



Manual on how a person can
**APPLY FOR A LICENSE TO
OPERATE AN ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC**

BASIC INFORMATION

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From time to time the process to apply for a license may change, so there will be regular updates of this manual. The aim is to provide increased access to online information.

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1. Introduction

The inspectorate within the Healthcare Standards Directorate monitors, inspects and regulates acupuncture clinics, to make sure that these clinics meet fundamental standards of quality and safety. The names of licensed clinics are published on the website so that the public is aware as to which establishments are licensed and thus have reinforced procedures for patient safety. This list can be accessed through <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/hcs/Pages/health-care-standards.aspx>.

The Directorate puts the health of the public at the centre of its work and strives to be rigorous, fair and consistent in its approach. The aim of this document is to provide basic information to any person applying for a license to operate an acupuncture clinic.

2. General information

- a. In Malta, acupuncture is regulated through the [Health Care Professions Act \(Chapter 464\)](#) and the [Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance \(Chapter 31\)](#);
- b. Acupuncture is to be performed, **ONLY** by registered acupuncturists;
- c. A valid acupuncture clinic license must be displayed in a prominent place within the waiting room of the clinic, where it may be easily observed by the public upon entering;
- d. The licensing office for acupuncture clinics is within the Health Care Standards Directorate at the Health Regulation Department;
- e. To practice as an acupuncturist in Malta one must be qualified and registered with the Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine (CPCM);
- f. As stipulated by the [Health Care Professions Act \(Chapter 464\)](#) and the [Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance \(Chapter 31\)](#). An acupuncture clinic within which acupuncturists can practice, needs to have a valid license issued through the Superintendence of Public Health;
- g. The licensing office for acupuncture clinics, is within the Health Care Standards Directorate at the Health Regulation Department;
- h. Opening Hours are from 7am till 2.45 pm Monday to Friday;

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(Inspection schedule, payment, collection of license);

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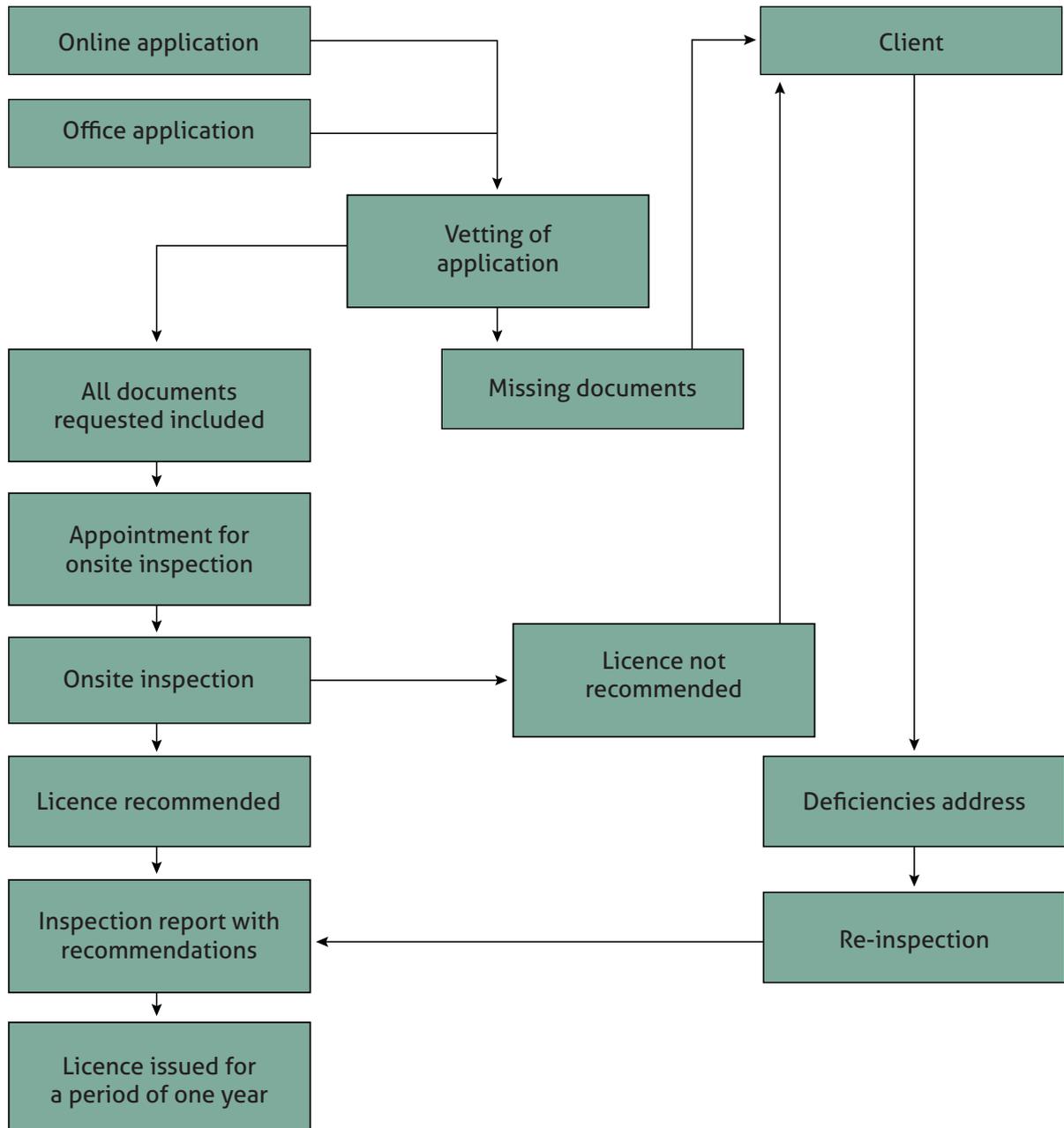
3. Applying for a license

