



# Payment Facilitator Certification Guide

Visa Supplemental Requirements

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## Introduction and Purpose

This document is a supplement of the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules*. In the event of any conflict between any content in this document, any document referenced herein, any exhibit to this document, or any communications concerning this document, and any content in the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules*, the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules* shall govern and control.

This document sets out requirements for Payment Facilitators certification process and guidelines that is required to be passed by Payment Facilitator prior to entering into the Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa, as specified in the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules*.

## Audience

This document is for Payment Facilitator applying for Payment Facilitator certification covering the requirements, timings, and applicable fees of the Payment Facilitator certification.

## References

Requirements for Payment Facilitators to enter into the Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa are specified in the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules*.

Detailed information on Visa risk standards is specified in [Visa Global Acquirer Risk Standards](#) and [Payment Facilitator and Marketplace Risk Guide](#).

Detailed information on certification Tiers for Visa Certified Payment Facilitators is available on the program webpage.

## Terminology

<b>Emerging Payment Facilitator</b>	A Payment Facilitator that processes Visa transactions in partnership with a Visa acquiring member in the CEMEA region, has been assigned a Payment Facilitator identifier (PF ID) by Visa and processes no more than USD 100,000 (or local currency equivalent) of transaction volume with Visa per month over past 6 calendar months.
<b>Certificate of Completion</b>	A document confirming successful fulfillment of all certification requirements and the status of Visa Certified Payment Facilitator.
<b>Certification Status</b>	The current standing of a Payment Facilitator within the certification process based on its Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment results and chosen Tier.

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<b>Certified Payment Facilitator</b>	A Payment Facilitator certified by Visa to provide Payment Services.
<b>Conditional Approval</b>	Temporary approval for a Payment Facilitator to confirm its Certification Status, subject to satisfying certain conditions.
<b>Conditional Participation Agreement</b>	Subtype of Payment Facilitator Agreement signed by a New Payment Facilitator or an Emerging Payment Facilitator that allows them to commence operations and process Visa transactions in a limited mode while their Certification is underway.
<b>High Integrity Risk Merchant</b>	Merchants operating in the domains of Online Gambling/Betting, Online Pharma, Adult Content, Dating Services, Crypto, and others, as specified in the <a href="#">Visa Integrity Risk Program Guide</a> .
<b>Minimum Requirements</b>	Mandatory criteria, including the Payment Facilitator's performance criteria pursuant to section 3 "Certification Process" that must be met entirely to obtain the status of Certified Payment Facilitator.
<b>New Payment Facilitator</b>	A Payment Facilitator that does not have a registered PF ID with Visa and has not yet processed any Visa transactions. A Payment Facilitator that has been operating without proper Visa registration does not qualify as a New Payment Facilitator.
<b>Operating Payment Facilitator</b>	A Payment Facilitator that processes Visa transactions in partnership with a Visa acquiring member in the CEMEA region, has been assigned a PF ID by Visa and does not qualify as an Emerging Payment Facilitator.
<b>Payment Facilitator</b>	A Visa non-member entity that deposits transactions, receives settlement from or contracts with an acquirer on behalf of a sponsored merchant, and is classified as a Payment Facilitator, as specified in the <i>Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules</i> .
<b>Payment Facilitator Agreement</b>	A contract outlining the terms of a Payment Facilitator's role in providing Payment Services to sponsored merchants and obligations to follow the standards and requirements set by Visa.
<b>Payment Services</b>	Service(s) provided by a Payment Facilitator to its sponsored merchants under the acceptance contract to deposit transactions and receive settlement from the acquirer.
<b>Probation Period</b>	A trial period during which a Payment Facilitator's performance is closely monitored by Visa.
<b>Quality-Related Requirements</b>	Criteria evaluating the operational efficiency and quality of a Payment Facilitator's processes.

