

## **FAQs on Apostille**

### **What is an Apostille and when do I need one?**

An Apostille is a certificate that authenticates the origin of a public document. It is issued by a country that is party to the Apostille Convention to be used in another country which is also a party to the Convention.

On 14 May 2019, the Philippines will officially become a party to the Apostille Convention. Authentication is still required for all Philippine documents to be used abroad, but this time with an Apostille instead of an Authentication Certificate ("red ribbon") as proof of authentication.

After authentication (Apostillization) by DFA-OCA, as Competent Authority, there is no more need for authentication (legalization) by the Foreign Embassies or Consulates except for non-Apostille countries and those that objected to the Philippine accession.

### **In which countries does the Apostille Convention apply?**

The Apostille Convention only applies if both the country where the public document was issued and the country where the public document is to be used are parties to the Convention. For the updated list of all "Apostille Countries," please visit this link: <https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=41>

Aside from countries that have not acceded to the Apostille Convention, the Philippine Apostille will not yet apply to Austria, Finland, Germany and Greece. Documents from and to such countries will still require legalization by the concerned Embassy or Consulate.

### **What do I do if the country where I need to use my public document is not an Apostille Country?**

By 14 May 2019, DFA-OCA will issue Apostille Certificates to all documents submitted for authentication. If your public document is to be used in a country where the Apostille Convention does not apply, you should contact the Embassy or Consulate of the country where you intend to use the document in order to find out what your options are. This usually means that you need to present your documents to the said country's Embassy or Consulate in the Philippines for its authentication/legalization.

You may also ask the intended recipient of your document whether an Apostille is necessary in your particular case.

### **To which documents does the Apostille Convention apply?**

The Philippine Apostille will apply to the same types of documents that are subject to authentication by the DFA prior to the effectivity of the Apostille Convention in the Philippines.

Moreover, an Apostille may never be used for the recognition of a document in the country where that document was issued. Apostilles are strictly for the use of public documents abroad. Thus, if your document is to be used in the Philippines, it cannot be submitted to the DFA for authentication/Apostillization.

**What is the benefit of an Apostille and how is it different from the Authentication Certificate ("Red Ribbon")?**

The Apostille streamlines the whole authentication procedure of documents for use abroad resulting to more convenience, less cost and processing time for the applicants. Before Apostille, a Philippine document to be used abroad needs a Certification by the relevant government agency or office, Authentication by the DFA and Authentication (Legalization) by the Embassy of the country of destination.

With the Apostille, the aforementioned document will no longer require legalization by the Foreign Embassy if the country of destination is already a Member of the Apostille Convention (or an "Apostille Country.") Once Apostillized, the document can be validly used in any and all Apostille Countries.

The Apostille Convention also establishes conditions that are more conducive to foreign investment thereby improving the country's global competitiveness. It makes it easier for companies to start up a business in a foreign country such as the Philippines. More direct investments in the Philippines mean more jobs for the Filipinos.

**How much is an Apostille?**

For now, payment for the DFA-OCA's Authentication Service is the same: Php100.00 for Regular Processing (i.e., released after four working days) and Php200.00 for Expedited Processing (to be released the following business day).

**Where can I avail of the Apostille?**

The Apostille is available in all Authenticating Units of the DFA: DFA-Aseana; DFA NCR-Northeast (Ali Mall); DFA NCR-East (SM Megamall); DFA NCR-West (SM Manila); DFA NCR-South (Metro Gaisano Alabang); DFA San Fernando, Pampanga; and soon, DFA Davao (SM Davao) and DFA Cebu (Pacific Mall-Metro Mandaue).

**I am an Overseas Filipino, how will the Apostille Convention affect me?**

Just as Philippine documents for use in Apostille countries will no longer need to pass through another authentication by the foreign embassies in Manila after they have been authenticated (Apostillized) by the DFA-OCA, foreign documents from Apostille countries will only need Apostillization by the host government for them to be validly used in the Philippines or in another

Apostille country. (Note: DFA-OCA will not authenticate/Apostillize all types of foreign documents.)

There shall be no change in the authentication process in non-Apostille countries and in Austria, Finland, Germany and Greece.

**What if I still want my document, executed in an Apostille country, to be authenticated by the Philippine Embassy?**

By 14 May 2019, Philippine Embassies/Consulates shall no longer authenticate documents originating from Apostille countries. Such documents will still need the Apostille from the host government but not the authentication by the Philippine Embassy/Consulate.

Embassies and Consulates are not authorized to issue an Apostille. However, Philippine Embassies/Consulates shall continue to provide acknowledgement and jurat services to walk-in applicants regardless of whether the origin of the document is an Apostille country or not.

**What are the effects of an Apostille?**

Just like the Authentication Certificate (or "red ribbon"), an Apostille only certifies the origin of the public document to which it relates: it certifies the authenticity of the signature or seal of the person or authority that signed or sealed the public document and the capacity in which this was done.

*An Apostille does not certify the content of the public document to which it relates.*

An Apostille may never be used for the recognition of a document in the country where that document was issued – Apostilles are strictly for use of public documents abroad. Thus, DFA-OCA will not issue an Apostille for documents that will be used in the Philippines.

**If the recipient of my Apostille wants to verify my Apostille, what should I suggest?**

Each Apostille Country is required to keep a register in which it records the date and number of every Apostille it issues, as well as information relating to the person or authority that signed or sealed the underlying public document. Recipients may contact the Competent Authority identified on the Apostille and ask whether the information on the Apostille corresponds with the information in the register.

In order to verify a particular Apostille, recipients may contact the Competent Authority. Contact information for the Competent Authorities, including phone numbers and website information, is available in the Apostille Section of the Hague Conference website: <https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/authorities1/?cid=41>.

Issued Philippine Apostilles may be verified through this link: [www.dfa.gov.ph/verify-apostille](http://www.dfa.gov.ph/verify-apostille).  
You may also scan the QR Code on the Apostille, using your smartphone, for a quick access to the verification link.