

AUTHENTICATION OF DOCUMENTS

Legal documents for use in The Bahamas

Legal documents for use in The Bahamas must be authenticated by the Embassy or a Bahamian Consulate, or by means of an APOSTILLE issued by the Secretary of State. (This only applies to countries which have signed the Hague Convention on Documents.¹) If the document has an APOSTILLE attached, no action is required by the Embassy and the document may be returned to sender.

In the absence of an APOSTILLE, the document requires notarization by a Consular Officer. These documents must have a notarial certificate issued by the County or Circuit Court Clerk of the administering county. The signature of the County or Circuit Court Clerk certifies the signature of the Notary Public who notarizes the document. If the notarial certificate is not attached, the

Authentication Fees

A fee of \$20.00 per document is charged to process a document. If the main document is done in duplicate, the second and subsequent copies are \$20.00 each. If several copies make up a whole, the main document is \$20.00 and the others are \$20.00 each. If more than one signature is required on a single document, i.e. there are several certificates attached to the same document, certification of the first signature is \$20.00 and each subsequent signature is \$10.00.

On occasion, the Embassy is asked to provide a witness to the signing of a document by an individual named in the document. The witnessing fee is \$10.00.

When documents are sent to the Embassy to be forwarded to the State Department and then on to another Embassy, in addition to the Embassy's processing fees, there are additional fees of \$8.00 per document for the State Department and \$10.00 for each destination to which the document is to be sent. For example there would be a charge of \$20.00 processing fee for a document which must first be authenticated by the Embassy, an additional fee of \$8.00 for processing by the State Department and a consular fee of \$10.00 per destination (\$20.00) to forward that document to another Embassy for processing. This does not include the processing fee charged by that Embassy.

It is the responsibility of the individual or law firm sending the documents to verify and provide the