<b>Remediation Plan</b>	A strategic plan for correcting identified deficiencies in compliance or performance of a Payment Facilitator to obtain the status of Visa Certified Payment Facilitator.
<b>Tier</b>	A subscription package that provides certain benefits within the certification process depending on the Certification Status.
<b>Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment</b>	Assessment performed by Visa to measure a Payment Facilitator's performance versus Minimum Requirements and Quality-Related Requirements.
<b>Visa Ready Acceptance Certification</b>	The process for a Payment Facilitator to obtain approval from Visa to operate on a specific market. Visa Ready Acceptance Certification is complete once Payment Facilitator did all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passed Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment</li> <li>• Paid certification and annual fees</li> <li>• Entered into Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa</li> </ul>
<b>Visa Ready Acceptance Payment Facilitator</b>	A Payment Facilitator with proven high standards and reliability based on Visa's certification process that is enrolled to respective Tier with Visa.
<b>Visa Ready Acceptance Performance Score</b>	A rating reflecting a Payment Facilitator's performance against Visa's certification criteria.
<b>Visa Trusted Partner</b>	A Payment Facilitator with proven high standards and reliability based on Visa's certification process that is enrolled to respective Tier with Visa.
<b>Willful Violation</b>	A deliberate breach of the <i>Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules</i> or terms of the Payment Facilitator Agreement.

## 1. Payment Facilitators Requirements in CEMEA

In the CEMEA Region: A Payment Facilitator must enter into the Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa and must be certified by Visa within Visa Ready Acceptance Certification in every country of operation.

In the CEMEA Region: An acquirer that contracts with a Payment Facilitator must ensure and obtain confirmation from Visa that its Payment Facilitator entered into Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa and is certified by Visa.

### 2. Certification Schedule

Payment Facilitators that have obtained the regulatory license and/or established the entity on or before 14 October 2023 must both:

- Initiate the Visa Ready Acceptance Certification by submitting required documents
- Obtain Certificate of Completion and execute the Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa no later than 24 August 2024

For Payment Facilitators that have obtained the regulatory license and/or established the entity on or after 14 October 2023, the certification must be completed prior to signing commercial/acceptance agreement with the acquirer and acquirer registration of the Payment Facilitator, as specified in the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules*.

After 24 August 2024 existing registration for Payment Facilitators that have not obtained Certificate of Completion from Visa and have not executed the Payment Facilitator Agreement or Conditional Participation Agreement with Visa will be cancelled and their assigned Payment Facilitator identifiers (PF IDs) will be suspended.

### 3. Certification Process

Before Visa authorizes a Payment Facilitator to provide Payment Services to Visa acquirers and sponsored merchants, the Payment Facilitator must provide evidence satisfactory to Visa that it can fulfill all of its obligations and acknowledge the responsibility to fulfill all of its obligations under the Payment Facilitator Agreement, including all applicable requirements to Payment Services, as specified in the *Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules* and [Visa Global Acquirer Risk Standards](#), and to ensure lack of the Payment Facilitator's actions (omissions), which in Visa's opinion may cause damage to the Visa-owned marks.

For the purpose of validating that a Payment Facilitator satisfies the Minimum Requirements and Quality-Related Requirements, Visa Ready Acceptance Certification must be completed by the Payment Facilitator in line with the process and schedule described herein.

To ensure continued compliance with all the Minimum Requirements and Quality-Related Requirements, Visa is entitled to conduct a re-assessment, as required but not more than once a year.

#### Enrollment Procedure:

Certification Procedure is initiated by submitting:

1. The Certification Intake Form: [https://promotions.visa.com/campaign/cemea\\_payfacs/](https://promotions.visa.com/campaign/cemea_payfacs/)
2. The Certification Questionnaire: [https://promotions.visa.com/campaign/cemea\\_payfacs\\_questionnaire/](https://promotions.visa.com/campaign/cemea_payfacs_questionnaire/)
3. Application package with supporting documents as listed below must be submitted by a Payment Facilitator by email: [CEMEAPaymentFacilitatorsTeam@visa.com](mailto:CEMEAPaymentFacilitatorsTeam@visa.com)

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Visa Ready Acceptance Certification team reviews the documents submitted by the Payment Facilitator and issues the report that contains Visa Ready Acceptance Performance Score and highlights required actions to be taken by the Payment Facilitator. Where a Payment Facilitator does not meet the required standard such application for certification will be declined.

