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LAW OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA ON CITIZENSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

*Adopted November 6, 1995
as amended through April 6, 2010, by RA Law No. 34.*

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CHAPTER 1: General Provisions

Article 1: Citizenship of the Republic of Armenia ("RA").

The procedure for acquisition and cessation of RA citizenship is set forth in this Law. A person shall lose RA citizenship upon formal cessation of citizenship.

Every person in the Republic of Armenia has a right to acquire citizenship as set forth by law. A person of Armenian ethnicity may acquire RA citizenship pursuant to a simplified procedure.

(Paragraph-3 deleted as per the amendment on 26.02.07 by RA Law-75-N)

An RA citizen may not be deprived of RA citizenship or of the right to change citizenship except in cases defined by this Law.

The changing of RA citizenship is regulated by this Law and international treaties.

Renunciation of RA citizenship or acquisition of the citizenship of another state do not automatically lead to the loss of RA citizenship. ***(Amended 26.02.07 by RA Law-75-N)***

Article 2: Laws governing RA citizenship.

RA citizenship is regulated by the RA Constitution, international treaties, this Law and other RA laws and regulations.

In the event of conflict, the norms set forth in the international treaties ratified by the Republic of Armenia shall prevail over the norms of this Law.

Article 3: Citizens of the Republic of Armenia defined.

Persons who have acquired RA citizenship according to this law shall be deemed citizens of the Republic of Armenia.

Citizens of the Republic of Armenia are equal before the law, irrespective of the basis of the acquisition of the citizenship, nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political and other opinions, social origin, property or other status, have all rights, freedom and obligations set forth in the Constitution and laws.

Article 4: Documents evidencing RA Citizenship.

The documents evidencing the RA citizenship are: the passport of the citizen of the Republic of Armenia and for persons under the age of 16 also the birth certificate or other certificate confirming RA citizenship.
(Amended on 26.02.07 by RA Law-75-N)

Article 5: Prohibition on Extradition of RA Citizens to another State

Extradition of an RA Citizen to another State is prohibited.

Article 6: Retention of RA Citizenship.

Residence outside of the territory of the Republic of Armenia does not automatically result in loss of RA citizenship.

The marriage of an RA citizen to a foreigner does not automatically result in loss of RA citizenship.

The changing of the citizenship of a married person does not cause a change of the citizenship of his/her spouse.

Article 7: Protection of RA citizens of the Republic of Armenia outside of the Republic.

RA Citizens enjoy the protection and assistance of the Republic of Armenia.

The Republic of Armenia, its diplomatic and consular mission and the officials are required to protect the rights of the RA citizens abroad as well as to take measures towards the restoration of the infringed rights of RA Citizens in accordance with the legislation of the host country and international treaties.

Article 8: Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons.

A person who is not an RA Citizen and does not have citizenship of another State shall be deemed a foreign citizen.

A person who is not an RA Citizen but resides in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and possesses no proof of the citizenship of another State shall be deemed a stateless person.

The Republic of Armenia encourages stateless persons to acquire RA Citizenship and does not hinder their acquisition of the citizenship of another State.

The legal status of foreign citizen and stateless persons on the territory of the Republic of Armenia shall be regulated by RA law and the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia.

CHAPTER 2: Acquisition of RA Citizenship

Article 9: Bases for the acquisition of RA Citizenship.

RA Citizenship is acquired:

- 1) through recognition of citizenship;
- 2) by birth;
- 3) through receiving citizenship (naturalization);
- 4) through the restoration of citizenship;
- 5) through receiving citizenship as a group (group naturalization);
- 6) on the bases set forth in the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia;
- 7) in other cases set forth in this Law.

Article 10: Recognition of RA Citizenship.

The following persons are recognized as citizens of the Republic of Armenia:

- 1) Citizens of the former Armenian SSR permanently residing on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, who prior to enactment of the Constitution (1995) had not acquired the citizenship of the another State or have not renounced that citizenship within one year after the date of the enactment of this Law;
- 2) Stateless persons or former citizens of other USSR republics who are not foreign citizens and who permanently reside in the RA and have applied for the acquisition of RA citizenship before December 31, 2012.
- 3) Citizens of Armenian origin of the former Armenian SSR living outside of Republic of Armenia who have not acquired citizenship of another country

(Article 10 amended on 18.11.97 by RA Law-157; 12.10.99 by RA Law-5; 20.03.01 by RA Law-157; 20.03.02 by RA Law-313; 18.11.03 by RA Law-33-N; 26.02.07 by RA Law-75-N; 06.04.10 by RA Law-34)

Article 11: Citizenship of a Child born to RA Citizens.

A child, both of whose parents hold RA citizenship at the time of his/her birth shall acquire RA citizenship regardless of his/her place of birth.

A child, one of whose parents holds RA Citizenship at the time of his/her birth, while the other parent is unknown or is a stateless person, shall acquire RA citizenship.

If one parent holds RA Citizenship at the time of child's birth and the other parent is a foreign citizen, the child's citizenship shall be determined by the mutual written consent of both parents.

In the absence of such consent the child shall acquire the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia, if he/she was born on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, or if he/she would become a stateless person if he/she does not acquire citizenship of the Republic of Armenia, or if the parents permanently reside on the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

Article 12: Citizenship of the Child of a Stateless Person.

A child born on the territory of the Republic of Armenia to Stateless parents shall acquire RA citizenship.