- a. A person interested in providing services through an acupuncture clinic, must apply for a license as stipulated [Health Care Professions Act \(Chapter 464\)](#) and the [Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance \(Chapter 31\)](#);
- b. New applicants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age;
- c. One can apply for a license either by completing the [application form](#) or through the online application available at: <https://hcstandardsregistration.gov.mt/>
- d. When applying for an acupuncture clinic license, the following documents must be submitted:
 - A filled in [application form](#);
 - A copy of the registration certificate of all acupuncturists working within the clinic;
 - A permit showing the proposed premises including the site plan and a declaration by an architect certifying that the premises carry a planning authority (PA) permit and that the premises can be used as an acupuncture clinic;
 - A Hepatitis B vaccination record and an Anti Hbs titre result of all the acupuncturists who will be working in the clinic (if applicable);
 - A photocopy of the applicant's identity card;
 - Certificates/qualifications;
 - If applying on behalf of a company, a copy of the Memorandum of Articles together with a declaration by the Director/s of the same company indicating that it is agreed that license is to be issued on the applicant's name;
 - For a third-country national to practice in an acupuncture clinic in Malta, one must apply for a work permit through Jobs Plus which can be contacted on telephone number 22201290 or e-mail: jobsplus@gov.mt;

- e. Upon receiving the filled in application together with all the relevant documents, the licensing officer will vet the application accordingly;
- f. At this stage an onsite inspection is organised and the applicant is informed;
- g. An inspection team holding an authorisation badge will visit the premises;
- h. In case of a new establishment, a pre-licensing visit may be requested by the applicant (recommended);
- i. A [self-assessment](#) check-list indicating the requirements to operate an acupuncture clinic, will be sent to the applicant ten (10) days prior to the inspection. This self-assessment will guide the applicant on what the inspection team will be expecting to find during the planned visit;
- j. During the inspection, the inspection team will verify if all conditions for licensing are satisfactory and will decide whether to recommend licensing or not;
- k. In cases where deficiencies are identified, a meeting with the applicant to advise and highlight the deficiencies needing attention will be held, this may necessitate a follow up visit;
- l. Once all conditions for licensing are satisfactory a license will be issued;
- m. The license includes a set of conditions. The licensee must understand and comply with these conditions;
- n. Once the application is approved and licensing is recommended, the client is advised to collect the license from the Healthcare Standards Directorate (HCSD) licensing office or may opt to receive it by registered post.

4. The licensing process

The following flow chart outlines the procedure followed by the client and the inspectorate during the licensing process.