### Application Package:

For the purpose of certification, a Payment Facilitator must provide the following:

Item	Screening for Conditional Participation Agreement	Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment
<b>Valid licenses issued by local regulatory authorities</b>	Required	Required
<b>PCI DSS Attestation of Compliance</b>	Required	Required
<b>Ownership structure and Ultimate Beneficiary Owners (UBOs)</b>	Required	Required
<b>Compliance organogram</b>	Required	Required
<b>AML/Compliance and sanctions policies and procedures</b>	Required	Required
<b>CDD Client onboarding procedures (KYC)</b>	Required	Required
<b>Sanction screening system</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Transaction monitoring system</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Third party control standards</b>	Not required	Required
<b>AML Audit Report</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Training and Awareness policies</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Record keeping policies</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Merchant Underwriting and Onboarding Policy</b>	Required	Required
<b>Overview / Description of Merchant Due Diligence / Risk Assessment Tool(s)</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Merchant Agreement</b>	Template	Samples
<b>Merchant Application</b>	Template	Samples
<b>Merchant Termination letter/notification</b>	Template	Samples
<b>Merchant Activity Monitoring Policy / Process</b>	Required	Required



Item	Screening for Conditional Participation Agreement	Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment
Investigation Policy / Protocol	Required	Required
Description & Overview of Risk Detection & Prevention Monitoring Tools	Not required	Required
Description / Overview of Web-Crawling Solution	Not required	Required (if established)
Fraud (TC40) and Dispute data review process	Not required	Required (if established)

### Assessments and Certification Criteria

A Payment Facilitator must provide Visa with the evidence of meeting the following requirements and criteria.

#### Visa Ready Acceptance Minimum Certification Requirements and Criteria

Underwriting of merchants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merchant application is available for all merchants</li> <li>Merchant is operating within the acquirer's jurisdiction</li> <li>Merchant is not from a restricted category, i.e. not a High-Integrity Risk Merchant without Visa approval</li> <li>Merchant is not involved in any illegal or brand damaging activity</li> </ul>
Onboarding of merchants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assigned merchant category code (MCC) reflects the core business of the merchant</li> <li>Merchant descriptor is either "Doing Business As" (DBA) name or legal name of the merchant</li> </ul>
Merchant activity monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator monitors merchants transaction activity at least on daily basis to detect and prevent fraud or other forms of illegal or brand damaging activity.</li> </ul>
Merchant website monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator has a process and tools to proactively identify merchant website changes or new merchant websites with an offering that violate the Visa Rules and regulation</li> </ul>
Data quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator identifier (PF ID) and sponsored merchant identifier (SM ID) is populated in authorization requests and clearing records</li> </ul>
Violations history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No violation of the <i>Visa Core Rules and Visa Product and Service Rules</i> within the past 6 months</li> </ul>
Risk management program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No identification in the risk management program within the past 6 months</li> </ul>

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<b>PCI DSS validation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Valid Attestation of Compliance (AOC) and Record of Compliance (ROC) is available</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate governance and management oversight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior management is committed to promoting a culture of compliance</li> <li>Senior management is setting the right tone across organizational functions at all levels</li> <li>Organization has a dedicated compliance and AML department/team</li> </ul>
<b>Regulatory requirements and licensing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator meets all applicable regulatory requirements including licensing and registration in the country(ies) of operation</li> </ul>
<b>Sanctions screening systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator has a sanctions screening solution that covers the applicable regulation, including but not limited to the sanctions administered by the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control</li> </ul>
<b>Transactions monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator has a transaction monitoring solution that can provide reports that pick out suspicious activity of merchants</li> </ul>
<b>Policies and procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive compliance and AML policies and procedures are available</li> </ul>
<b>Third party controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Third party supervision policies and procedure, due diligence and periodic review is in place</li> </ul>
<b>Internal and independent audit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator has an internal audit function</li> </ul>
<b>Training and awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator's employees are required to complete mandatory compliance and AML training</li> </ul>
<b>Client due diligence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator has documented policies and procedures to perform due diligence on its clients</li> </ul>
<b>Record keeping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment Facilitator has record keeping policies in accordance with applicable regulations in their jurisdiction</li> <li>Records of sponsored merchants' files are available and accessible</li> </ul>

Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment scorecard consists of Minimum Requirements and Quality-Related Requirements. These requirements collectively evaluate the Payment Facilitator's operational standards and their aptitude for certification.

