

Accreditation of Registrars



Practical guide

2024

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1. Preamble

This practical guide is intended to help registrars complete the accreditation application and outlines the relationship with the registration agreement proposed by Afnic.

The accreditation application is intended for new registrars.

2. The accreditation procedure

2.1. Accreditation application

Each registrar wishing to be accredited by Afnic must download the Afnic accreditation application file, from the following address:

<https://www.afnic.fr/en/products-and-services/fr-and-associated-services/become-a-registrar-afnic-accreditation/>

The information provided must be verified and up-to-date.

The completed, signed application (accreditation application and supporting documents) shall be addressed:

1. By email to the following address: **accreditation@afnic.fr** or

2. By post to the following address:

Afnic - Direction Commerciale

7 avenue du 8 mai 1945

78280 GUYANCOURT - France

- **in French or English;**
- **in typed form only: responses may be entered directly on the form, then saved in PDF format;**
- **in Times New Roman or Arial font, size 12 or equivalent.**

2.2. Examination of the file

The examination of the file is divided into two phases:

- **the first phase is dedicated to the initial assessment of the file;**

- **the second phase is dedicated to a detailed assessment of the file.**

2.2.1. Initial assessment

Upon receipt of the application, Afnic will check that:

- the accreditation application is entirely completed and signed;
- the registrar identification form is completed, signed and **accompanied by the supporting documents requested in this document**;
- the registration form for the registrar directory is completed.
- Upon receipt of the accreditation application, Afnic will contact the applicant via email using the address specified in the accreditation application, to (as applicable):
 - **inform the applicant that their application is incomplete and invite them to provide any additional information: the application, supplemented with the expected information must be sent back within 15 calendar days. The application reference supplied in the email request for additional information sent to you by Afnic must be included;**
 - **inform the applicant that their application is complete and send them an acknowledgement of receipt within 8 calendar days: Afnic will then proceed to the detailed examination as soon as possible;**
 - **send the applicant the necessary codes for the technical tests on the test bench: the registrar will then have 30 calendar days to carry out the tests and send the results to the address: test-accreditation@afnic.fr.**

Technical tests required from new registrars

- ☒ Have at least 2 servers correctly configured,
- ☒ Create a domain name and a contact (interface of choice),
- ☒ Make an administrative and technical modification (interface of choice).

Afnic will then proceed to the detailed examination as soon as possible.

2.2.2. Detailed assessment

The criteria that the registrar must meet to obtain accreditation are defined by the Decree No 2015-1317 of 20 October 2015 adopted in application of articles L. 33-6 and L. 45 of the Postal and Electronic Communications Code - Article 2.

The registrar applying for an Afnic accreditation will have to show that they:

1. Understand the principles and operating procedures of the Internet domain name system.
2. Understand the equipment and the technical rules for carrying out registrations at the registry.
3. Have put in place a procedure for checking the identification data provided by the domain name applicants to respond, where necessary, to the requests of the registry.
4. Have the necessary human resources and techniques to handle updating the administrative and technical data supplied by domain name applicants for their identification.
5. Have the equipment and software necessary to guarantee the security of the personal data provided by domain name applicants and keep these data in compliance with the provisions for the protection of personal data.
6. Offer adequate public reception facilities.

Upon receipt of the complete file, Afnic will examine the accreditation application.

The examination is carried out by individuals from the sales and technical support management team.

These individuals must ensure that the minimum requirements explicitly identified throughout the file are correctly completed by the future registrar.

They must also look at the explanations and diagrams which are attached to the file and endeavour to evaluate their relevance in light of the questions asked.

Finally, they check the overall consistency of the file.

In the event of incomplete information or questions, they will send the registrar a request for additional information via the email address indicated in the accreditation application file.

In order to facilitate processing, it is imperative that the entire file thus completed be returned to the address **accreditation@afnic.fr**.

The registrar has 15 calendar days to provide the information requested.

If all of the above criteria have been met and the tests carried out successfully, Afnic will send several emails to the registrar applying, to inform them that they are accredited and to provide information about their customer account.

If the above criteria have not been met or the additional information requested has not been returned within the 15 calendar days allotted, Afnic will send a registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt to the registrar outlining the reasons why they have not been accredited.

The latter will then have a new period of 15 calendar days to lodge an appeal against the decision.

The fact that accreditation has not been granted does not in any way prevent the registrar from submitting a new accreditation application in the future.

For the first year, irrespective of the date that Afnic accredited the registrar, the accreditation is applicable for a period expiring on 31 December of the calendar year in progress.

