

# Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard v1.0 – Eligibility Criteria Policy

## Objectives, scope, and limitations

This eligibility criteria policy is aimed at supply chain organisations applying to implement the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard v1.0. It sets out the minimum requirements for supply chain organisations seeking to enter the new programme. Meeting these criteria is the first step in becoming verified to the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard v1.0. This policy lays out Better Cotton's commitment to protecting the integrity of the Better Cotton Chain of Custody system and foster a safe trading environment in Better Cotton supply chains.

The scope of the policy covers all supply chain organisations applying to enter the Better Cotton Chain of Custody v1.0 programme. This includes organisations seeking to apply the physical Chain of Custody (CoC) models, as well as those only seeking to apply mass balance.

The policy does not cover supply chain organisations applying the Better Cotton CoC Guidelines v1.4. Note that supply chain organisations will be required to transition and adhere to the new CoC Standard by May 2025. Failure to do so will result in expulsion from the programme and loss of Better Cotton Platform (BCP) access.

These criteria do not act as a replacement for corporate supply chain due diligence which is increasingly a legal requirement for organisations importing textile products into key consumer markets. Supply chain organisations and Better Cotton Retailer and Brand Members are encouraged to follow best practice guidance such as that outlined in the [OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment & Footwear Sector](#).

[Meeting these criteria alone does not act as approval to join the programme. Full details of the verification process can be found on the Better Cotton website.](#)

## Eligibility criteria

To enter the CoC programme, all supply chain organisations must meet the following eligibility criteria at the time of application:

- Must be a registered legal entity.
- Must provide details to Better Cotton regarding each individual site included in the scope of the Better Cotton Chain of Custody v1.0
- Must not be on any internationally recognised default list, nor be affiliated with a company on a default list, such as the International Cotton Association List of Unfulfilled Awards
- Must not be on the GOTS Certification ban list.
- Must not be on the Textile Exchange ban list.

Better Cotton shall review supply chain organisations to ensure they meet this eligibility criteria.

In addition, Better Cotton will conduct research on all supply chain organisations, to ensure that there are no outstanding material issues that can create reputational risk for Better Cotton. This may include a review of regulatory sanctioned entity lists. In this context, material issues include being found guilty, responsible for, or associated with fraudulent behaviour within the past 5 years. Organisations must be able to demonstrate credibly that any outstanding issues have been fully resolved.

As per 2.2.3 in the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard The organisation shall communicate any changes in the management representative, or any other significant changes to Better Cotton by email within 15 calendar days of the change occurring. This includes whether the organisation has been added to any of the lists referenced above. This may have an impact on the organisations ability to remain in the Better Cotton Chain of Custody programme.

Better Cotton may add additional criteria from time to time. Any additional criteria will be applied to new supply chain organisations applying to the CoC programme and will apply on renewal to the existing supply chain organisations in the programme.

Better Cotton reserves the right to reject any application to the CoC programme. An organisation that has their application rejected shall not re-apply within 12 months of their previous application. Organisations on timebound ban lists (such as those of GOTS and Textile Exchange) are advised to submit applications only after their ban period has passed.

Should a supply chain organisation that currently applies the Better Cotton CoC Guidelines v1.4 have their application rejected during the transition period, Better Cotton reserves the right to remove their organisation's access to the Better Cotton Platform.

## Appeals

Supply chain organisations have the option to appeal the decision to reject the organisation and shall submit their appeal in writing within 30 days of the rejection to [compliance@bettercotton.org](mailto:compliance@bettercotton.org). The appeal shall outline why the organisation does not breach the eligibility criteria along with evidence to support this claim.