

PANAMA REPUBLIC
EXECUTIVE BRANCH

LAW DECREE # 3

(February 22, 2008)

That creates the National Immigration Service, the Immigration Career and other dispositions

THE PRESIDENT OF PANAMA,

in use of his constitutional and legal faculties, specifically those which the numeral 1 of Article 1 of the Law 1 of 2008 provides, having listened the favorable opinion of the Cabinet's Council.

DECREES:

TITLE I

IMMIGRATION

UNIQUE CHAPTER

OBJECTIVE AND APPLICATION FIELD

1. This Law Decree has the objective to regulate the immigration entry and exit patterns of nationals and foreigners, the length of visit of foreigners on our national territory; to establish the requirements and procedures to acquire Panamanian natural citizenship, and to create the National Service of Immigration and Immigration Career, without prejudice of what is outlined in treaties, international and integration agreements adopted by Panama and in special laws.

2. Create the National Immigration Service, as an institution of public safety and administrative management, appointed to the Ministry of State and Justice, subject to any immigration policies that the Executive Branch might dictate, and subject to audits by the CONTRALORIA GENERAL DE LA REPUBLICA.

The National Immigration Service shall execute its functions across the national territory and shall count with the organization, the resources, and facilities within the aerial, maritime, and ground immigration buildings of the country. In the execution of its functions, it shall obey the principles of law, order, efficiency, transparency, professionalism, discipline, and simplification of the immigration procedures, with strict adherence to human rights.

3. In virtue of international agreements that have been ratified by the Republic of Panama, and the norms of the International Rights, this Law Decree shall not apply to:

1. Diplomatic and consular agents, and foreign mission functionaries and their families, which are properly accredited by the Republic of Panama.
2. Permanent representatives, representatives and special dignitaries, foreign officers of international government organizations stationed on national territory and their families, in accordance to the international agreements subscribed and ratified by the Republic of Panama.

TITLE II

IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES

CHAPTER I

NATIONAL IMMIGRATION SERVICE

4. (there is no numeral 3)

The National Immigration Service provides a public function of safety, administration, supervision, control, and application of the immigration policies dictated by the Executive Branch, in accordance with this Law Decree, its regulations and norms related to this matter.

5. The National Immigration Service shall operate without interruption across our national territory, and shall be assembled by officers appointed by the General Director of the National Immigration Service, in accordance with the norms of the Immigration Career, to the different offices or immigration points of this country, according to their specialty, for the effective application of immigration control.

The General Director of the National Immigration Service, prior authorization of the Secretary of State and Justice, shall be able to create branches, departments, and

administrative units required for the proper function of the institution, subject to any law dispositions.

6. The National Immigration Service has the following functions:

7.

1. To apply the immigration policy and enforce the current immigration laws.
2. Organize, guide, register, audit, and provide immigration service to foreigners, and ensure the effective control of their stay in the country, within the limits established by this Law Decree.
3. Execute immigration control and maintain a registry of entry and exit of nationals and foreigners.
4. Authorize, deny, or prohibit the entrance or permanence of foreigners on our national territory, and order their deportation, expulsion, or return, in accordance with the Constitution and the law.
5. Approve or deny, through a motivated resolution, the applications of changes in immigration categories of foreigners in the country.
6. Approve or deny application of such immigration categories processed through embassies and consulates.
7. Cancel, through a motivated resolution, the permits of non-residence, temporary residence, and permanent residence, of foreigners in the country, in accordance with this Law Decree.
8. Embrace and resolve the applications of visas requested by non-resident foreigners.
9. Provide identification documents to foreigners recognized by the Republic of Panama as refugees, political refugees, and people with temporary protection due to humanitarian reasons.
10. Provide protection to foreigners whose native countries have no diplomatic or consular presence.
11. Comply with and enforce the international agreements ratified by the Republic of Panama on immigration matters.
12. Manage the money collected as deposit for deportation and guarantee in the FONDO FIDUCIARIO DE MIGRACION, and refund these deposits when appropriate.

13. Administer the Special Fund for the Development of Human Resources.
14. Create an internal system of procedures, general protocols, operational and administrative, to establish the norms of institutional management and its rules.
15. Execute immigration control over passengers of national and international transportation systems, private or public, in airports, borders, maritime and fluvial harbors, and on any other place of our national territory. For this effect, permanent or recurrent controls may be established, properly authorized by the General Director of the National Immigration Service.
16. Inspect and enforce immigration control in the work place, and on any place of public access, when there are signs of irregular immigration activities.
17. Exchange information and cooperate with other national entities and similar foreign services, as well as with international organizations specialized in immigration matters, to contribute in the implementation of actions against the illegal traffic of immigrants, people trade, organized transnational crime, terrorism, weapons and explosives smuggling, and against the re-routing of merchandise of illicit use and other related activities.
18. Capture and detain foreigners that break the dispositions of immigration laws, within the terms provided by this Law Decree.
19. Conduct the appropriate investigations to prevent, identify, and preclude infractions related to the immigration judicial regime, and cooperate with the authorities in the investigations related with the infractions related to the penal law.
20. Practice coactive jurisdiction.
21. Enforce appropriate administrative sanctions to offenders of this Law Decree and its rules.
22. Any other that the law and rules would establish.

7.

The National Immigration Service shall protect the respect and dignity of human rights. In the execution of its functions, the public servants of the National Immigration Service shall not discriminate for reasons of national origin or economic and social status, or disability, political beliefs, ethnic background, gender, language, or religion.

CHAPTER II

CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL OF IMMIGRATION

8. Create the Consultative Council of Immigration as a means of advice and consultancy of the National Immigration Service, which the following public servants shall integrate, or by anyone they appoint:

9.

1. The Secretary of State and Justice, who shall preside.
2. The Secretary of Foreign Relations.
3. The Secretary of Labor and Labor Development.
4. The Secretary of Commerce and Industry.
5. The Secretary of Economy and Finances.
6. The President of the Electoral Tribunal.
7. The General Manager of the Panama Institute of Tourism.
8. The Executive Secretary of Public Safety and National Defense.
9. The General Director of the National Immigration Service, whose function shall be that of Secretary, with the right to vote.

The Secretary of State and Justice shall have the authority to summon to any of the Council meetings, with the right to vote, any natural or legal person, or associations properly recognized by the Ministry of State and Justice.

CHAPTER III

IMMIGRATION POLICY

The following are functions of the Ministry of State and Justice, in political and immigration matters:

10.

1. Prepare and submit to the Executive Branch the immigration policies that can guide the country in its demographic strategies of population forecasting, so it can be approved when the Executive deems it necessary.

2. Submit to the consideration of the Executive Branch immigrant-worker programs, that shall satisfy our national political, economical, and demographic interests.
3. Recommend and develop special measures that the country should adopt to control, audit, and prevent irregular immigration.
4. Promote the fulfillment of interdisciplinary studies to facilitate the integration of immigrants to Panama's society.
5. Recommend and supervise the fulfillment of census and data updates, with the purpose to determine the migratory quantity and quality of immigrants that stay on our national territory, the conditions in which they perform their activities, and their relation with the country as a whole and with other groups that populate the country.
6. Recommend to the Executive Branch the negotiation, modification, or revision of treaties, or international immigration agreements.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL DIRECTOR AND SUB DIRECTOR

The General Director and Sub Director are public servants appointed and removed freely by the President of Panama.

