

Cutting The Red Tape: How to Obtain Certifications at the National Registry in Costa Rica

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A notary at your home:

For years the National Registry has offered to the public information from all Public Registries such as Property, Vehicles, Boats, Corporations and Lot Plans on the website www.rnpdigital.com. This information is exclusively for consultation purposes since only certifications obtained from Registry offices or issued by a Notary can be used as valid documents to submit to private and public Institutions. Based on the *Digital Government Program*, BCR Banco de Costa Rica and the National Registry launched another option on that website at <https://www.rnpdigital.com/shopping/login.jspx> so valid certifications can be obtained.

It's necessary to create an account and then obtaining an access password to purchase certifications through a procedure similar to those purchases made online. The average cost of certification is 2.800 colons (A little more than USD \$5). Payments are made through any valid credit card. Once printed, the document will show a certificate number that can be checked by an Officer within 15 days on the same website to confirm its validity. This could be especially useful to those needing to obtain personerías or certifications proving the right to legally represent a company. This is the document required by most institutions because it proves who has the current right to legally represent the company.

Cutting the red tape:

People forced to deal with Public Institutions usually get frustrated by huge lines and endless lists of requirements required for administrative matters. It is not unusual to submit requested information or forms only to find more information or forms are required in what seems to be a never-ending process. Well, there is a law that can be used as a valuable tool to fight the system. Law number 8220, the Law to Protect Citizens from Excess of Requirements and Administrative Procedures basically states:

- The law applies to ALL public Institutions in Costa Rica.
- Once a person files documents with an Institution, those documents can't be requested again for the same process.
- Public Institutions can't request documents or information they handle. For example: INS can't request a copy of the car's Marchamo, since INS is the institutions that issues

that document.

- All Institutions are required to provide information through public media as to the exact requirements for the procedures they handle, and exactly which legal authority gives them the right to set these requirements. Most show this info on their websites.
- Once a person submits the requested requirements, public officers are allowed to request additional requirements only once. In case they demand more on three or more occasions, the person can refuse and request that disciplinary action be taken against the public officer for disregarding this law.
- In some specific cases such as permits, licenses or authorizations, once all required documents are submitted the public Institutions involved must provide an answer within 1 month, otherwise, the Petitioner can consider the request approved through a legal right called Positive Silence. In this case a Notary will have to issue a document acknowledging all requirements were met and that the Institution did not answer on time. The exception to this rule is when the permits, authorizations or licenses are related to environmental matters.

About the Author: Allan Garro was incorporated as a lawyer and public notary in 1996. He specializes in Litigation, Corporate, and Real Estate Law. He has also acted as an external legal consultant to Congress. He has been the author of more than 100 published English Language articles and can be reached at [\[email protected\]](#)