

Apostille - Guidance Notes

What is an Apostille?

An Apostille is a certificate attached to a document by the Civil Status & Registration Office, confirming that the document has been signed by a notary public or other public official. It confirms that the notary public or public official is, in fact, a genuine notary public or public official authorised by HM Government of Gibraltar.

The Civil Status & Registration Office is the only Competent Authority in Gibraltar for issuing Apostilles. The Civil Status & Registration Office will sign and place a seal on the Apostille and attach this to the Notarial document or other public document which confirms its authenticity. It is a further layer of verification.

The Hague Convention governs the issuance of Apostilles and specifies the procedure through which a document issued in one of the signatory countries can be certified for legal purposes in all the other signatory states. The Apostille convention was designed to streamline the process for getting documents recognized internationally and many countries now use the Apostille.

Do I need an Apostille?

It is difficult for us to advise on the specific requirements of specific transactions within a certain country or territory. The document provider or the document recipient is the best source of confirmation as to whether or not you require an Apostille. However, if in doubt it is advisable that you obtain such confirmation and obtain an Apostille.

We advise that if your document will eventually be lodged with a public institution, a Court or other Government Office, then the chances are, that it will require an Apostille.

Not all countries have signed the Apostille Treaty. Where this is the case, even those countries that have not signed this treaty may still ask for the documents to be apostilled.

What Documents Need an Apostille?

The types of documents that may need an Apostille are court documents, administrative documents, notarial acts, and certain official certificates. Birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates, divorce decrees, and patent applications are just a few of the business translations that may need an Apostille to go into effect in a foreign country.

Getting an Apostille

Obtaining an Apostille is a fairly simple process. Simply complete the request form and submit it to the Civil Status and Registration Office, along with the pertinent documents and the appropriate fees. For a document to be accepted for an Apostille, it must be signed by a notary public approved by HM Government of Gibraltar.

The Civil Status and Registration Office provide two types of services. The department provides a **Next Day Service** and a **Same Day Service**.

The **Next Day Service** is a normal service whereby Apostilles are normally ready for collection at 14:30hrs on the working day following the acceptance of the documents. For example, if documents are submitted at 11:00hrs on Thursday, the apostilled document should be ready for collection by 14:30 hrs on Friday. However, if documents are submitted at 11:00hrs on Friday the Apostille should be ready for collection by 14:30hrs on Monday.

It is important to note, that there may be factors, such as public holidays, that may inevitably affect processing times, therefore, on these occasions staff will advise of the timescales for processing and issuance.

The **Same Day Service** is a fast track service for the issuance of apostilles and is available during 08:30hrs to 14:00hrs only, Monday to Friday, on payment of a fee. Apostilles using this service should be ready for collection after 1 hour of submission.

On occasions, the request for an Apostille via the Same Day Service may be made in order to deal with an emergency or an unforeseen event were the Apostille is imminently required. In these exceptional circumstances, staff will endeavour to assist as much as possible, resources permitting. However, you must understand that we do not provide an on the spot service and due to a number of factors it may not be possible to issue an Apostille before 1 hour.

Completing and submitting a request

Completing the request form is simple and straightforward.

SECTION 1 – Please tick in this section the service you request and include the number of Apostilles required via the chosen service. Also include the total number of Apostilles requested.

SECTION 2 – In this section, please include your details, or that of the company which you represent, along with the contact details.

SECTION 3 – In this section, please include your name, signature and date.

How can we help you?

Should you require any details on Apostilles, please feel free to contact the Civil Status and Registration Office on Tel: 200 51725.