To be a General Director and Sub Director at the service of the National Immigration Service, the following is required:

1. Be a natural born citizen of Panama.
2. Have proven moral standards.
3. Have not been convicted of a felony.
4. Have a college degree.

11.

The following are the functions of the General Director of the National Immigration Service:

1. Direct, plan, and manage the National Immigration Service.

2. Adopt measures for the effective application of the functions established by this Law Decree and its regulations.
3. Penalize members of the National Immigration Service for breaking this Law Decree's regulations and pertinent disciplinary norms.
4. Oversee, approve, or deny proposals of internal procedures, general protocols, operative and administrative, to establish the institutional norms and regulations.
5. Make recommendations to the Secretary of State and Justice for organizational, administrative, and operational changes deemed necessary for the effective execution of the functions established by this Law Decree.
6. Present a pre-approved institutional budget for the consideration of the Secretary of State and Justice.
7. Administer the Fiduciary Fund of Immigration, the Special Fund for the Development of Human Resources, and the resources approved in the budget.
8. Delegate the functions and attributions considered appropriate to his direct reports, with the exception of decisions regarding legal permanency, deportation, or expulsion.
9. Apply appropriate monetary and administrative penalties to anyone who infringe this Law Decree and its regulations.
10. Represent the National Immigration Service abroad, in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Relations.
11. Practice an active jurisdiction, and when appropriate, delegate upon an officer of the institution.
12. Exchange information with similar foreign institutions and with national and international government organizations specialized in immigration matters.
13. Authorize necessary investigations to prevent, identify, and preclude infractions against immigration laws.
14. Adopt administrative practices that promote safety criteria, transparency, swiftness, and fairness.
15. Determine deportation terms according to the gravity of the cause that stimulates it, according to this Law Decree.
16. Execute any other functions determined by this Law Decree and its regulations.

12.

The Sub Director of the National Immigration Service shall be assigned responsibilities by the General Director, and shall replace him when temporarily absent.

CHAPTER V

IMMIGRATION RESPONSABILITIES OF THE DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR PANAMANIAN PERSONNEL

13. Authorize the diplomatic and consular personnel of the Republic of Panama, so it can perform its immigration functions, according to international agreements, this Law Decree, and its regulations.

While performing their duties, the diplomatic and consular officers shall:

1. Receive, process, and issue visas, within the non-resident category, and the ones determined by the Executive Branch through the Ministry of State and Justice, prior fulfillment of proper requirements and procedures.
2. Conduct any necessary actions to verify that the documents and statements presented are valid.
3. Receive and process, according to the respective regulations, permits of temporary residency to foreign individuals that are shall to attend school in Panama, as regular University students, properly recognized by the authorities, except those established in agreements and special laws.
4. Submit updates to the National Immigration Service, within the first 5 days of every month, on the status of immigration matters within their offices.

TITLE III

IMMIGRATION CATEGORIES

CHAPTER I

CLASSIFICATION

14. Foreigners that enter our national territory can do so under the following immigration categories:

1. Non-resident.
2. Temporary resident.
3. Permanent resident.
4. Foreigners under the protection of the Republic of Panama.

The Executive Branch shall regulate the immigration categories and sub-categories, the procedures and conditions under which visas and permits shall be issued, in accordance with the national safety, health, and public order, and protection of rights and liberties principles.

Foreign individuals may request a category change only when all requirements established in this Law Decree and its regulations have been met, except for any outlined exceptions.

15. The Executive Branch shall regulate the conditions and requirements to be met to apply for each of these categories and may create other immigration sub-categories.

CHAPTER II

NON-RESIDENT

16. Non-resident is a foreigner who enters the national territory sporadically, does not have intentions of establishing residence in the country nor has the intention to abandon his residence of origin while in Panama, and has financial resources to support himself during his visits, and exits the country within the authorized period of time.

Attending to the purpose of the foreigner's visit to our country, the visa or permit of non-residence shall be issued under the following sub-categories:

1. **Tourists.** People who enter the country exclusively for the purpose of recreation and other activities established in this Law Decree, for a term of no longer than 90 days, without prejudice of what is established on international agreements ratified by the Republic of Panama and principles of reciprocity.
2. **Transit passengers and crews.** People who enter our national territory but shall continue their trip to another destination within 12 hours of their arrival, as well as crews and passengers of international transport mediums, and people who stay at immigration facilities.

In cases of emergencies and unforeseen circumstances, it shall be possible to extend the transit permanency for up to 72 hours, prior approval of the General

Director, or the authorized public servant at the airports, ports, or immigration control facilities.

3. **Sailors.** Foreign citizens who enter the country with the purpose to board ships as crewmembers, from ports and national waters, to start their duties aboard a ship, are allowed to stay in the country for a period of no more than 5 days and shall comply to all current legal dispositions regarding this matter. In cases of unforeseen circumstances, this period may be extended, prior authorization of the General Director, or the authorized public servant at the airports, ports, or immigration control facilities.

17. Foreigners that enter the country under the tourist category, can solicit a change in immigration category, for which an extension may be granted of up to 60 additional days, to complete the documentation for the status change, if all requirements established in this Law Decree and the regulation, are met.

CHAPTER III

TEMPORARY RESIDENT

18. A temporary resident is a foreigner that enters the country for work related, special politics, education, cultural, religious, humanitarian, and to reunite with family, and other sub-categories, for a period of up to 6 years, except for those cases in which the special laws and agreements establish different periods. The requirements, procedures, costs, and changes of category, shall be established under the regulations of this Law Decree.

Dependants are parents, spouse, and children under 18 years of age (minors). Children older than 18 years of age and up to 25 years, who may be claimed as dependants, as long as they are current students and are under the financial support of the temporary resident, can obtain an extension to their permit for a period of time, which in no case can be greater than that of the temporary resident.

19. Foreigners to which the Cabinet Decree # 363 of 1971 and law 23 of 1977, makes reference to, for effects of the present Law Decree, shall be absorbed under the immigration category of temporary residents, and shall keep the fiscal benefits and tax exemptions that their special laws have established.

CHAPTER IV

PERMANENT RESIDENT

20. A permanent resident is a foreigner that enters our national territory for economic and investment, special politics, and demographic, reasons, and under other sub-categories, with the intention to establish residence in the country, under the special politics adopted by the country, following the requirements, procedures, and costs, that shall be established in this Law Decree.

Paragraph. In the regulation of this Law Decree, it shall be established the minimum amounts of pensions, retirements, and investments, that foreigners applying for permanent residency shall provide.

The Executive Branch shall revise it every 2 years, so as to determine its currency to the national and global economy, keeping in mind our national interests.

21. The National Immigration Service shall issue to foreign individuals soliciting any of the immigration statuses outlined on this chapter, a provisional residency permit of 2 years, with an identification document. After the 2 years, permanent residency may be applied for, if all the requirements established by the law are met.

22. Foreigners to which the Law 9 of 1987 refer to, shall be absorbed for the purposes of this Law Decree under the category of permanent resident, and shall keep fiscal benefits and tax exemptions established by their special laws.

