

How to request residency?

Immigration procedures in Costa Rica are done at the **General Direction of Immigration and Alien Status**. The corresponding documentation can be presented by the interested party at the Costa Rican consulate or embassy of the country of origin or residency, or by a third party with due authorization or special power of attorney granted by the foreigner for the procedure.

Following are the general aspects that must be followed in order to perform procedures to request residency in Costa Rica. In addition, details of residency are presented according to the different immigration categories or residency procedures for retired foreigners wishing to reside in the country.

General Aspects

The following requisites are to be presented by the interested party at the Costa Rica Consulate located in their country of origin or residency, or by a third party whom shall have an authorization or special power granted by the foreigner for the respective procedure at the Consulate.

1.- REQUEST LETTER. Addressed to the General Direction of Immigration and Alien Status, duly authenticated and in Spanish. If interested party does not personally present residency request at Consulate, they must grant special authorization or special power of attorney to a third party so that it can be performed. Both must be in the Spanish language and duly authenticated. The letter must contain a complete description of the alien, extensive and detailed indication of reasons for wishing to reside in the country and confirm financial means by which they will live.

2- PROXY IN COSTA RICA: Foreigner must assign a proxy in Costa Rica, through special power of attorney, who will be responsible to manage all your residency affairs. Power must contain an address within the judicial perimeter of San Jose and a fax number where proxy can receive notifications.

3- BIRTH CERTIFICATIONS: Must include parents name. If certification does not include this information, foreigners must render a legal statement before a public notary confirming this.

4- POLICE RECORDS: Issued in the country or state of residency for the past 2 years. This certification must not be more than 6 months old when submitting to the Consulate.

5- COMPLETE PASSPORT PHOTOCOPY: All pages.

6- FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS:Recent passport size photos.

All documents issued abroad must be authenticated by a Costa Rican Consulate, located at issuance location, except passport photocopies which can be authenticated at any Consulate or Public Notary authorized to function in Costa Rica. Documents issued by any other Costa Rican dependence or certified by an attorney or notary in Costa Rica, do not require authentication by consular authority.

Family Group

Regarding family groups, spouses and children under 18 years of age or disabled, can be included. A request form must be submitted for each family member, and must attach required mentioned requisites, as well as duly authenticated marriage certificate. Underage children do not need to submit police record.

One or both parents must sign underage children request form, and when power of attorney, one request form can be submitted for the family group and attach each file with a photocopy of the same, issued by the Consular authority or notary.

Costs

The costs involved in the Consular residency request form procedures, are the following:

- Special power of attorney performed at Consulate \$100.00
- Power of attorney signature authentication performed by notary abroad \$80.00
- Power of attorney certified photocopy \$25.00
- Authentication of request letter signature, birth, police, marriage and other certifications, \$40.00 each.
- Courier fee to submit request to Costa Rica. (Depends on weight of file)

Additional requisites according to requested category

Any probatory or additional document, which must be included to the residency request form, can be added to the file once at the Direction of Immigration and Alien Status. The Residency department will review the submitted request and will notify the proxy in San Jose so that

documentation can be submitted is considered necessary. If requested documents are issued in Costa Rica, the proxy shall have 10 working days for submission, and in 30 days if issued abroad.

Permanent Residency

Permanent residency is granted to all those foreigners that classify in the following:

- a) **FAMILY KINSHIP WITH COSTA RICAN:** if relation is with spouse, children, parents or siblings.
- b) **RETIREEE.** Those who receive a minimum pension of \$600 per month.
- c) **INDEPENDENT:** Those who receive minimum income of \$1000 per month.
- d) **INVESTOR:** Those who invest a minimum of \$200,000.00 or \$50,000.00 from specific sectors determined by the Government of Costa Rica.

Those foreigners that classify under the abovementioned a), b) or c), can submit residency request directly at the General Direction of Immigration and Alien Status, having complied with all requisites required by Law.

Temporary Residency

Temporary residency is granted to those foreigners that classify in the following:

- a) Professional Scientist or specialized personnel, hired by established companies or that develop activities in the country to perform their specialty work.
- b) Entrepreneur, business people, national or foreign company directive personnel.
- c) Students.
- d) Religious people that are dedicated to the activities of cult or teaching.
- e) Exiles or refugees
- f) Spouses or underage children of the people abovementioned.
- g) Those that do not classify in the previous classification, but authorized by the General Direction of Immigration and Alien Status.
- h) Tourism or Recreational vessel owners or crew.