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Who we are

At the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs we are responsible for the administration of the provisions of:

- Chapter III of the Constitution
- The Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap. 188) - registration/naturalisation of persons as citizens of Malta, confirmation of dual citizenship cases and deprivation of Maltese citizenship
- Section 44 (4) of the Constitution - confirmation that persons to whom this section refers enjoy 'freedom of movement' in Malta
- The Immigration Act (Cap 217):
 - Section 4: Confirming 'exempt person status'
 - Section 7: Issuing residence permits
 - Section 11: Issuing employment licences

This Charter

This Charter outlines the services we provide and the standards of service we aim to achieve and which you can expect from us. It also tells you what to do if you would like our service to change or improve. We regularly monitor and seek to improve the quality of our customer service according to the standards in the Quality Service Charter. Through this charter we are committed to providing you with a quality service.

We have issued information leaflets on the different services we offer. Each leaflet explains in detail the particular service, who is entitled to it, the procedures to be followed and the documents that have to be produced. Each leaflet is numbered and carries the letters CEA (Citizenship & Expatriate Affairs). These leaflets may be obtained from our Department.

An important aim of this Charter is to consolidate the information contained in the leaflets and to show our commitment by establishing standards in respect of each service provided.



Our Services

- If you require information regarding your national status, we can confirm whether you ever became a Maltese citizen, still are a Maltese citizen and what you should do to retain Maltese citizenship (Leaflet CEA 1)
- If you are a foreigner married to a citizen of Malta or a former citizen of Malta, or the child born abroad between 21.09.64 and 31.07.89 of a Maltese mother, we can help you through the whole process of acquiring Maltese citizenship by registration (Leaflet CEA 2)
- If you are eligible to apply for naturalisation as a citizen of Malta, we can inform you of all the procedures you have to follow. Whether citizenship is granted or not depends on whether your application can be considered under the current citizenship guidelines (Leaflet CEA 3)
- If you became a citizen of Malta on 21.09.64 or at birth and if you are or were an emigrant or if you have resided or are still residing abroad and you have retained or acquired or are about to acquire a citizenship other than that of Malta, we can confirm whether you qualify to hold dual citizenship (Leaflet CEA 4)
- If you need to register:
 - the birth certificate of a citizen of Malta who was born abroad
 - the marriage certificate in respect of a citizen of Malta who was married abroad
 - the death certificate of a citizen of Malta who passed away outside Maltathen you will need to call on us before you proceed to the Public Registry (Leaflet CEA 5)
- If you are:
 - a former citizen of Malta who was born in Malta and who lost Maltese citizenship as result of emigration
 - the non-Maltese spouse of a citizen of Malta and has been married for 5 years and are still living with your Maltese spouse
 - the widow/widower of a citizen of Malta to whom you had been married for at least 5 years or 5 years have elapsed from the date of marriage or of a former citizen of Malta (see above)

- the son/daughter of a citizen of Malta or of a former citizen of Malta (see above)
then you enjoy freedom of movement, that is, you may remain in Malta and also work here (in the case of children this is applicable until their twenty-first birthday)
- If you are the non-Maltese spouse of a citizen of Malta but you have not yet been married for 5 years, or you are the widow/widower of a citizen of Malta who died before 5 years of marriage, then you enjoy exempt person status, which entitles you to the same rights as freedom of movement (Leaflet CEA 6)
- If you are a foreigner and you wish to make the Maltese Islands your permanent home and you fulfil the relative conditions of the Permanent Residence Scheme then we can help you to achieve your aim (Leaflet CEA 7)
- If you possess skills that are required locally or you wish to invest in Malta and participate actively in your enterprise, then we may process an application for the issue of an employment licence which will enable you to work in Malta (Leaflet CEA 8).

How to contact us

Our Department is located close to the Auberge de Castille (the Prime Minister's Office), and is near the entrance to the Upper Barrakka Gardens. You can contact us by:

- coming personally or writing to the:

Department of Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs
3, Castille Place
Valletta CMR 02

- phoning us on 21 250868 / 21 250569 - 73
- faxing us on 21 237513
- sending an e-mail on citizenship@gov.mt
- accessing our website at:
<http://www.mha.gov.mt/services/citizenship/citizenship.html>



Opening hours

The Department is open to the public during these times:

8.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.

every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday all year round.

Employment licences may be collected from the Department during these times:

8.30 a.m. - noon

Monday to Friday all year round.

The Director meets members of the public only by appointment. For this purpose you may contact our Department on telephone number 21 224259 to make an appointment.

In those cases where your presence is not really necessary, as for example to submit:

- an application for an employment licence
 - an application for a residence permit
 - documents requested by an official of the Department
- you can submit your application/documents by post at the address already indicated.