Thereafter, the accreditation is renewed automatically for an annual period beginning on 1 January and expiring on 31 December each year.

Information:

Using resellers and subcontracting is not prohibited. However, it is the responsibility of the accredited registrar to ensure that their intermediaries comply with their commitments and declarations. When resellers or subcontracting is used, the registrar shall ensure compliance with the legal framework related to the protection of personal data, particularly in the event of transfers outside of the European Union. Failing this, the accreditation may be withdrawn.

3. Developments concerning accreditation information

Accreditation is granted on the basis of the information mentioned in the accreditation application.

Afnic contacts the registrars every two years to invite them to update the information provided in the accreditation application.

The registrar commits to keeping the information provided to Afnic as part of the accreditation application up to date.

In the case of developments or modifications, the registrar must inform Afnic immediately by email or post at the addresses mentioned above, or via their customer service contact.

Any modification or development of information shall give rise to a review of the accreditation application.

4. Suspension/Withdrawal of accreditation

4.1. Withdrawal or suspension of accreditation

Afnic may suspend or withdraw the accreditation granted to a registrar in one of the following cases:

- ☒ in the case of sending Afnic data that are incorrect or outdated at the time of the accreditation application;
- ☒ in the case of non-compliance with the accreditation criteria defined by article R.20-44-43 of the Postal and Electronic Communications Code following a check carried out by Afnic;
- ☒ in the case of modifications or developments in the accreditation data resulting in non-compliance with the accreditation criteria defined by the law;
- ☒ in the case of non-compliance with articles L. 45-1 to L45-3 and L. 45-5;
- ☒ in the case of non-renewal or termination of the registration agreement binding Afnic to the registrar.

4.2. Procedure for withdrawal or suspension of accreditation

The non-renewal or termination of the registration agreement binding Afnic to the registrar shall give rise to automatic withdrawal of accreditation.

In the case of non-compliance with the accreditation criteria, the decision to withdraw or suspend the accreditation depends of the gravity of the breach found, bearing in mind that:

- ☒ if the breach is minor or isolated, a simple suspension of accreditation will be considered;
- ☒ if the breach is major or repeated, a withdrawal of accreditation may be declared.

Where a registrar no longer meets all or part of the accreditation criteria, their accreditation shall be suspended for a period of no more than four months or shall be directly withdrawn.

Afnic shall notify the registrar involved of the proposal to suspend or remove accreditation and its reasons for doing so. The registrar shall have 30 calendar days to submit their observations.

Upon receipt of the observations from the registrar, and failing that, after the time period allotted to the registrar to respond, Afnic in turn shall have 30 calendar days to make the decision to suspend or withdraw the accreditation granted.

Afnic shall notify the registrar of the final decision by registered post with acknowledgement of receipt. The registration agreement binding Afnic to the registrar shall itself be suspended or terminated.

Decisions to withdraw or suspend accreditation are made by Afnic's legal director.

5. Checks

Afnic may carry out spot checks of the information provided on its own initiative or based on a justifiable complaint from a third party.

These checks may be carried out using documents or on-site at the registrar's premises.

The checks are referred to as documentary checks when Afnic requests one or more pieces of information and/or documents.

The registrar shall send the information and/or documents requested within a maximum of 72 hours, reduced to 48 hours in case of emergency.

The checks may be carried out on-site provided that the registrar is informed 72 hours in advance.

6. Accreditation and registration agreement

An application for accreditation can only be made if the registrar accepts the registration agreement that binds them to Afnic.

In the event that the accreditation has been suspended or withdrawn, the registration agreement binding Afnic to the registrar shall also be suspended or terminated.

On the other hand, provisional suspension of the registration agreement binding Afnic to the registrar does not affect accreditation.

7. Costs

The registrar shall bear all the costs incurred in preparing, sending the application and maintaining the accreditation.

8. Confidentiality of the information provided

All of the data transmitted to Afnic by the registrar in the context of the accreditation application is by nature confidential.

But this obligation to confidentiality does not apply:

- ☒ in the event that Afnic would need to disclose this information in the context of legal proceedings, regardless of the reason;
- ☒ in the event that Afnic would need to justify paperwork related to the accreditation to the tax authorities;
- ☒ in the event that a third party presents a justifiable request for access to the application file of a particular registrar (the registrar will be contacted before access is granted so that they can remove information that they consider to be confidential).

On its website, Afnic publishes a directory containing a list of the accredited registrars as well as the information supplied in the registration form for this directory.