5. The acupuncture clinic

- a. An acupuncture clinic must have the license displayed in an area, where it can be easily observed by the public upon entering the waiting area;
- b. The premises must be kept clean, in good condition and state of repair;
- c. The acupuncture clinic must have all the necessary equipment;
- d. The acupuncture clinic must have adequate lighting and ventilation (Natural or mechanical);
- e. The area where procedures are carried out must provide total client privacy;
- f. The premises must have an efficient drainage system connected to a main system;
- g. Fire-fighting equipment must consist of fire extinguishers with a valid expiry date;
- h. An acupuncture clinic must have a separate waiting room and when the clinic is being planned, the procedure area should only have access through the waiting room;
- i. The clinic walls must be painted with water repellent paint for easy cleaning;
- j. Toilet facilities must be available.

6. The work station

- a. Work surfaces must be kept clean and well maintained and must be regularly washed with warm soapy water and wiped with a 70% alcohol solution. Work tops should be made of an impervious material for easy cleaning;
- b. Paper towels must always be available;
- c. There should be sufficient space to accommodate all the equipment used during procedures;
- d. A wash hand basin must be available and within easy reach of the area where procedures are carried out and must be kept clean, well maintained and connected to the main drainage system. Single lever taps must have a supply of hot and cold water;
- e. Soap/suitable detergent and adequate drying facilities must be available near each wash hand basin;
- f. Client couches must be upholstered with an impervious type of material, which can be easily cleaned. Multiple couches must have a partition between them for adequate client privacy;
- g. A proper sharps container that is rigid, puncture-resistant and leak proof must be available within each area where procedures are carried out;
- h. A foot operated pedal bin lined with a disposable garbage bag must be available in each working station.

7. Lavatory facilities

- a. Lavatory facilities must be connected to the main drainage system and must always be kept clean and well maintained;
- b. There must be a proper functioning flushing apparatus;
- c. The wash hand basin within the lavatory room must have a supply of hot and cold water;
- d. Adequate hand washing/drying facilities must always be available;
- e. Proper ventilation must be present within the lavatory facilities (natural or mechanical);
- f. The lavatory facilities must have adequate lighting;
- g. Where possible, lavatory facilities are to be accessible from the waiting room.

8. Equipment used during acupuncture procedures

- a. Equipment used during acupuncture procedures must be maintained as per manufacturer's instructions. All documentation relating to maintenance and servicing should be made available and stored properly;
- b. Acupuncture equipment and consumables must have a CE mark;
- c. All sharps must be disposed of in special sharps containers that are rigid, puncture-resistant, and leak-proof and must be kept upright. Clinical waste must be collected by an approved Class D waste collector.

9. Additional guidelines

- a. An updated equipment register complete with a scheduled maintenance program must be kept by the licensee;
- b. An adequate first aid box is to be readily available;
- c. To practice acupuncture, acupuncturists must be covered against a professional indemnity;
- d. All practicing acupuncturists must be familiar with blood and body fluid spillage precautions;
- e. Except as set forth below, the license is not transferable, and it shall be immediately void if the acupuncture clinic ceases to operate, if the clinic ownership changes or if the acupuncture clinic is relocated to a different site;
- f. In the case of a transfer of ownership, the new owners of an acupuncture clinic shall present an application for licensure with the HCSD within the Superintendence of Public Health. In addition, the following information shall be submitted with the application:
 - g. A detailed description of the proposed transfer of ownership;
 - h. Copies of all legal documents pertinent to the transfer of ownership transaction which are signed by both the current licensed owners and the proposed licensed owners;
 - i. The license, unless suspended or revoked, shall be renewed annually at the end of the current year. The acupuncture clinic will receive a request for the renewal fee 30 days prior to the expiration of the license. A renewal license shall not be issued unless the licensure fee is received by the Directorate;

- j. The license may not be renewed, if current licensing standards, local rules, regulations, and/or requirements are not met;
- k. Failure to renew a license shall constitute the operation of a health care facility without a license and may result in the issuing by the HCSD within the Superintendence of Public Health of a cease and desist order, in accordance with the Medical Kindred Professions Ordinance (CAP. 31);
- l. **Record-keeping:** records of each client must be kept at the clinic and made available to the inspection team as requested. The information in these records must include: name, age, I.D number, address and the date when an acupuncture service was provided. These records must be signed and kept securely for ten (10) years.