Our commitment

We hope that you will find our Department clean, pleasant and welcoming. We will do our best to ensure that the official with whom you have an appointment or who is to deal with your case will see you as quickly as possible.

In those cases where the service you need depends solely on our Department, as in the case of confirmation of:

- freedom of movement
- exempt person status
- dual citizenship

you will receive a reply from our Department within 3 weeks from the date of your enquiry.

Some of the services we offer do not depend exclusively on our Department and we will require the co-operation of others as, for example, in the case of the issue of employment licences where the Police, the Board for the Processing of Applications and other Departments are involved. In these cases we shall try to deliver such services within the following time frames:

	Maximum Period *
The registration of former citizens of Malta or of children born abroad to Maltese mothers	1 month
The issue of an employment licence	3 months
The issue of a residence permit	3 months
The naturalisation of a person as a citizen of Malta	4 months
	Minimum Period **
The registration of a person married to a Maltese citizen, as a citizen of Malta	4 months

* From date of receipt of application.

** As it is not possible to assess how long investigations in such cases may take, only a minimum period can be indicated.

In the case of other routine correspondence we will reply to your requests within a maximum period of 10 working days. If for some reason this is not possible, we will inform you of the action that is being taken.

How you can help us

Some examples of how you can help us provide a better service:

- If you have applied for Maltese citizenship and have been asked by the Immigration Police to call on them producing documents indicated, you should do so immediately
- If you are an employer and you would like to apply for an employment licence for an expatriate, you should ideally apply 3 months before you would like the person to start working with you
- Your application for the issue of an employment licence should be accompanied by a letter justifying your request. This letter should contain information as to:

- the efforts that have been made to recruit a Maltese citizen
- the salary the post carries
- the role the expatriate concerned shall be fulfilling
- the number of Maltese employees on a full-time/part-time basis
- whether any expatriates are already employed by the company.

The letter should be accompanied by an updated copy of the company's Memorandum & Articles of Association (unless already submitted in connection with a previous application), a detailed job description, a curriculum vitae and testimonials as necessary.

- In those cases where, prior to the issue of an employment licence, the person concerned has to undergo a health screening process as required by law, unless that person takes immediate action as instructed by the Department, the issue of the licence may be delayed
- When an application for the extension of an employment licence is to be made, the employer should submit such a request 6 months before the expiry date of the current licence in the case of an extension for 1 year, and 3 months before in the case of an extension of a shorter period
- In the case of termination of employment of a foreigner, the employer has the obligation to inform the Department immediately of such an event and return the original employment licence for cancellation
- Employers are advised to make use only of applications made available by the Department. Photocopies are not acceptable and shall be returned to be substituted.

We also ask you to:

- be courteous and co-operative with our staff
- call on us only when we are open to the public
- call beforehand to make the necessary arrangements, if you have to see an official of the Department due to an urgent need
- ensure that you have all the necessary documents that are required before proceeding to the Department
- use the mail service when possible and in such instances ensure that the application form has been completed correctly and in full and that all necessary documents are attached to it.



If you are not satisfied with our service

It is important that you are satisfied with our service. If you think that we have failed to maintain our service delivery standards you can lodge a complaint. We will look into all complaints as they also help us improve our service and because your complete satisfaction is essential to us.

You can either make your complaint in writing, by completing the relevant section of the Feedback Form, or call for an appointment with our Customer Care Official to discuss your complaint. The official will investigate your complaint and inform you in writing within 1 week of his findings.

If your complaint needs a longer period to be investigated you will be informed accordingly in writing. If you are still not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you may then forward your complaint to:

The Director
Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs
3, Castille Place
Valletta CMR 02

The Director will send you a reply within 10 working days.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that we cannot deal with your complaint if:

- you do not qualify for a service
- your application for Maltese citizenship has been refused. It is to be noted in this respect that Section 14 of the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap 188) stipulates that 'the Minister (responsible for citizenship matters) shall not be required to assign any reason for the grant or refusal of any application under this Act and the decision of the Minister on any such application shall not be subject to appeal or review in any court'
- your application for the issue of a residence permit or an employment licence has been refused from an immigration (Police) point of view.



If your application for an employment licence was refused on grounds other than those indicated above, and you feel that you have fresh grounds which were not known or brought forward in your original application, you can request that the decision taken be reconsidered. A request for reconsideration will be processed within 3 weeks from its receipt.

Learning from you!

We continuously strive to provide a service that meets your needs and we welcome any comments and suggestions for service improvement. Kindly give us your comments by filling in the Feedback Form and leaving it in the suggestion box that we have made available at the reception area or by mailing it to us.

All information is correct at time of going to print. Information is continuously updated on the Charter Support Unit website.

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