CHAPTER IIV

FOREIGNERS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

23. Foreigners under the protection of the Republic of Panama are defined as: refugees, political refugees, people without citizenship, and persons under humanitarian statutes of provisional protection, who had entered as a group or individually, in search of temporary protection, while they wait to return to their country of origin, or their relocation to a third country.

The recognition of such condition shall be subject to the national constitution and international treaties ratified by the Republic of Panama.

24. Once the condition of refugee, political refugee, or non-citizenship is recognized by the Republic of Panama, the National Immigration Service shall issue a permit of temporary residency valid for 1 year, which can be extended for an equal period of 1 year, as long as the competent authorities certify that the condition is maintained.

The national commission of eligibility for the attention of refugees shall issue a permit valid for 2 months (which can be extended), to foreigners under provisional humanitarian statutes of protection.

Foreigners under this condition are exempt of paying the relocation fee unless they loose or renounce to such condition.

25. In the case of refugees, once the clause of group suspension is applied, the Executive Branch may exempt them from the deposit of relocation.

26. Refugees, political refugees, and non-citizenship people shall have the same rights as temporary residents, including the right to work, subject to the current work regulations, the duty to pay taxes and social security contributions, under the same conditions as national citizens, as well as to pay for immigration services.

These refugees may be exempted of common requirements applicable to residents and shall have the right to change their immigration category.

27. In the case the condition of refugee, political refugee, or non-citizenship is lost, renounced, revoked, the competent authorities shall notify of such occurrence to the National Immigration Service.

TITLE V

TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT RESIDENCY PERMIT

CHAPTER I

COMMON REQUIREMENTS

28. The application for a temporary or permanent residency permit presented to the National Immigration Service, shall be filed through the services of an attorney, in accordance to the requirements established for each category of visa or permit, with the exception of that category that is applied for from overseas, and that category applicable for reasons of education, that shall meet the following common requirements:

1. A copy of the passport, properly notarized by a Panamanian public notary or including a certification of the diplomatic representation accredited in the country, or of the corresponding authority in the place of issuance.

When the National Immigration Service deems it necessary, it may require that the applicant certify the authenticity of the passport.

2. A criminal record from the country of origin or residency. On those countries where this document is not issued, the applicant shall provide a certification from a diplomatic or consular agent from their country of origin, accredited by the Republic of Panama, in which the inexistence of such document is ratified, and a sworn declaration before a public notary, in which it is established that there are no felonies on the record.
3. A health certificate issued by a professional doctor within 3 months prior the submission of the application.
4. Pay a fee of 250 balboas to the National Treasury for the rights to apply for an immigration category, and 800 balboas to the National Immigration Service as a deposit for relocation.
5. A sworn statement of personal integrity.

All documentation that is originated abroad shall have to comply with the legalizing requirements.

29. People of the cloth, students, persons married to Panama nationals, children younger than 12 years old, and other people outlined on the special laws, are exempt to pay the deposit of relocation.

30. The regulations of this Law Decree shall establish any special requirements and procedures for each immigration category and sub-category, corresponding to this Title, as well as the exemptions outlined in the previous article.

CHAPTER II

CANCELLATION OF VISAS AND IMMIGRATION PERMITS

31. The General Director of the National Immigration Service shall be able to cancel the permanency or residency on our national territory, to any foreign individual under temporary or permanent residency, in any of the sub-categories, for the following reasons:

32.

1. Marry a Panama national with the sole intention of obtaining residency status.
2. Threaten our national security, public order, moral standards, or public health, or violate civil and personal rights.
3. In the case of permanent residents, absent from the country for more than 2 years, unless this absence is justified and authorized by the Director of the National Immigration Service.

4. Perform activities non-compatible with those that were used as basis to obtain a visa or non-resident, permanent or temporary resident permit.

5. Provide false statements and/or fraudulent or altered documentation.

6. Intention to bribe, personally or through a third party, with any type of a promise of financial compensation, or apply any type of pressure intended to influence the shall of the officers of the National Immigration Service, or diplomatic or consular agents, with the goal to obtain a visa or permit.

7. Having been convicted of a felony of tax fraud.

8. Cease the reasons that originated the authorization for a visa or permit.

9. Any other reason established in the law and regulations.

33The National Immigration Service shall deport foreigners whose non-resident visas or temporary or permanent resident permit have been canceled, except in the cases in which the law offers a different solution.

CHAPTER III

COMMON DISPOSITIONS TO PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

34 The National Immigration Service and the members of the police services shall be able to request to any foreign individual, without exception, to produce documentation that proves the legal entrance to our national territory and their immigration status. On appropriate situations, the police shall put foreigners under the custody of the National Immigration Service.

35.The National Immigration Service shall process applications for temporary or permanent resident permits, in no more than 60 business days. The applicant shall have the right to get a corresponding voucher while the application is in process. In the event that an incomplete or defective application is found, the applicant shall be granted a term of 15 business days, starting from the notification, to fix it.

Temporary paragraph. Starting the first year of the application of this Law Decree, in the event that there is no decision taken within the established term in this article, it shall be understood that the application was approved.

36.For security and public order reasons, the Security entities, the Public Ministry, and the judicial authorities, shall communicate immediately to the National Immigration Service, regarding the existence of investigations or judicial procedures, in which a

foreigner is involved, indicating the crime he or she is being accused of, any issued warrants, and whether the individual is under custody or not.

For the effect of what is outlined in the previous paragraph, the National Immigration Service shall create the technical mechanisms and shall formalize agreements and protocols with all the affected institutions, with the goal of protecting the flow of information, within the law.

TITLE V

FOREIGNER REGISTRY

UNIQUE CHAPTER

CREATION

37. Create the Foreigner Registry, which shall house all the information from every foreign individual that applies for temporary or permanent residency status, outlined in this Law Decree, which shall receive a unique and permanent number. The National Immigration Service shall manage this registry.

The National Immigration Service shall take all the necessary actions so that the unique and permanent number, referenced in the previous paragraph, either match or can be validated by the tax identification number issued by the DIRECCION GENERAL DE INGRESOS of the Finance and Economy Ministry, Social Security, and the Electoral Tribunal. This number shall be used for every legal purpose, public or private. For this effect, the Director of the National Immigration Service shall subscribe the inter-institutional agreements for its implementation.

All the information contained in the Foreigner Registry shall be confidential, but may be shared, if the individual or competent authority requests it due to a criminal or tax fraud investigation.

38. Every foreign individual has the obligation to communicate changes in the information that he or she provided to the Foreigner Registry, within no more than 30 calendar days, starting the day in which the change occur. For the effects of personal notifications, the National Immigration Service shall consider as valid the address that which is present at the Foreigner Registry.

TITLE VI
IMMIGRATION CONTROL

CHAPTER I

ENTRANCE AND EXIT

39. Immigration control shall be performed by the National Immigration Service, according to this Law Decree and its regulations, in line with the immigration policies established by the Executive Branch.

40. For nationals to be able to exit the country shall have to present a current passport or safe-conduct and meet all the requirements outlined in this Law Decree.

The National Immigration Service shall keep a registry of immigration control of every minor, in which their identities, country of destination, identity of guardian, and authorizing document, shall be included.

