

LEGALIZATION BY MEANS OF “APOSTILLE”

Italy, along with the United States of America and other Countries is a part to the 1961 Hague Convention abolishing requirement of legalization of consular acknowledgment for foreign public documents originated in one signatory country and intended for use in another signatory country. When a public document is to be produced in a foreign State (Country) party to the above mentioned Convention, the only formality is required in order to certify the authenticity of the signature and the genuineness of the seal or stamp which it bears, is the attachment of a special certificate called an “Apostille”.

The “Apostille” is attached by the Office of the “Secretary of State” of the State in which the document was issued and/or notarized. The fee for this procedure may vary from one State to another. Therefore you must inquire directly with the appropriate Secretary of States’ s Office.

When requesting the “Apostille”, you must specify the Country in which the document is going to be used. You may obtain the “Apostille” in person or you may forward the original documents to be “legalized” to the Secretary of State, along with your written request for the “Apostille”, including the correct fee and a self addressed stamped return envelope. It is suggested that you check with the Secretary of State regarding the form of payment. In most cases a money order or personal check made out to the “Secretary of State of...” is acceptable.

THE “APOSTILLE APPLIES TO PUBLIC DOCUMENTS SUCH AS:

- Certified copies of birth, marriage and death, certificates issued by a local County Clerk Office;
- Certified documents issued by an authority r an official of the courts or tribunals of the State;
- Official administrative documents;
- Notary acts, affidavits/declarations signed by persons in an official capacity;
- Authentication of a signature by a legally commissioned Notary Public.

PLEASE NOTE: Vital statistics certificates (birth, marriage, death, etc.) that occurred in the United States of America in relation to Italian citizens must be registered at the City Halls in Italy. The registration will be processed by the Consular Offices. In order to do so the certificates must be submitted to the Consular Office that has jurisdiction over the State in which the events occurred, in certified copies issued by the competent County Clerk Office and legalized with the “Apostille”. Simple photocopies or certified copies issued by the local registrar are not valid for registration in Italy.