1. **Minimum Requirements:** These are essential conditions, including the Payment Facilitator's performance criteria pursuant to section 3 "Certification Process" that must be satisfied by the Payment Facilitator with no exception, as specified in the Terminology section, with regards to

their applicability (i.e. existing regulatory requirements in specific markets). A Payment Facilitator cannot progress to the assessment of Quality-Related Requirements unless all the Minimum Requirements are met.

2. Quality-Related Requirements: Adhering to the best practices specified in [Payment Facilitator and Marketplace Risk Guide](#) is measured on a weighted score basis and is instrumental in determining the final Certification Status of a Payment Facilitator.

A New Payment Facilitator and an Emerging Payment Facilitator are required to commence operations under the Conditional Participation Agreement with Visa prior to completing the full Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment. The Conditional Participation Agreement has the following conditions:

- Operations are limited for one year, during which the Payment Facilitator must complete the Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment. If the Payment Facilitator fails to complete the Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment within one year, the Payment Facilitator's Conditional Participation Agreement will automatically lapse.
- Payment Facilitators cannot onboard or process transactions related to the following Merchant Category Codes:
  - Adult Content – MCC 5967
  - Dating and Escort Services – MCC 7273
  - Gambling – MCC 7995
  - Pharmacies – MCC 5122, 5912
  - Crypto Merchants: exchanges, wallet providers or on-ramp providers (card absent) – MCC 6051, 6012
  - Cyberlockers and similar remote digital file-sharing services (card absent) – MCC 4816
  - Games of Skill (card absent) – MCC 5816
  - High Integrity Risk Financial Trading Platforms (card absent) – MCC 6211
  - Outbound Telemarketing (card absent) – MCC 5966
  - Subscription "Negative Option" Merchants (card absent) – MCC 5968
  - Tobacco Sales (cross-border card absent) – MCC 5993
  - Airlines, Air Carriers – MCC 3000-3350
  - Airlines and Air Carriers (Not Elsewhere Classified) – MCC 4511
  - Car Rental Agencies – MCC 3351-3441
  - Car Rental Agencies (Not Elsewhere Classified) – MCC 7512
  - Lodging – Hotels, Motels, Resorts – MCC 3501-3838
  - Lodging – Hotels, Motels, Resorts, Central Reservation Services (Not Elsewhere Classified) – MCC 7011
  - Travel Agencies and Tour Operators – MCC 4722
  - Railroads – MCC 4011
  - Local and Suburban Commuter Passenger Transportation, Including Ferries – MCC 4111
  - Passenger Railways – MCC 4112
  - Steamships and Cruise Lines – MCC 4411
  - Direct Marketing – Travel Related Arrangement Services – MCC 5962

- A Payment Facilitator must not onboard or process transactions for marketplaces

A Payment Facilitator's identification under any Visa Risk Management Programs (including but not limited by VIRP, TLD, VAMP, VDMP, VFMP) may result in immediate termination of Conditional Participation Agreement at Visa's sole discretion.

Before signing the Conditional Participation Agreement, Visa performs a screening check to confirm the eligibility for a New Payment Facilitator or an Emerging Payment Facilitator. The conditions are as follows:

- Payment Facilitator meets all regulatory licensing requirements in regulated markets.
- Payment Facilitator has necessary templates for onboarding merchants (including merchant application, agreement, and termination templates).
- Payment Facilitator has a dedicated AML/Compliance unit, as confirmed by the company organogram.
- Payment Facilitator has formalized Risk and AML policies in place.
- Payment Facilitator, along with its beneficial owners, is not listed in sanctions list monitored by Visa at the time of checking.