41. For a Panamanian or foreign minor to be able to leave the country, must meet one of the following:

1. Be accompanied by the parents.
2. Be accompanied by one of the parents, and has written authorization sign by the other, and notarized by a public notary.
3. Be accompanied by one of the parents, and has the authorization of a competent judge, and in case one of the parents is deceased, a death certificate must be produced.
4. Be accompanied by a third party, and has written authorization sign by both parents, according to numerals 2 and 3.
5. If the minor is traveling alone, must produce written authorization sign by both parents, according to numerals 2 and 3.

Paragraph. Excluded from this disposition are non-resident minors.

42.If an order issued by the competent authority exists, immigration authorities located on immigration facilities shall not allow foreigners to enter or leave the country, and nationals to leave the country.

43.Foreigners that have violated any portion of the immigration law shall not be allowed to leave the country without having paid the corresponding monetary fines. If he or she does not have the financial means to pay these fines, deportation procedures shall take place.

44.Without prejudice of any current international agreements, to be able to enter our national territory, foreigners must meet the following requirements:

1. Enter through any authorized immigration air, sea, or ground port.
2. Produce a valid passport or travel document when required by a competent authority, including a valid visa.
3. Agree to be interviewed by competent authorities when entering or leaving the country. Agree to have their information verified, and agree to have their luggage inspected and verified.
4. Present an Admission/Departure card provided by the international carrier, properly filled, without prejudice of the faculty of the National Immigration Service to implement other automated means of collecting information, in accordance with international standards.
5. Have no prohibitions to enter the country.
6. Have financial solvency to cover and support his expenses while visiting the country. Exempt from this disposition are transit passengers that remain within an immigration facility.
7. Have a return ticket back to their country of origin or residence, when the immigration category requires so.
8. Have cancelled all obligations with the National Immigration Service.
9. Comply with health requirements established by the Health Ministry, as well as with any other requirement issued by the competent authorities.

A foreign individual shall have the obligation, at the moment of registration, to present a valid passport or travel document, as well as to provide the front desk or administrator of hotels or hospitality facilities, information regarding their length of visit and departure date.

At the same time, hotel and hospitality owners and administrators shall have the obligation to forward such information to the National Immigration Service, which shall implement automated means to collect them.

45.Every foreign individual in the country must carry his/her immigration and identification documents and present them to the competent authorities when asked so.

CHAPTER II

AUTHORIZATION OF MULTIPLE ADMISSIONS AND DEPARTURES

46. The authorization of multiple admissions and departures constitutes a visa of admission and departures to and from our national territory, issued by the National Immigration Service, or the authorized diplomatic or consular personnel, to foreigners non residents that so request. This type of visa shall be granted based on the dispositions of this Law Decree and its regulations, special laws, treaties, or international agreements, ratified and approved by the Republic of Panama.

47. An authorization for multiple admissions and departures granted to a non-resident foreigner shall be valid for up to 5 years, and it shall be noted on a valid passport, without prejudice of any other issuing ways. Such authorization does not grant the right to stay in the country for a term greater than that established in this Law Decree for this category.

48. On request, a multiple admissions and departures visa shall be granted to the foreigner individual that is in the process of changing his immigration status from a temporary resident permit, to a permanent resident.

49. A multiple admissions and departures visa allows the entrance and departure to and from our national territory, an unlimited number of times, for as long as it is current. If the foreign individual stays in the country after the expiration date, shall be punished with the appropriate monetary and administrative penalties established within the law and regulations, including canceling the visa.

CHAPTER III

REASONS FOR ADMISSION DENIAL

50. The National Immigration Service shall have the authority to deny to any foreign individual, his admission or transit to the country, as well as to revoke the corresponding visa or permit, in the following situations:

51.

1. A current order to deny entry by a competent authority.
2. Provide fraudulent or altered documentation, foreign or domestic, to the competent authority, with the purpose of obtaining an admission visa to our national territory.
3. Attempt to enter the country with a document that does not meet the requirements that the current law demands.
4. Have felonies in the country of origin or residence.
5. Constitute a risk or threat to our national security or to the international community.

6. Suffer from an illness that the Ministry of Health qualifies as a sanitary risk, or come from a country or region that the World Health Organization, or the Pan-American Health Organization have deemed highly contagious.
7. Have been deported or expelled from the country and such actions are still in effect.
8. Break the present Law Decree or its regulation.

Foreign individuals that fall in any of the previously outlined points shall be returned to the last port of boarding, without exception.

52. The National Immigration Service shall carry the registry of impediments issued by competent authorities and shall establish through regulation, the procedures for their collection, actualization, and control.

CHAPTER IV

LABORAL IMMIGRATION

53. The National Immigration Service and the Ministry of Labor and Labor Development, shall adopt the necessary procedures to ensure that the immigration procedures from their counterparts are carried out in a coordinated way, for the better adherence of immigration and labor legal dispositions.

54. The employer, agent, contractor, or intermediary, of any nature that needs to hire foreign workers, or to receive professional services of a foreigner within our national territory, shall comply with all the requirements established in this Law Decree, labor law, and other pertinent legal dispositions.

55. The employer, agent, contractor, or intermediary, of any nature that needs to hire foreign workers, or to receive professional services of a foreigner within our national territory, shall demand proof of documentation that allows him to stay legally in the country. Failure to comply shall carry the appropriate penalties.

56. The employer, agent, contractor, or intermediary, of any nature that needs to hire foreign workers, or to receive professional services of a foreigner within our national territory, shall notify the National Immigration Service, within a term of no more than 20 work days, about the ending of the labor or contractual relationship. Failure to comply with this disposition shall result in fines for the employer and/or the foreign individual, without prejudice that the National Immigration Service carries out the deportation of the laborer or professional.

CHAPTER V

CROSS-BORDER IMMIGRATION MOVEMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

57. The country recognizes the existence, within its territory, of movements and immigration displacements across-borders that do not constitute a massive affluence, on the part of ancestral Panamanian ethnic indigenous, the obligation to preserve and to facilitate the innocent crossing of these people, to and from the Panamanian jurisdiction, as well as to protect them from threats related with the illicit traffic of persons, illicit drug-traffic and related crimes, terrorism, illegal weapons and explosive traffic, and other criminal activities related with the illegal ecosystem predation, and the illegal traffic of plants and animals on the extinction list.

58. The administrative and traditional indigenous authorities have the obligation to cooperate and coordinate with the National Immigration Service and other public institutions, the supervision and control of the immigration movement of indigenous citizens.

CHAPTER VI

TO THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT CARRIERS

59. For the effect of this Law Decree, an international transport carrier shall be defined as that which via air, ground, or sea, dedicates to the movement of people or cargo between 2 or more national jurisdictions.

60. The National Immigration Service shall inspect the international people or cargo carriers, to verify compliance to what is established in this Law Decree and its regulation.

The international carrier has the duty to verify that its crew and passengers comply with all requirements established in this Law Decree and its regulation.

61. Such passenger, whose admission is denied due to noncompliance with the requirements established by the law and its regulations, shall be returned to the port of origin, and the international carrier shall incur all related costs, without prejudice of any penalties that may be imposed to both. All costs derived to the passenger's stay in the country shall be charged to the carrier.

