

## **INFORMATION SHEET**

### **DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS**

Please take note that the application for an unabridged (full) birth / marriage / death / certificate; letter of no impediment (marital status); citizenship letters (letters confirming naturalization) etc., is a personal matter that the applicant must attend to and the issuing of these documents are the sole responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs.

#### **Step 1:**

Customers must apply at the nearest Regional/District Home Affairs office. For further details pertaining to the requirements, costs and processing times, etc., contact the Department of Home Affairs, as follows:

For enquiries:

#### ***Department of Home Affairs – Contact Centre***

Tel: 0800 601 190 (within South Africa)

Tel: +27 11 461-9253 (abroad)

Tel: 0800 20 44 76 (compliments and complaints)

E-mail: [csc@dha.gov.za](mailto:csc@dha.gov.za)

Website: <http://www.home-affairs.gov.za>

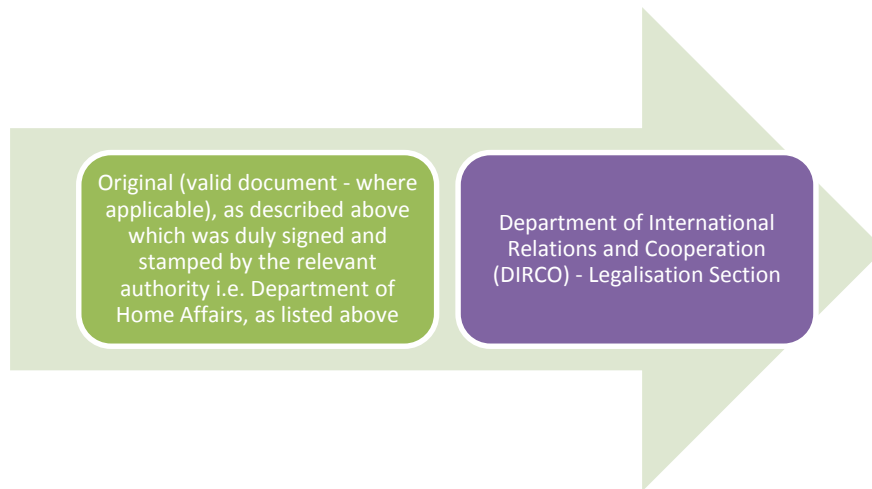
**Note:** The Department of Home Affairs (Head Office in Pretoria) does not directly deal with members of the public. Therefore members of the public must apply at any Regional or District Home Affairs office. (*Refer to the Home Affairs website – under contact us – for a list of regional customer service centres nearest to you.*) Customers may also apply from abroad via the nearest South African representative (i.e. Embassy, High Commission or Consulate-General) with the express request to have the document legalised. In these cases, the Department of Home Affairs will forward the certificate to DIRCO – Legalisation Section to be legalised.

***NOTE: The DIRCO – Legalisation Section does not take any responsibility for incorrect information provided, due to changes in the relevant authorities contact details; procedures; etc. It is therefore the responsibility of the customer to verify information directly with the relevant institution concerned.***

#### **Step 2:**

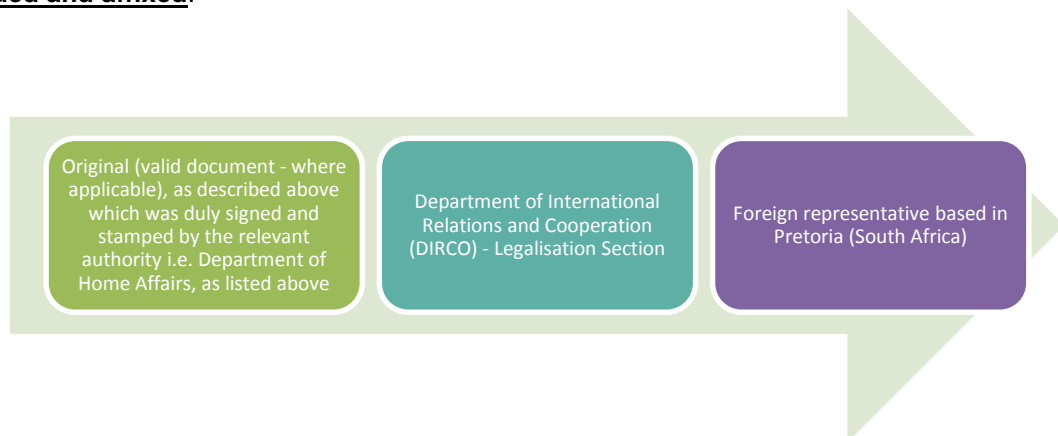
Customers need to submit the ***original*** document to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) – Legalisation Section in Pretoria for legalisation purposes (Apostille or Authentication) for use abroad. (Note: Documents to be Authenticated (*for non-Hague Convention countries*) or Apostilled (*for countries that are signatory to the Hague Convention*). Please visit [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) for further information on signatory countries.)

