

APOSTILLE AND ATTESTATION OF DOCUMENTS

Introduction

Apostille refers to a means of authenticating the seals and signatures of officials on public documents that is acceptable in all nations that belong to the Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents, the Apostille Convention, or the Apostille Treaty. The country of destination determines whether the authentication is an apostille or certification. The apostille ensures that public documents issued in one signatory country will be recognized as valid in another signatory country. It is an international certification comparable to a notarisation in domestic law, and normally supplements a local notarisation of the document.

Documents Which Require Apostille

Additional authentication required for international acceptance of notarized documents including (but not limited to) adoption papers, affidavits, birth certificates, contracts, death certificates, deeds, diplomas and degrees, divorce decrees, incorporation papers, marriage certificates, patent applications, powers of attorney, and school transcripts.

Why is Apostille Required

Certain documents will require apostille when moving into a particular country for educational and employment purposes, or while immigrating to a country after marriage. Once a document has been apostilled it is accepted in member countries without requiring any further legalization.

Normal Attestation

This is done for all the countries which are not a member of Hague Convention and where Apostille is not accepted. In such a case, the document must be certified by the foreign ministry of the issuing country, and then by the foreign ministry of the government of the state in which the document will be used, meaning the document must be certified twice before it can have legal effect in the receiving country.