audits
- Report on any significant changes in ownership or operations

22. Q. What are “terms and conditions” of a gambling licence?

A. The terms and conditions of a licence are the rules and obligations that a licensee must abide by in order to legally operate under the authority of the Gambling Control Commission. These may include compliance with operational, financial, technical, and responsible gambling requirements.

23. Q. Can the Commission impose additional conditions after a licence is granted?

A. Yes. The Commission has the authority to modify or impose new conditions if deemed necessary to ensure compliance with legal or regulatory standards.

24. Q. What happens if a licensee breaches a term or condition?

A. A breach of the terms and conditions may result in enforcement action by the Commission, including:

- Fines or penalties
- Suspension of Licence
- Revocation of the licence
- Legal proceedings
- Public notice of non-compliance

25. Q. Who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions?

A. The licensee, including its directors, managers, and key employees, is responsible for ensuring full compliance with the stipulated Terms and Conditions. Failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions may result in sanctions against the licence holder.

FIT AND PROPER

1. Q. What does “fit and proper” mean in the context of gambling regulation?

A. "Fit and proper" refers to an assessment made by the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission to determine whether an individual or company is suitable to hold a licence or key position in the gambling sector. This evaluation considers integrity, financial soundness, competence, and any history of criminal or regulatory misconduct. A detailed schedule is provided in the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021 Section 33, Schedule 2.

2. Q. Who needs to undergo a fit and proper assessment?

A. All key personnel involved in licensed gambling operations must undergo a fit and proper assessment. This includes

- Directors
- Beneficial Owners
- An associate
- Key employees and officers
- Security staff at all levels
- Internal compliance personnel including game supervisors and inspectors
- Accounting staff including cashiers, clerks, assistants and any person dealing with, or recording credit, cash chips, tokens and coins
- Any person involved in management, monitoring, supervising or directing the activities
- Any person administering a game on behalf of the licensee, including a croupier
- Any person operating any gaming equipment directly or indirectly connected to the licensed activities
- Such other persons as may be prescribed by the Minister/Commission

3. Q. What factors are considered during a fit and proper assessment?

A. The Commission considers a range of factors, including but not limited to:

- Criminal history (particularly related to dishonesty, violence, fraud or financial crime).
- Financial soundness (e.g., history of bankruptcy or insolvency, liquidity maintenance and proper accounting system).
- Professional qualifications and experience.
- Past conduct in regulated industries.
- Associations with other individuals or entities involved in illegal or unethical conduct.

4. Q. What documents are required for a fit and proper application?

A. The following documents are required during the application process:

- Completed Personal Declaration Form.
- Recent police certificate of character.
- Certified copies of identification.
- Financial statements or credit report.
- Curriculum vitae and supporting qualifications.
- Declaration of beneficial ownership (if applicable).

5. Q. Can a person with a criminal record be deemed fit and proper?

A. Yes, a person with a criminal record is not automatically disqualified from passing the assessment. The Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission will assess the nature of the offence, how long ago it occurred, and whether the individual has demonstrated rehabilitation and good conduct since.

6. Q. Is the fit and proper assessment a one-time requirement?

A. No. Fit and proper assessments are ongoing. The Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission may reassess individuals periodically or when significant changes occur (e.g., change of control, adverse media reports, or regulatory alerts).

7. Q. How long does the fit and proper assessment take?

A. Processing times vary based on the complexity of the case and completeness of documentation. Delays may occur if additional checks or clarifications are required.

8. Q. Can the Commission refuse approval based on the fit and proper test?

A. Yes. The Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Commission has the authority to refuse a licence approval if an individual or entity fails to meet fit and proper standards.

9. Q. How can I appeal a decision regarding my fit and proper status?

A. If you are dissatisfied with a decision, you may file a written appeal with the Commission within thirty days of receipt of the decision, according to Section 50 of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting) Control Act, 2021.

10. Q. Is the information submitted during a fit and proper assessment confidential?

A. Yes. All information submitted is treated with strict confidentiality and is used solely for regulatory purposes, in accordance with data protection laws and the Commission's internal policies.