

OBTAINING AN ANNUAL RESIDENCE PERMIT IN THE BAHAMAS

An individual who receives a Permanent Residence Certificate has similar legal rights as a Bahamian citizen, notwithstanding being prohibited from voting in any election or participating in any political election.

If you are interested in residing in The Bahamas on an annual basis, applying for an Annual Residence Permit may be the more efficient means of acquiring this right. Subject to an annual application and approval process, these individuals may qualify for an Annual Residence Permit under one of four categories listed below:

1. As a spouse or dependant of a citizen of The Bahamas.

If an applicant is married to a Bahamian citizen, a resident spouse permit may be issued, providing the marriage has existed for less than 5 years. The resident spouse permit is issued for up to 5 years. An application for permanent residence can be made for permanent residence or citizenship after five years or more of marriage.

2. As a spouse or dependant of a permit holder.

A copy of the sponsor's work permit, permit to reside, certificate of permanent residence or other lawful authority to reside in The Bahamas must be included.

3. As an independent economic resident.

A financial reference will be required from a reputable bank verifying economic worth, and two written character reference are required. For an annual residence permit, a head of household pays \$1,000.00 and each dependant, \$25.00.

4. As a resident home owner or seasonal resident homeowner.

Under this category, non-Bahamians who own second homes in The Bahamas may apply to the director of immigration for an annual homeowner's residence card. This card is renewable annually and entitles the owner, spouse or any minor child/ children endorsed on the owner's card when travelling with the owner, to enter and remain in The Bahamas for the validity of the card. The fee is \$250.00 per year and is intended to facilitate entry into The Bahamas with minimal formalities, entitling the holder to visit for a stay of up to one year.

Although the Annual Residence Permit allows for a successful applicant to reside in The Bahamas, this does not allow for the applicant to engage in any form of employment during their stay. In order to be employed in The Bahamas, the applicant must apply for a work permit.

If a spouse or dependant wishes to apply for an Annual Residence Permit, the following documents are required:

- Immigration Form 1, Section B, completed and notarized with \$4.00 in Bahamian postage stamp affixed thereon;
- A cover letter from the supporting the applicant stating the relationship and accepting financial responsibility for the subject of the application;
- Birth, marriage and/or any certificate evidencing the dependant of the subject of the application;
- The applicant's birth certificate;
- A medical certificate dated not more than 30 days prior to submission;
- A police certificate issued less than six months earlier;
- Two passport sized photographs;
- A processing fee of \$25.00.