

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF TOURISM

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF A TOURIST AND TRAVEL AGENCY IN CYPRUS

1. The establishment and operation of Travel Agencies is regulated by the Tourist and Travel Agencies and Tourist Guides Law of 1995 until 2013.
2. In accordance with the provisions of the above Law, the interested party must submit a duly completed Application Form to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism for examination and evaluation.
3. In compliance with the provisions of the legislation it is a prerequisite for the granting of the relevant licence that the Manager in charge as well as the Travel Agency's name be proposed beforehand.
4. The proposed Manager should amongst other matters:
 - (a) either be a graduate of a recognized higher school of tourist studies, or possess a University degree in tourism and have at least one year working experience in a travel agency,
 - (b) or be a holder of a University Degree and have at least three years working experience in a travel agency,
 - (c) or be a graduate of a sixth grade school of secondary education and have at least seven years working experience in a travel office, airline or shipping company in departments dealing mainly and directly with tourist and travel activities,
 - (d) and have good knowledge of at least one foreign language of those prevailing in the tourist industry.
5. As far as the approval of names for Travel Agencies is concerned the provisions of the relevant legislation must be complied with.

Furthermore according to the Deputy Ministry's policy it is desirable that:

- (i) The names derive from Cypriot culture, history, civilization and the special characteristics of Cyprus.
 - (ii) Greek names must not be translated literally but be written in Latin characters.
 - (iii) The names where possible must be brief, meaningful and in no way include initials or a combination of initials and words.
 - (iv) Names of cities, villages or locations must not be included in a name.
6. The Deputy Ministry of Tourism proceeds to examine and approve a name irrespective of whether the said name was approved or not by the Registrar of Companies. The Deputy Ministry is not bound to accept any name registered with the Registrar of Companies either as a legal entity or a trade name. The interested parties are advised to firstly communicate with the Deputy Ministry of Tourism to be accordingly informed, before they proceed with the Registrar of Companies.

7. Every Travel Agency should:
 - (i) Have suitably furnished and independent premises and have a floor area of at least 20 sqm. with a private toilet and wash basin.
 - (ii) Be staffed with at least two persons including the Manager.
8. Upon approval of the application the following is required:
 - (i) Deposit of a guarantee €15.000,00 either by way of cash or by a letter of guarantee from a Bank or Cooperative Credit or Insurance Institution and,
 - (ii) Payment of €400,00 licence fees for the licence to operate for the first two years or part thereof.
9. No foreign company (Non EU) may operate as a Travel Agency and carry out tourist activities on a permanent basis in Cyprus unless it is represented by a licensed local Agency. Both the foreign and local Agency must state to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism the date of commencement and termination of their cooperation and provide the Deputy Ministry with any information requested by them related to the Tourist arrival, transfers, and residence.
10. Travel Agencies established in the European Union who wish to establish and operate in Cyprus and to carry out tourist activities on a permanent basis must obtain a licence to operate a travel agency from the Deputy Ministry of Tourism as well as inform the Deputy Ministry of Tourism of the date of commencement of operation of their business and provide the Deputy Ministry of Tourism with any information requested related to the tourist arrivals, transfers and their place of accommodation.
11. It is prohibited to operate or advertise a Travel Agency as well as to use the term tourist or a similar term prior to securing a licence in accordance with the Law.

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