

Guidance Notes - Acquisition of Immovable Property or Rights Therein in Seychelles by Non-Seychellois

1. A Non-Seychellois individual or corporate body may purchase immovable property (or rights therein) which is privately owned in Seychelles subject to sanction being obtained from the Government of Seychelles. Sanctions granted are valid from one year from the date on which these were issued during which time the transactions must have been effected and registered.
2. A Non-Seychellois may not purchase freehold any immovable property owned by the State, save in certain specific instances, e.g. under the Villas Policy of September 2013 and conversion of Leasehold to Freehold titles in the case of Condominium¹ Property. However subject to the necessary approvals and Sanction being granted a Non-Seychellois may hold such property on a long term lease.
3. A Non-Seychellois may not acquire freehold land on any outlying island of the Seychelles. However subject to the necessary approvals and Sanction being granted a Non-Seychellois may hold such property on a long term lease.
4. A Non-Seychellois may not purchase immovable property sold by the State to a third party under any Government subsidized Land and Housing Scheme.
5. An application for sanction to purchase, lease or hold an option to purchase immovable property or rights therein in Seychelles must be submitted to the Office of the Principal Secretary Lands, Ministry of Lands and Housing, either directly or through a Notary or an Attorney in Seychelles. A Non-Refundable Application Fee is payable as follows upon filing of an application:
 - (i) For purchase or acquisition of Immovable Property - SCR3,000/-
 - (ii) For lease of Immovable Property - SCR2,000/-
 - (iii) For purchase or acquisition of shares of other interest in a company owning Immovable Property - SCR1,000/- per application
6. In addition if an application is approved, the following sanction processing fees will be payable:
 - (i) For purchase or acquisition of Immovable Property - 1.5 % of the market value of the property.
 - (ii) For lease of Immovable Property - 1.5% of the annual market rental value of the property.
 - (iii) For purchase or acquisition of shares or other interest in a company owning Immovable Property - SCR3000/- per application.
7. Any acquisition of an interest in land through purchase or lease of land or rights therein must be related to an approved development project.
8. Any purchase of immovable property (i.e. a holiday home or residential development) within a tourism resort development is guided by the Villas Policy of September 2013 which inter alia sets out the rates of taxes payable and other conditions of purchase. The Villas Policy of September 2013 can be downloaded from www.spa.gov.sc or www.investinseychelles.com
9. In the case of purchase of immovable property for residential use or residential development outside the Villas Policy of September 2013, this will be subject to the following criteria:
 - (1) A minimum market value of SCR10 million for immovable property containing a dwelling house.
 - (2) A minimum market value of SCR4,000/- per sq. metre for bare land.
 - (3) A minimum and maximum plot size of 2,000 sq. metres and 4,000 sq. metres respectively.

¹ Condominium is a residential or commercial unit registered or proposed to be registered under the Condominium Property Act 1996

- (4) Exceptions to land size limits for immovable property requiring additional space for privacy, security, difficult topography, etc may be made,
- (5) An increase in Sanction duty from 11% to 12% of the market value of the immovable property.
- (6) Non-Seychellois will not be permitted to purchase subsidised State land and/or housing units sold under any Land and Housing Scheme.
- (7) All applications should meet other applicable criteria, such as land use, the Tourism Development Act Regulations 2020 (ownership of tourism establishments), etc.

The new criteria will be subject to periodic reviews and Government will maintain the due diligence process for all applications.

10. In order to promote and facilitate condominium development in the country the current rate of 1.5% of the market value of the property as sanction duty is maintained.
11. A Non-Seychellois may not purchase a condominium unit where the value of the unit is less than SCR30,000/- per sq. metre.
12. As is currently the case, a Non-Seychellois will not be permitted to purchase condominium property constructed on State land or on land purchased from Government under any subsidised land and/or housing scheme.
13. In the case of residential property the vehicle of ownership is limited to natural persons and/or a local company with natural persons as shareholders, directors and beneficial owners. In the case of corporate shareholders, directors and beneficial owners in a local company the shareholders, directors and beneficial owners must be readily traceable in Seychelles to natural persons.
14. In the case of investments in the tourism, commercial or industrial sectors or other bona fide investments in the country as well as those coming under the purview of the Villas Policy, the purchaser is exempted from the applicable Sanction duty. Sanction Duty is also exempted in the case of:
 - (a) transfers between spouses/parent/children, partition amongst heirs, settlement of matrimonial property voluntarily or through Court Judgments;
 - (b) transfer of shares in an existing land owning entity which is required in connection with the normal conduct of the business as an ongoing concern in Seychelles (excluding residential properties and holiday homes) e.g. corporate restructuring, shares allotments following increases in share capital.
15. Sanction application forms and other applicable documents can be collected from the Office of the Principal Secretary Lands Department, Ministry of Lands and Housing or downloaded from the websites www.spa.gov.sc or www.investinseychelles.com
16. All applications **must** be accompanied by the following:
 - (a) **in the case of an individual(s):**
 - Certified true copy of applicant/(s) valid passport details which must be accompanied by the contact details of the certifying Notary or Attorney.

- Copies of 2 utility bills as proof of residential address which should not be older than 3 months from the date of the application.
- Original Current Police Clearance Certificate not older than 6 months from the date of the application in country of residence in the last 2 years.
- Signed declaration that the individual is not (or is) a Politically Exposed Person (PEP).
- Signed declaration of source of funds to be used for the proposed transaction (declaration form can be downloaded from www.spa.gov.sc or www.investinseychelles.com)
- Signed declaration of proof of funds from the originating bank validating the proposed transaction. (e.g. a bank-signed statement showing the requisite balance of funds or a letter of reference stating availability of funds from the bank).

(b) in the case of a corporate body or association:

- Certificate of Incorporation.
- Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- Register of Shareholders and Directors as per last company annual returns.
- Written declaration by the natural person(s) who are the ultimate beneficial owner(s) of the corporate body which is duly certified by a notary or attorney and with the contact details of the certifying notary or attorney.
- Signed declaration that the individual is not (or is) a Politically Exposed Person (PEP).
- Certified true copy of valid passport details of the ultimate beneficial owner(s) which must be accompanied by the contact details of the certifying Notary or Attorney.
- Copies of 2 utility bills of the ultimate beneficial owner(s) as proof of residential address which should not be older than 3 months from the date of the application.
- Original Current Police Clearance Certificate of the ultimate beneficial owner(s) not older than 6 months from the date of the application in country of residence in the last 2 years.
- Proof of identity in the form of 2 utility bills and certified true copies of valid passport details with the contact details of the certifying notary or attorney for each director and for each shareholder holding 25% or more of the shares of the corporate body.
- Signed declaration of source of funds to be used for the proposed transaction (declaration form can be downloaded from www.spa.gov.sc or www.investinseychelles.com)
- Signed declaration of proof of funds from the originating bank validating the proposed transaction. (e.g. a bank-signed statement showing the requisite balance of funds or a letter of reference stating availability of funds from the bank).

N.B All submitted documents which are not in English or French language must be translated with the full contact details of the translator