**Visa reserves the right to request additional information or apply further limitations or restrictions until the Payment Facilitator completes the Visa Payment Facilitator certification process.**

### Certificate of Completion

Upon completion of the Visa Ready Acceptance Certification, a Payment Facilitator that successfully got certified will receive the status of Visa Certified Payment Facilitator. Based on results of the Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment, a Payment Facilitator with high standards and reliability based on the Visa's certification process may apply for extended Tiers, i.e. "Visa Ready Payment Facilitator" or "Visa Trusted Partner".

Final Certification Status is assigned when the below are both met:

- Payment Facilitator is confirmed to be eligible for the Certification Status, based on the Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment results
- Payment Facilitator has signed up for respective Tier by signing the respective agreement and paying the annual fee, as applicable

Certificate of Completion is provided to the Payment Facilitator after all of the below is completed:

- Certification fee is paid to Visa
- Annual fee is paid to Visa
- The Payment Facilitator Agreement is signed by both Visa and the Payment Facilitator

Certification Status may be upgraded during the next round of certification upon providing evidence satisfactory to Visa that Minimum Requirements and Quality-Related Requirements for the desired status are both met.

### Certification Fees

One-time certification fee for a Payment Facilitator specified in the [Visa Fee Schedule](#) to be paid directly by the Payment Facilitator prior to entering into the Payment Facilitator Agreement with Visa. Certification fee must be paid for every attempt of certification even if the certification was failed by the Payment Facilitator.

For a Payment Facilitator admitted under Conditional Participation Agreement the certification fees must be paid once it completes Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment and obtain Certificate of Completion in basic or premium Tier.

### Annual Fees

Annual fee specified in the [Visa Fee Schedule](#) is paid annually based on the selected Tier. Each Tier provides a Certified Payment Facilitator access to Visa informational resources, educational programs, technical support, advisory and other benefits depending on the tier.

For a Payment Facilitator admitted under Conditional Participation Agreement the annual fees must be paid once it completes Visa Ready Acceptance Assessment and obtain Certificate of Completion in basic or premium Tier. Visa will provide access to educational benefits to support Payment Facilitator readiness and successful certification.

### Rejection and Re-Certification:

A Payment Facilitator that does not meet the Minimum Requirements will have its application declined and may submit a fresh application in 45 days. If the Payment Facilitator still does not meet the Minimum Requirements after 45 days, it will not be eligible to apply for certification for another 12 months. A Payment Facilitator is required to re-certify every 36 months or at Visa's request based on on-going monitoring but not more than once every 12 months. Visa may allow less frequent re-certification at its sole discretion based on the results of the previous Visa Ready Acceptance Certification and results of ongoing monitoring.

## 4. Probation and Termination

Visa has a right to temporarily revoke the Payment Facilitator's certification for a specified period ("Probation Period") to provide Payment Services for any or all Visa acquirers and sponsored merchants in case of Payment Facilitator is in breach of the Payment Facilitator Agreement, applicable law requirements, including, but not limited to applicable sanctions screening requirements, insufficient due diligence standards, as determined by Visa, to enable Payment Facilitator to comply with the Minimum Requirements and Quality-Related Requirements, as well as a result of Payment Facilitator's merger, consolidation, or substantial change of ownership or financial condition.

Visa has a right to permanently terminate the Payment Facilitator Agreement and revoke its approval for a Payment Facilitator to provide any or all Payment Services if any of the following:

- Failure to meet any of the Payment Facilitator's Performance Criteria as set forth in section 3 "Certification Process"
- Failure to rectify violations during the Probation Period to Visa's satisfaction Willful Violation and failure of its remediation based on Visa's request
- Circumvent detection of the Payment Facilitators' sponsored merchants by Visa risk management programs (including but not limited by VDMP, VFMP, VIRP, VAMP, PCI DSS compliance)
- Violation of applicable laws

**Following the receipt of the probation or termination notice from Visa, the Payment Facilitator must not enter in any new relationships with Visa acquirers and/or sponsored merchants for providing Payment Services.**