

# Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard v1.0/1.1 – Eligibility Criteria Policy

**Effective from February 2025**

## **Objectives, scope, and limitations**

This eligibility criteria policy is aimed at organisations applying to implement the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard v1.0/1.1. It sets out the minimum requirements for supply chain organisations seeking to enter the new programme. Meeting these criteria is the first step in to entering the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard programme. 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 organisations applying to enter the Better Cotton Chain of Custody 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 process can be found on the Better Cotton website.](#)

## **Eligibility criteria**

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

- Shall be a registered legal entity.
- Shall provide details to the Certification Body regarding each individual site included in the scope of the Better Cotton Chain of Custody v1.0
- Shall 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
- Shall not be on the GOTS Certification ban list.
- Shall not be on the Textile Exchange ban list.

When an organisation applies to the Certification Body to become certified against the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard the Certification Body shall review supply chain organisations to ensure they meet this eligibility criteria.

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 the Certification Body 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 eligibility 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.

The Certification Body 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, the Certification Body shall inform Better Cotton who reserve the right to remove the organisation's access to the Better Cotton Platform.

## **Appeals**

Organisations have the option to appeal the decision to reject the organisation and should do this with the CB in the first instance. Should that be unsuccessful the organisation may also appeal to Better Cotton 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.