

**REPUBLIC OF PANAMA**

*Ministry of Finance and Treasury*

*Office of the Directorate of Merchant Marine Circular No. 72*

*Consular and Maritime Affairs*

<b>To:</b> Owners/Operators and Masters of Panamanian Flag Vessels
<b>Subject:</b> Consular Fees and Legalization's
<b>Reference:</b> 1. Merchant Marine Circular No. 73 2. Law No. 55 of 1979

The Directorate of Consular and Maritime Affairs considers it important to make some clarifications of certain Consular services mentioned in our Merchant Marine Circular No. 73, as follows:

**A. Presentation of Documents to the Consul**

Owners/Operators and Masters of Panamanian Flag Vessels should be advised that by law they are not obliged to submit to Consular officials the ship's documents, unless there is an express authorization from the Directorate of Consular and Maritime Affairs. Hence, all documents should be kept on board the vessel.

**B. Consular Inspections**

Panamanian Law does not require a vessel to be inspected by Panama Consuls abroad. Owners/Operators and Masters are advised that such inspections are not mandatory. Owners should contact the Directorate of Consular and Maritime Affairs immediately whenever they experience such a problem.

**C. Legalization**

The administration wishes to make clear certain aspects of legalization and when such procedure is necessary.

1. By Law, any document that has to be used for a legal or commercial transaction in Panama requires legalization.
2. For the registration of a vessel or mortgages or titles, all documents should be legalized by a Consul at the time of the transaction.

So, when it was stated in Merchant Marine Circular No.73 that ... "Consuls may legalize any documents or book and charge for it whenever it is necessary ...," we are referring to the above circumstances. It should be clear that if the Master of Agent request the legalization of documents, the Consul will charge for his services.

Not included in documents that may be legalized by a Consul are all the statutory certificates issued to satisfy the requirements of I.M.O. and I.L.O. Conventions to which Panama is a party, the Exemption Certificates, and the National Safety and Radio Certificates issued to vessels under 500 GRT. These exclusions reiterate the statements on such in Merchant Marine Circular No. 73.

Also exempted from the requirements to be legalize are the registration papers such as Patente of Navigation, Radio License and valid crew documents.

**D. Consular Fees**

Law No. 55 of 1979 establishes a list of Consular services with the correspondent fees to be charged by Panamanian Consuls abroad. It should be understood that such fees are considered minimum fees and that in certain cases may vary according to the area. Notwithstanding this, they should not exceed the reasonable amounts in practice:

1. Services Regarding Navigation (USD):

- 1 For the receipt, custody and delivery of books and documents

of a national vessel anchored in a foreign port \$ 25.00

- 1 For the issuance of Consular clearance of a national vessel \$ 25.00

- 1 For the drawing up, opening or closing proceedings and sealing

of pages of a log book, account book, cargo book, engine book, radio book

and any other book required to be carried on board \$ 25.00

- 1 For Consul's assistance in acts requiring his presence or

at the request of the Master or Shipowner, or in the case of shipwreck,

boarding, grounding, damages or forced arrival, labor disputes, and

proved expenses of removal and demurrage, for each hour or

fraction thereof, up to a maximum of \$ 100.00 in total \$ 20.00

1 For legalization of copies of each international or technical

certificate issued to national vessels by organizations and

institutions authorized by the National Government \$ 10.00

1 For registering and issuing the first copy of a ship protest or

declaration or statement by a Master or other officials to the Consul \$ 10.00

1 If a statement needs to be taken from the crew or passengers,

for each such statement \$ 10.00

1 For participating in the deposit and certification of the inventory

of merchandise salvaged from a ship, in addition to warehousing and

custody, which shall always be for the account of shipowner,

forwarder or consignee of the goods, 1% of the sales or auction value 1%

1 For participation of the Consul in the sale, auction or public sale

of all or part of the goods salvaged from a vessel, 2% of the value 2%

1. Service Regarding Crew of Merchant Ships and Maritime Labor:

1 For the sale of each set of enlistment or enrollment contract \$ 25.00

1 For certifying or authorizing the proceeding of the opening or

closing of an original enlistment contract \$ 10.00

1 For certification of each additional copy of the aforementioned contract \$ 5.00

1 For legalizing or authorizing the signature of each seaman hired

or discharged in the enlistment contract \$ 10.00

1 For issuing a certified copy of an enlistment contract \$ 10.00

1 For certifying the Master's declaration of non-existence of Panamanian

crewmen in a port \$ 10.00

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Inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular should be directed to:  
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New York, New York 10036, U.S.A.