Law Association of Trinidad and Tobago

LEGAL PROFESSION ACT NO.21 OF 1986 CONSOLIDATED 2000
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CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS

APPLICANTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED 6-MONTH ATTACHMENTS PURSUANT TO SECTION 15(1A) OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION ACT CHAP. 90:03

An application for a CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS shall be made in the prescribed form (available on LATT's website via CoF Online Application Form)

The applicant must be a national of Trinidad and Tobago to apply under s. 15 (1A) of the Legal Profession Act 1986 and must provide the following documents:

Note: *It is mandatory for the Applicant to register their six-month attachment with the LATT upon commencement of the attachment. See the proceeding link for reference.*
https://lawassociationtt.com/law-students/requirements-for-an-attachment/

1. A Statutory Declaration indicating if the applicant has been:

    a. Charged for any criminal offences in a Court of Law in Trinidad and Tobago or any other jurisdiction and at the time of the application the matter(s) remains pending;
    b. Convicted of any criminal offence in a Court of Law in Trinidad and Tobago, and the outcome of same.
    c. Charged for any criminal offences in a Court of Law in any other jurisdiction and has been convicted of same, if same was appealed and the result of said appeal, or if the applicant was pardoned, particulars of same

    Note: *The Statutory Declaration must not be declared prior to 1st October 2023.*

2. A letter of certification from the Head of Chambers practising in Trinidad and Tobago, who is an Attorney-at-Law of not less than ten years standing, to the effect that the applicant has undergone an attachment at those Chambers for a continuous period of not less than six months doing work relating to the practice of law. The letter must include:

    a. The period of attachment, e.g. August 1, 2022 – January 31, 2023;
    b. An attached work log with the areas of law to which the applicant was exposed, e.g. preparation of advice; drafting of conveyance; attended Chaguanas District Court, etc.

Note: *The Practising Certificate for the certifying Attorney-at-Law for the current year or alternatively the Practising Certificate for the preceding year and the receipt for the current year's Annual Subscription fees and contributions to the Compensation Fund for the certifying attorney must also be attached to the letter of certification.*

3. Where the applicant is a member of the Bar of a foreign country or has practised abroad, the applicant must submit:

    - A Certificate of Good Standing from the relevant official of the Bar or professional body of that country.

4. Two testimonials from the following persons:

    a. Preferably from two (2) members of the LATT who are each of at least five (5) years standing and who hold a valid Practising Certificate. The person writing the testimonial must have known the applicant for a period of <u>at least one (1) year</u>, excluding any previous six (6) month attachment; or

    b. One testimonial from a member of the LATT of at least five (5) years standing who holds a valid Practising Certificate and who must have known the applicant for a period of <u>at least one (1) year,</u> excluding any previous six (6) month attachment; and

    One testimonial from a person of good standing whose occupation falls into one of the occupations below, who must have known the applicant for a period of <u>at least five (5) years:</u>

    Senior Public Officers, Ministers of Religion, Managing Directors or Directors and Managers of Financial Institutions, Professionals, Members of Parliament, Mayors, Chairpersons and Members of Local Government Bodies, Notaries Public, Justices of the Peace, Principals and Vice Principals of Schools and University Lecturers. (Endorsement of official stamps is necessary).

TESTIMONIALS ARE TO BE PROVIDED ON THE LETTERHEAD OF THE APPROPRIATE OFFICE OF THE OFFICE HOLDER (e.g A managing director must provide testimonial on company letterhead, Member of Parliament must provide testimonial on Constituency letterhead etc.)

Note: *Persons of good standing who fall into any of the categories listed above should provide documentation to validate their membership/employment. The LATT reserves the right to require further documentation if insufficient documentation has been submitted.*

The testimonials must include:

- A statement of the length of time in which the applicant has been known.

- The circumstances/capacity in which the applicant has been known (personal or professional).
- A statement of the opportunity that the writer of the testimonial had to form the opinions expressed. (A bare statement that the applicant is known for a period of years and is considered a fit and proper person will not suffice).
- Certification as to the applicant's fitness to practise and specific endorsement of their "good character, reputation, honesty and integrity". The certification must include an endorsement that the public can reasonably be expected to have confidence in the Applicant to act as an Attorney at Law and to uphold the ethics and obligations of an Attorney at Law.
- A statement whether at the date of their testimonial they have enquired from the Applicant whether the Applicant has any criminal charges and or convictions and if there are any charges or convictions, what are those charges or convictions.
- A statement that the person is fit and proper to be admitted to the Bar.
- In the case of someone who has known the applicant as a student, it should state what opportunity the writer had to evaluate the applicant other than in the classroom.

5. A coloured US passport-sized photograph (2 x 2 inches/ 51 x 51 mm) of the applicant. The applicant must be dressed in court attire, i.e., a black, navy blue, dark grey, or brown jacket and white shirt for men and a white shirt or blouse for women. This photograph must be certified by the writer of one of the testimonials on the reverse side of the photograph with the following words: "*I certify that this is a true likeness of the applicant, ……"* and must bear the writer's name in block letters with the date and their signature.

6. A copy of Educational Certificates (LLB, LPC, LEC, BPTC & BVC).

   Note: *The original certificate must be presented and will be compared by a LATT staff member and returned following comparison with submitted copies.*

7. A copy of two (2) valid forms of identification (i.e. not expired) along with the original must be presented (either the applicant's National Identification Card, Passport, or Drivers Permit along with his/her Birth Certificate).

8. With immediate effect, there is an administrative charge of TTD $300.00 plus VAT on the application for the Certificate of Fitness.

Important Points to Note

- All documents must be submitted in letter size (8½" x 11") paper.
- **Applicants will be advised of any queries pertaining to their applications by email.**
- **Applicants will be notified of an appointment for the verification of all documents by LATT by email.**
- **All original documents including, passport picture, statutory declaration, identification documents (Driver's Permit, National Identification card, passport), testimonials and educational certificates**

(e.g. LLB, LPC, LEC, BPTC & BVC) must be presented for verification at the appointment. SEE ONLINE CHECKLIST

- The dress code for the document verification appointment for all applicants visiting LATT's office is Court Attire (Black and White). LATT reserves the right to cancel the appointment if the applicant is not suitably attired.
- Accepted methods of payment include Linx, Visa and Mastercard.

Once the application is successful, **Certificates of Fitness will be processed within** fifteen (15) working days of either the document verification appointment, or the date on which the last outstanding document/s is/are presented by the Applicant to LATT (whichever is later in time).
If you experience any **technical difficulties** in navigating the electronic application form, please call **726-4929** during the Law Association's business hours of 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Monday to Friday.
If having reviewed the Guidelines and Checklist, you have any questions about the application process, you may email applications@lawassociationtt.com. A response will be forthcoming within three business days.