**NOTE: Flow diagram: To follow the process as explained above (when the destination country is signatory / party to the Apostile Convention) – and when the Apostille Certificate will be issued and affixed:**



*(If the Convention applies, an Apostille is the only formality that is required to establish the origin of the public document – no additional requirement may be imposed to authenticate the origin of the public document.)*

**NOTE: Flow diagram: To follow the process as explained above (when the destination country is NOT signatory / party to the Apostille Convention) – and when the Certificate of Authentication will be issued and affixed:**



**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION (DIRCO) – LEGALISATION SECTION**

OR Tambo Building, 460 Soutpansberg Road, Rietondale, Pretoria, 0084

Tel: (012) 351-1268 / 0775 / 1717 / 1269 / 1231 / 0595 / 1490 / 0033 or 1232 (Supervisor)

**Note:** As the Legalisation Section receives a high volume of incoming calls pertaining to general enquiries, it is therefore recommended that you forward your enquiry via e-mail to [legalisation@dirco.gov.za](mailto:legalisation@dirco.gov.za), as to ensure that you are able to receive the relevant assistance and guidance in writing from the Legalisation Section.

E-mail: [legalisation@dirco.gov.za](mailto:legalisation@dirco.gov.za)

Website: [www.dirco.gov.za](http://www.dirco.gov.za) – Consular Information – Consular Notarial Services (Legalisation of Official (Public) Documents)

**Note:**

- Customers need to submit the **original full or unabridged certificate**. The Legalisation Section cannot legalise abridged certificates (in other words a shortened version of the unabridged certificate). The reason for this is that an abridged certificate is simply a computer printout and it does not contain the stamp or signature of the issuing authority. *(The certificate should preferably not be older than one year.)*
- It must also be noted that the Legalisation Section cannot legalise marriage certificates (BI-27) which was issued, stamped and signed by a marriage officer, who is not employed at the Department of Home Affairs.
- Letter of no impediment (marital status) can be legalised if on an original, official Home Affairs letterhead, signed and stamped by the **authorised** Home Affairs official. *(These documents are only valid for a period of six (6) months from the date of issue.)*

Important: The Department of Home Affairs confirmed that the Letter of No Impediments (marital status) are issued by their Head Office only. It has not been delegated to any of the Regional Home Affairs Offices. Therefore, the Legalisation Section will only accept these Letters of No Impediment which were issued, stamped and signed by the authorised official at the Head Office of the Department of Home Affairs (letters as issued by the Regional Home Affairs offices will not be accepted for legalisation purposes, as these were issued without authorisation).

- Citizenship letters (letters confirming naturalization) can be legalised if on an original Home Affairs letterhead, duly stamped and signed by the authorised Home Affairs official. *(These documents should not be older than a year from the date of issue.)*
- The Legalisation Section recommends that customers verify with the relevant foreign representative in South Africa what their countries specific requirements are in terms of the signature to be verified.
- “Old” documentation: Please take note that although the original document is an original and valid document, the **signature** of the official (or employee) who originally issued and signed the document might not be available on the DIRCO – Legalisation Section signature database, neither be obtainable from the specific government Department, as the official (or employee) who originally issued and signed the document is no longer employed at the specific Department, which makes it impossible for the Legalisation Section to legalise the “old” document at such a late stage. Therefore it is advisable that the document should preferably not be older than one (1) year. The Legalisation Section furthermore recommends that customers must also verify with the relevant foreign representative in South Africa what their specific country requirements are.
- **Note:** Documents which has been laminated will not be accepted for legalisation purposes.

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