62. The international carrier is obliged to cooperate with the National Immigration Service, for which shall:

1. Provide, within the appropriate time (specific for each case) the list of passengers and/or crew, with their respective credentials, travel documents, as required.
2. Ensure that the crew does not remain in the country past the authorized time.
3. Avoid the unloading of passengers on a technical layover, unless they are properly authorized.
4. Provide to all passengers arriving or departing our national territory, the documentation required by our national authorities.
5. Provide an area to keep transit passengers within the immigration facility.

63. The National Immigration Service shall be able to manage immigration control through technical procedures.

International transport carriers are under obligation to provide any information related to the immigration control of admissions and departures of passengers, and the corresponding verification lists, to the National Immigration Service

International transport carriers are under obligation to adopt proper procedures to allow interconnections requested to comply with the requirements of the National Immigration Service, regarding to the management of the immigration control through technical procedures.

64. International transport carriers, in case of crew defection, or the presence of defectors, are responsible to transport them out of our national territory, incurring all costs, and shall cooperate with all competent authorities to identify and locate them.

CHAPTER VII

DEPORTATION AND EXPULSION

65. The National Immigration Service shall deport and order the impediment of admission to our national territory to foreign individuals, for the following reasons:

66.

1. Enter the country irregularly, unless there are exceptions established by special laws.
2. Stay without or irregular documents in our national territory.
3. Incur in activities against moral and good customs.
4. Threaten public safety, national defense, and public health.
5. Have completed a prison sentence.
6. Incur in any other (activity?) determined by law.

The National Immigration Service, prior issuance of deportation, shall:

1. Verify the existence of the motivating facts.
2. Listen to the defense presented by the individual in person, or by a hired attorney.
3. Respect the individual's human rights and fundamental guarantees.
4. Issue an arrest warrant.
5. Notify in person the resolution that the warrant orders.
6. Try to preserve the higher interest of minors and family units.

The resolution that orders the deportation shall be notified in person.

67. Against the resolution that orders the deportation, follows the option to reconsideration, which shall be granted in the suspended effect, and with this appeal, the federal way shall be exhausted.

68. The National Immigration Service shall be able to authorize the voluntary return of the individual, in the cases foreseen in the law, as long as the individual or a third party assumes the costs.

69. Foreign individuals that have been deported shall not be able to enter the country for a period of 5 to 10 years, starting the date of the execution of the deportation. Once this period has expired, the individual may request that the Director General of the National Immigration Service lifts the impediment to enter the country, who shall evaluate such request for approval or denial. This sanction shall be extended indefinitely in the cases in which the individual eludes the resolution and stays illegally in the country, or re-enters without authorization.

70. A deported individual, prior authorization to enter can return back to the country only after the impediment has been lifted, and all deportation costs have been reimbursed back to the country.

71. The National Immigration Service may expel a foreign individual that:

72.

1. Devotes his life to crime, or incites racial, religious, cultural, or political, prejudice.
2. Is a menace against collective safety, health, or public order.
3. Has been convicted of a felony, after the fulfillment of a sentence.
4. Has been deported and has re-entered the country illegally.

The foreign individual that has been expelled for any of the reasons outlined in the previous article shall not be able to return to the country. The individual that re-enters shall be remanded to the competent authority or, shall be permanently expelled.

73. The resolution that orders the expelling action shall be notified in person. Against it follows the option of reconsideration, which shall be granted in the suspended effect, and with this appeal, the federal way shall be exhausted.

TITLE VII

FIDUCIARY FUND OF IMMIGRATION AND SPECIAL FUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CHAPTER I

FIDUCIARY FUND OF IMMIGRATION

74. Create the Fiduciary Fund of Immigration, whose patrimony shall be integrated by:

1. The existent resources in the Fund of Repatriation maintained in the special account of the Panamas National Bank.
2. The resources of the Deposit of Repatriation, which after 1-year of the date of admission of an individual into the country, would be reimbursed.
3. The Deposits of Guarantee provided by foreign individuals, after the terms and conditions established for their stay in the country were not met.
4. Inheritances, donations, contributions, or subsidies provided by natural or legal persons, and national or international entities.

75. The patrimony of the Fiduciary Fund of Immigration shall be used to cover:

1. Investment projects designed to optimize and increment systematically and permanently, the quality and range of immigration services in the country and abroad.
2. Expenses incurred by the deportation and expelling of foreign individuals.
3. Room and board, food, health, custody and transportation expenses, incurred by foreign individuals within the country under the National Immigration Services custody.
4. Expenses due to repatriation of nationals in situations of peril in foreign countries.
5. Operational expenses due to immigration control procedures.

76. The National Immigration Service shall maintain the Fiduciary Fund of Immigration, deposited in the Panama National Bank or in the Savings Account.

77. The administration and utilization of the Fiduciary Fund of Immigration shall be subject to the regulation that, to the effect, dictate the Executive Branch, and to the audits of the CONTRALORIA GENERAL DE LA REPUBLICA.

CHAPTER II

SPECIAL FUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

78. Create, permanently, the Special Fund for the Development of Human Resources, which shall be utilized to provide incentives for the efficiency of the institution's personnel, in accordance with their merits, responsibilities, and fulfillment of their duties, and for those officers that provide their services in hard to get places.

79. This Fund shall be integrated by 10% of the fines generated for offenses against immigration norms, deposited in the Panama National Bank or in the Savings Account.

80. The management and the utilizations of the Special Fund for the Development of Human Resources shall be subject to the regulation that, to the effect, dictates the Executive Branch, and to the audits from the CONTRALORIA GENERAL DE LA REPUBLICA.

TITLE VIII

VICTIM PROTECTION

UNIQUE CHAPTER

MEASURES OF PROTECTION AND PREVENTION

81. The National Immigration Service shall enforce the application of current norms in the Republic of Panama, regarding the prevention and repression of people trade and immigrant trafficking.

While practicing its functions, shall contribute in the prevention and repression of illegal activities such as kidnapping, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, money laundering and related crimes, terrorism and its funding, illegal trafficking of weapons and explosives, re-routing of merchandise of double use with illicit purposes, as well as the possession and distribution of weapons of mass destruction.

Any foreign individual that is involved, promotes or facilitates the commission of any of the criminal activities previously described may be expelled, without prejudice of any penal punishment applied.

Any regular or irregular immigrant that cooperates in investigations leading to uncover any of the illegal activities previously described shall receive appropriate protection and preventions administrative measures as established by this Law Decree and in its regulations.

82. Create the unit of attention to the victims of people trade, which shall attend on an integral manner to those regular or irregular immigrants that witness or have been victims of crimes related to people trade and/or immigrant trafficking, specially minors, in conjunction with the competent authorities.

Persons that qualify for this condition shall receive immigrant protection treatment, until the situation has been defined or resolved by the competent authorities. The Country, through the corresponding institutions, shall protect the identity and privacy of the witness or victim, providing confidentiality in court proceedings.

83. The National Immigration Service shall promote the execution of the following preventive measures:

84.

1. Educational and sensitizing campaigns to prevent persons from being victims of people trade and immigrant traffic crimes, specially minors.
2. National and international cooperation to combat crime.
3. Implementation of measures to prevent the sexual exploitation of immigrants, especially of minors.
4. Exchange of information with national and international entities to help identify organizations or person under suspicion of practicing immigrant trafficking and people trade activities, and the sexual exploitation of people.
5. Coordinate actions with embassies, consulates, and international entities established in Panama, for the return to the country of origin or residence, of victims of the mentioned crimes, especially minors.

TITLE IX

INFRACTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES

CHAPTER I

FINES AND ADMISSION IMPEDIMENTS

An irregular immigrant the requests his voluntary return must pay a 50 balboas fine for every month or fraction of a month he stayed illegally. An impediment for re-entry shall be established, which shall not be for less than 2 years or more than 5 years, and shall leave the country within a term of 7 calendar days, except in cases of verified emergency circumstances.

An irregular immigrant that verifies marital status with a Panama national, or has a child under 18 years of age, as long as he is performing his/her duties of spouse and father, shall pay a fine of up to 1,000.00 balboas, and shall not receive an impediment of re-entry.

85. The General Director of the National Immigration Service shall have 24 hours to order the detention or freedom of the irregular immigrant.

If when presenting his charges shows evidence that he can meet the requirements to modify his immigration status, shall have the option to legalize his permanency, or to leave the country by his own means, within a reasonable amount of time (which can not exceed 10 calendar days) without prejudice of any other sanctions established by the law.

86. Minor, persons with severe disabilities, seniors over 85 years of age, indigenous people, terminally ill people, as well as for humanitarian reason, are the only exceptions to the fines outlined in this chapter.

87. Every foreigner that has acquired a temporary or permanent resident status in Panama must inform to the National Immigration Service, any changes in address, or variations to the information provided to the Foreign Registry. Failure to comply shall result in a fine of 100 balboas for the first occurrence. Any further occurrences may result in the cancellation of the residency permit, or in deportation.

88. Failure to comply with the requirements outlined in Chapter VI, Title VI of this Law Decree, shall result in a fine ranging from 800 to 10,000 balboas. The National Immigration Service shall notify to the competent authorities of any recurrence, so appropriate action can be taken.

If the failure to comply the dispositions outlined in this Law Decree by an airline company results in a national or foreign individuals, who maintains an impediment for leaving the country, exiting our national territory, fines may be of up to 25,000 balboas, without prejudice of the penal responsibilities imposed.

89. Employers that retain identification documents, travel documents or passport, of foreign workers, that fail to comply with the minimum labor, health, and social safety, dispositions outlined by the law, shall be punished with fines of up to 60,000 balboas the first occurrence. Re-occurrences shall have fines of up to 5,000 balboas, without prejudice of any penal responsibilities imposed.

90. Any other non-compliance to this Law Decree, not outlined in this Chapter, shall be punished with fines of up to 5,00 balboas, according to the gravity of the infraction.

91. Every foreign individual has the obligation to carry identification documents otherwise a fine of 10 balboas shall be imposed.

92. The National Immigration Service has coercive jurisdiction to perform the collection of outstanding debts, past due fines, permits, damages caused to property, and in general, any debt or bond owed to the institution. If anyone shall refuse to pay a fine, the General Director shall certify the debt, which shall constitute an executive title to base the coercive judicial process.

CHAPTER II

PREVENTIVE SHELTERS

93. The National Immigration Service shall create preventive shelters, destined to provide temporary housing, at the institution's request, to foreign individuals that have broken immigration laws. The regulation shall manage the operations of these preventive shelters; minimum standards and services, making sure human rights are protected. Only persons older than 18 years of age may occupy these shelters.

Minors shall be put at the disposition of the Ministry of Social Development. In addition, a communication to the diplomatic or consular representative of the minor's country of origin or residence shall be forwarded. In the event that there is no representative of the minor's government in Panama, the communication shall be forwarded to a friendly government representative.

94. An individual housed in one of the preventive shelters shall have the right to communicate with an attorney, family member, and with diplomatic or consular representatives from his country of origin or residence, or a friendly government in the case that no representatives of his government are in Panama.

The National Immigration Service shall communicate to the diplomatic or consular representatives accredited in Panama, the immigrant status of individuals in these facilities.

CHAPTER III

STAY BY JUDICIAL ORDER

95. By judicial order or that of a competent authority, the National Immigration Service, shall allow those foreign individuals that need to undergo a judicial or administrative process, to stay conditionally in the country, for as long as such authority considers appropriate.

CHAPTER IV

RESOURCES

96. Against the resolutions issued by the General Director of the National Immigration Service, the only appeal rights that follow are the reconsideration appeal which is forwarded to the General Director, and appeal to the Secretary of State and Justice, both of whom shall be granted in a suspended manner and can be presented within the next 5 work days following the notification, through a legal representative. Against resolutions that impose monetary penalties and order the deportation, the only appeal to follow is the appeal of reconsideration. Any administrative proceedings not established in this Law Decree shall be distributed in accordance to the Law 38 of 2000.

97. Notifications to the affected parties shall be done by proclamation, which shall contain the expression of the administrative proceedings in which the notification shall be done, the date and the disposition section that must be notified, which shall be determined the day after the resolution was dictated, for 3 work days. This proclamation shall be added to the file with expression of the day and time of its fixation or de-fixation, from the date of its de-fixation, the notification shall be understood.

98. The use of electronic media is authorized to provide notifications, in accordance to the established regulations in this Law Decree.

TITLE X

IMMIGRATION CAREER

CHAPTER I

CREATION AND ORGANIZATION

99. Create the Immigration Career for public servants of the National Immigration Service, with the purpose of establishing a special labor path founded under principles of equality, merit, honesty, transparency, capability, and efficiency.

Requirements and procedures to get appointed, promoted, relocated, suspended, and terminated, shall be established by the regulation of the this Law Decree.

100. The initiation of public servants in the Immigration Career shall be conditioned to the procedures of selection according to their capabilities, professional competency, public moral, equal opportunity, and psycho-physical condition. All these considerations shall

be verified through valid, appropriate and pertinent standards, previously established in the regulation of this Law Decree.

101. The National Immigration Service shall create and update a handbook of occupational categories, based on compensation, grade, level, according to job function and responsibilities, with a uniform nomenclature which shall allow to identify minimum requirements of experience, education, knowledge, capability and aptitude.

CHAPTER II

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOR OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE NATIONAL IMMIGRATION SERVICE

102. Every officer of the National Immigration Service is expected to behave based on the following basic principles:

103.

1. Guarantee adherence to the constitution and the law of the Republic of Panama.
2. Promote free and safe immigration movement, with strict respect to fundamental rights.
3. Behave with honesty and rectitude when performing their functions.
4. Collaborate with competent authorities within the terms established by the law.
5. Treat confidential and restricted information as such, whether this information is obtained while performing or not performing his duties.
6. Protect the life and integrity of the person under their custody, as well as respect the honor and dignity of said person.
7. Act based on principles of equality, opportunity, and balance, in the utilization of resources to his disposal.
8. Use force only in such situations where there is a threat to his life, physical integrity, and that of third parties, or in circumstances that might result in grave risk to citizen's safety, and in conformity with the principles referred in the previous numeral.
9. Properly identify himself as a public servant of the immigration authority at the moment of performing an arrest, as well as to communicate the reasons for the arrest.
10. Comply, with efficiency, paperwork, deadlines and requirements mandatory when arresting an individual.
11. Any other indicated by the law.

CHAPTER III
RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS, AND PROHIBITIONS

Article 103. Officers of the National Immigration Service are required to:

1. Comply, at all times, the duties imposed by this Law Decree and its regulations, as well as respect the dignity and human rights of every person.
2. Perform personally and efficiently the duties of his job, according to the modalities determined by the regulations.
3. Enforce orders and directives issued by superiors in charge of supervising activities of the corresponding service, in accordance with the specifications of his position.
4. Observe at all times, a proper conduct with his superiors, direct reports, and show the public the courtesy and consideration.
5. Keep and conserve all documents, assets, and interests of the Institution entrusted to him for his use and management.
6. Attend regularly educational sessions to better his performance.
7. Make sure his direct reports are kept informed regarding changes in regulations and guidelines, related to his position, when appropriate.
8. Keep his superiors informed regarding crimes and disciplinary offenses that might put the country at risk, or that might compromise the institution's prestige, safety, and morale.

Article 104. Officers of the National Immigration Service shall have the right to:

1. Have stability when performing his duties. Officers can be dismissed only in accordance with the reasons outlined in this Law Decree and its regulation.
2. Be fairly compensated, in accordance with the law and regulations.
3. Paid and unpaid leaves. Guidelines for leaves shall be established in the regulation.
4. Paid vacations and thirteenth month salary, even in situations of dismissal or resignation.
5. Have a work schedule based on the regulation, adapted to the particular job description.
6. Be promoted as appropriate, according with the norms of the respective regulation.
7. Request relocations, as long as it is not detrimental to the normal performance of the operations.
8. Wear uniforms, pins, and related apparel required for the job, in accordance to the most current legal dispositions and the regulation.
9. Be paid and compensated according to the legal dispositions, based on level and job function.
10. Have access to documentation that explains the reasons of a promotion denial, as well as the utilization of other rights outlined in this Law Decree and its regulation.
11. Present defense in cases of prosecution due to improper acts by their superior, that result in harassment to the dignity of the public servant of the National Immigration Service, while in property grounds or not.

12. Receive free legal counseling, in legal matters filed against the officer due to actions while performing his duties.
13. Participate in educational courses.
14. Receive commendations and monetary incentives when attaining a college degree related to the Immigration Career, properly accredited by the institution, according with what it is outlined in this Law Decree.

Article 105. Public servants of the National Immigration Service are prohibited from:

1. Breaking the principles that rule the immigration service.
2. Not obeying orders and regulations.
3. Disrespecting any member of another safety institution or body, or Estate officer, which is in need assistance or support in the function of his duties.
4. Instigating other persons to commit mistakes or omit information, statements, concepts and data, necessary to establish the truth regarding an event related to his service.
5. Giving statements and provoking or facilitating publications, without authorization of his superiors, regarding matters of the institution.
6. De-authorizing, interfering, or disobeying, without a justified reason, decisions that, based on legal attributes, are made by any member of the national Immigration Service.
7. Impeding or negating the cooperation needed in the investigations being performed by any administrative or judicial authority.
8. Taking advantage of his authority or level to obtain, from direct reports or private persons, gifts, loans, or any other benefit for themselves or third parties.
9. Utilizing assets or equipment belonging to the National Immigration Service, or a private party, or a direct report, to violate the law, regulations, or directives from superiors.
10. Harassing the public or public servants of the National Immigration Service. Regulations shall define and further develop this topic.
11. Realizing immigration proceedings for their benefit.
12. Divulging public information, except when authorized or required by the competent authority, or requested by individuals.
13. Any other action established by the regulation of this Law Decree.

CHAPTER IV

FORMATTING, CAPACITATING, AND SPECIALIZING IN IMMIGRATION

Article 106. Create the Immigration Academy, whose goal is to reach maximum performance from the personnel of the National Immigration Service, under technical parameters, a general pan of formation, capacitating, specializing and professional competency, which shall be established by the Ministry of State and Justice. For this

effect, it shall promote agreements with educational centers such as colleges, high schools, and technical institutions, to elevate the professional level of the members of the National Immigration Service, through the constant exchange of scientific and technical knowledge.

Article 107. The Immigration Academy shall promote ethic, moral, and humane values, advocating the professional operation of the National Immigration Service through courses, seminars, classes, and any other academic formation, according to the needs of the Institution. At the same time, shall implement a method of evaluation of performance, which shall be developed in its regulation.

Article 108. The Ministry of State and Justice shall create capacitating and specializing facilities, for the members of the National Immigration Service.

TITLE XI

COORDINATION OF THE NATIONAL IMMIGRATION SERVICE WITH OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

UNIQUE CHAPTER

MEANS OF COOPERATION

Article 109. In such places of difficult access, or those in which by their nature there are no offices or representatives of the National Immigration Service, it is authorized to the Public Force, as auxiliary help to the authority, to execute immigration control, according to the capabilities, norms, directives, and orders imposed by the National Immigration Service.

Article 110. With the purpose to protect the immigration movement, the National Immigration Service shall maintain a systematic and permanent relationship with the entities of public safety and other governmental agencies, and shall coordinate with these the activities required for the execution of its activities.

Article 111. To the effects of achieving a reciprocal coordination, in conformity with the previous article, authorization to the basis of the knowledge that these entities deemed convenient shall be granted, prior evaluation by the General Director.

Article 112. The National Direction of Civil Registry shall communicate to the National Immigration Service, the issuance of new death certificates, within a term of no more than 15 calendar days, to update its database.

Article 113. The Ministry of Labor and Labor Development shall forward every three months to the National Immigration Service, the list of work permit approved and denied,

as well as the copy of the respective resolutions, to the effect of keeping the Institution's database updated.

Article 114. Without prejudice of what is outlined in this Chapter, the National Immigration Service shall be able to create other means of cooperation, establish new administrative agreements, and new agreements with other public institutions, for the accurate fulfillment of its functions.

TITLE XII

PUBLICITY AND TRANSPARENCY

UNIQUE CHAPTER

MEASURES OF PUBLICITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Article 115. The National Immigration Service shall grant the access to any information related with its functions, except in cases of confidential information contained in personal files and in the institutions archive, or that which is labeled as restricted access in adherence of our national laws and current agreements and international treaties in our country.

Article 116. Without prejudice of legal proceedings that legal representation might require, the affected parties shall be able to personally follow the processing of the application in the offices of the National Immigration Service.

Article 117. The National Immigration Service shall allow interested parties the access to their non-confidential or restricted information, through the electronic means that shall be implemented, to be able to follow the progress of their applications.

TITLE XIII

REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS TO OBTAIN PANAMANIAN NATURALIZED CITIZENSHIP

CHAPTER I

GENERAL DISPOSITIONS

Article 118. The approval or denial of an application of naturalization is a function of the Executive branch, in attention to what it is established under articles 10 and 12 of the Political Constitution of Panama.

Article 119. It is the duty of the President of Panama to know of the applications for naturalization through the Ministry of State and Justice.

CHAPTER II

FILING OF APPLICATIONS

Article 120. The application of the letter of naturalization shall be filed in the Ministry of State and Justice, and shall include the following documents:

1. A résumé directed to the President of Panama, requesting Panamanian citizenship. The application must include the names of the applicant, as they appear on the birth certificate and on the identification card; age, gender, marital status, parents names, passport number, identification card number or Foreign Registry number, place of birth or nationality held at the moment of application, complete residence address, telephone numbers, and a sworn statement indicating the reasons for the application, the resignation of prior citizenships (original or acquired), and the legal basis that supports it.
2. Verify the absence of a criminal record or outstanding arrest warrants, through certifications issued by the competent authorities of the country of residence within the last 5 years, or of the country of origin, whichever the case might be.
3. Criminal record issued by Panamanian authorities.
4. Original copy of the personal identity document of the permanent resident, granted by the competent authority.
5. Marriage certificate or birth certificate of Panamanian children, in the case that the application falls under numeral 2 of article 10 of the Political Constitution of Panama.
6. Prove financial solvency.
7. Hold an interview in person.
8. Prove that all taxes have been filed and paid through the filing of the PAZ Y SALVO NACIONAL.
9. A copy of the passport verified by the consul or embassy of the corresponding country. In cases where foreign individuals have no representation of their country in Panama, a friendly nation shall perform the verification.
10. Certificate of good health.
11. Certificate of immigration status issued by the National Immigration Service.
12. Proof of the existence of the law of reciprocity, if that is the case.
13. 2 passport size pictures in formal attire.

Article 121. Once these requirements have been met, the Ministry of State and Justice, or the person to which this function is delegated to, shall receive the application, or shall

request corrections to be made, within a term of 30 work days, starting at the time of filing.

Article 122. Once the application has been received, a request for an update regarding the immigration status of the applicant shall be send to the National Immigration Service, which shall provide the following information:

1. Date and port of entry.
2. Conditions in which the individual entered the country, whether legally or illegally.
3. Immigration movements showing entrance and exit to and from the country to be able to verify period of continuous residency.
4. Date of input into the Foreign Registry.
5. Number and date granted the residency and status of applied residency.
6. Immigration conduct, so as to verify if the individual has been deported, expelled, if the residency has expired, or if he is eligible for amnesty.
7. Any other information with reference to the individual's behavior that might be recorded in the Registries of the National Immigration Service, especially that originated in the Public Ministry, of the Legal Branch, and of the security entities.

Article 123. Once this information has been received, the Ministry of State and Justice shall proceed to analyze the application, and if there is proof that the individual does not meet the requirements, the petition shall be declined. Otherwise, shall ask that the Electoral Tribunal perform the appropriate tests regarding the individual's knowledge of the Spanish language, and of history, geography, and political and administrative organization of Panama. Failure to show for these tests shall result in automatic decline.

Article 125. A resolution to decline the application does not have any appeal rights.

CHAPTER XIII

ISSUANCE OF THE LETTER OF CITIZENSHIP

Article 126. In those cases that the Panamanian citizenship by naturalization is requested, in attention to the dispositions outlined in numerals 1 and 2 of the article 10 of the Political Constitution, the continuous residency shall begging at the start of the resolution that grants residency to the petitioner as a permanent resident.

For the effects of the previous paragraph, in the case of the foreign individual that enters the country as a minor, as a dependant of the permanent resident, to be reunited with family, the time shall be computed beginning at the start of the date in which the status of permanent resident was obtained.

Article 127. Once all the formal and legal requirements have been met, the President of the country can issue the letter of naturalization requested. Every letter of naturalization

approved, before it is given to the applicant and for it to be legal, the individual must produce a certified or bank check in the amount of 600 balboas made to the National Treasury.

Article 128. The letter of naturalization granted shall be forwarded to the province governor in which the applicant resides, for a swearing in ceremony. In this ceremony, national Panamanian by naturalization shall swear that:

1. Shall obey, comply, and defend the Political Constitution of the Country and the national laws.
2. Shall absolutely renounce to any political and civil ties to the country of origin, or to any other country he considers to be a citizen.
3. Shall renounce to all rights and privileges that might derive from such ties.

Article 129. Once the referenced oath has been taken the governor shall give the letter of naturalization to the individual and shall advise that it must be registered in the National Direction of Civil Registry, according with what's outlined in the unique Text of the Law 31 of July 25, 2006. Without this action, the letter does not have judiciary effect.

Article 130. In the cases in which the application for naturalization is declined or nullified, the resignation to the citizenship of origin shall not have effect.

TITLE XIV

FINAL TRANSITORIAL DISPOSITIONS

CHAPTER I

TRANSITORIAL DISPOSITIONS

Article 131. The applications for naturalization in process at the time this Law Decree takes effect shall fall under the legislation active at the time of filing, except for the dispositions in the article 126 of this Law Decree.

Article 132. As soon as this Law Decree takes effect, the National Direction of Immigration and Naturalization shall be substituted, for all legal effects, by the National Immigration Service.

As a result, in every legal norm, document or process in course in which it is mentioned or be part of, the National Direction of Immigration and Naturalization, it shall be understood as referring to the National Immigration Service.

The current administrative structure of the National Direction of Immigration and Naturalization shall be maintained with all its functions, faculties and prerogatives, until the new structure is approved.

Article 133. All assets property of the country, as well as personal and the financial and budgetary resources, including actives and bank accounts that at the moment of the application of this Law Decree exist, in the possession or assigned to the National Direction of Immigration and Naturalization, shall be assigned, given, or put at the disposal of the National Immigration Service, according to its procedure.

Article 134. The immigration proceedings initiated under prior laws shall be processed in conformity with the norms established on them, except what refers to impugnation means.

Article 135. The foreign individual that might have entered the country and is not able to accredit his stay, shall have the opportunity to legalize his status or to leave the country under his own means, within a term of no more than 6 months after this Law Decree takes effect.

CHAPTER II

FINAL DISPOSITIONS

Article 136. The Executive Branch, through the Ministry of State and Justice, shall be able to establish taxes and rights for the services provided by the National Immigration Service.

Article 137. The Secretary of Finances and Economy, once approved this Law Decree, shall immediately provide the extraordinary certificates necessary for its implementation.

Article 138. The national Immigration Service, the Ministry of labor and Labor Development, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, under the coordination of the Government Innovation Secretary of the Presidency Ministry, shall realize all the procedures necessary to automate the process of immigration procedures determined by the National Immigration Service.

Article 139. Within no more than one year after the application of this Law Decree, permanent residents must have obtained the new personal identification document approved by the Electoral Tribunal.

Article 140. In all those laws in which there is a reference to be a right to have a personal identification document for foreigners, shall be understood that it is referring to the permanent resident document.

Article 141. This Law Decree derogates Law Decree 16 of 1960, Law Decree 13 of 1965, Law Decree 38 of 1966, Law 8 of 1967, Law 23 of 1975, Law 23 of 1975, Law 22 of 1978, Law 38 of 1978, Law 6 of 1980, Law 25 of 1980, Law 7 of 1980, article 7 of Law 9 of 1987, Law 47 of 1999, article 36 of Law 15 of 2007, as well as any other norm that opposes it.

Article 142. This law decree shall be effective 6 months after its promulgation.

COMMUNICATE AND COMPLY.