Article 13: Citizenship by Naturalization. (as amended on 26.02.2007 by RA Law No. 75-N)

Any person 18 years of age and capable of working that is not an RA citizen may apply to for RA citizenship, if he/she

- 1) has been lawfully residing on the territory of the Republic of Armenia for the preceding 3 years;
- 2) is proficient in the Armenian language;
- 3) is familiar with the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia.

A person who is not an RA Citizen may be granted RA Citizenship without being subject to the conditions set forth in points 1) and 2) of the first part of this article, if he/she:

- 1) marries a citizen of the Republic of Armenia or has a child who holds RA citizenship,
- 2) has parents or at least one parent that had held RA citizenship in the past or was born on the territory of the Republic of Armenia and had applied for RA Citizenship within 3 years of attaining the age of 18;
- 3) is Armenian by origin (is of Armenian ancestry)
- 4) has renounced RA Citizenship of his/her own accord after January 1, 1995.

Notwithstanding the provisions of 1st, 2nd and 3rd points as well as the second part of this article, RA Citizenship may be granted to persons who have provided exceptional service to the Republic of Armenia.

An applicant for RA Citizenship shall submit his/her application in person to the authorized body of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

RA Citizenship shall be granted by the decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia.

An application for RA Citizenship may be denied, if the applicant's activities are deemed harmful to the state and social welfare or public order, the public health and societal mores, or the rights, freedoms, dignity and good reputation of others. The bases for denying an application for RA Citizenship are not required to be given.

The person receiving RA Citizenship shall take the following oath: "I, (name, surname) becoming the citizen of the Republic of Armenia, swear to be loyal to the Republic of Armenia, to comply with the Constitution and the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, to defend the independence and the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia. I pledge to respect the State language, the national culture and the traditions of the Republic of Armenia."

The person receiving RA Citizenship shall sign the oath.

Upon receiving RA citizenship, the recipient shall be given a copy of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and an information manual on special provision of the Armenian law prepared by the authorized body of the RA Government.

Article 13¹ . Dual Citizenship (Amended on 26.02.2007 by RA Law No. 75-N)

A dual citizen is a citizen of more than one country at the same time.

A person who holds the citizenship of other countries in addition to RA Citizenship shall be deemed dual citizen of the Republic of Armenia.

For the Republic of Armenia, a dual citizen of the Republic of Armenia shall be recognized only as an RA citizen. This provision extends also on those who, after January 1, 1995, accepted or were granted citizenship of another country without renouncing RA Citizenship as required by law, as well as on those RA citizens who renounced the RA citizenship unilaterally.

A dual citizen of the Republic of Armenia has the same rights, responsibilities and obligations as other RA citizens, except as prescribed by international treaties and law of the Republic of Armenia.

An RA citizen upon accepting or receiving the citizenship of another country shall inform the authorized body of the RA Government, no later than one month thereafter, in the manner required by the RA Government.

Failure to do so shall be subject to penalties as defined by law.

Article 14: Restoration of RA Citizenship.

A person who has lost RA Citizenship may petition for its restoration, provided such request is not barred by Art. 13.4 of this Law and the petitioner has not previously been deprived of his/her citizenship.

Article 15: Group Naturalization.

Receiving RA Citizenship as a group in case of repatriation or other cases prescribed by Law shall be carried out by decree of the President of the Republic.

CHAPTER 3: The Citizenship of a Child in case of Change of Parents' Citizenship or Adoption.

Article 16: The Citizenship of a Child if Parents acquire RA citizenship.

A child under the age of 14 whose parents have acquired RA citizenship shall acquire RA citizenship.

For children under 14 years of age, if one of the parents has acquired RA citizenship, while the other is a foreign citizen or Stateless person, the child shall acquire RA citizenship, if both parents consent, or if child resides on the territory of the Republic of Armenia and the parent who holds RA citizenship consents.

Article 17: The Citizenship of a child if Parents lose RA citizenship.

A child under 14 years of age whose parents have lost RA citizenship shall lose his/her RA citizenship, if he/she has acquired the citizenship of another State.

For a child under 14 years of age, if one the parent has lost RA citizenship, while the other is an RA citizen the child shall lose RA citizenship, if both parents consent, or if the child resides outside the territory of the Republic of Armenia and the parent who holds RA citizenship consents.

Article 18: The Citizenship of a Child in case of Adoption.

A child adopted by citizens of the Republic of Armenia shall acquire RA citizenship.

If one of the adopting spouses is a stateless person, while the other is an RA citizen, the child shall acquire RA citizenship.

If one of the adopting spouses is a foreign citizen, while the other is an RA citizen the child shall acquire RA citizenship, provided:

- 1) both adoptive parents consent;
- 2) the child resides in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and the parent who holds RA citizenship consents;
- 3) the child is a person without citizenship or may become a stateless person.

Article 19: Retention of RA Citizenship in case of adoption.

A child who holds RA citizenship and is adopted by foreign citizens or married couple where one of the spouses is a foreign citizen and the other is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia shall retain his/her RA citizenship. In such cases the child may renounce its RA citizenship only at the request of his/her adoptive parents.

A child who holds RA citizenship and is adopted by Stateless persons or a married couple where one spouses is without citizenship and the other is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia shall retain RA citizenship.

Article 20: Citizenship of a Child whose Parents are Unknown.

A child on the territory of the Republic of Armenia whose parents are unknown is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia. In case of discovery of at least one of the parents or a trustee, the citizenship may be changed as set forth in this Law.

Article 21: Retention of Citizenship by a Child who is in Custody or Guardianship.

A child holding RA citizenship who is in the custody or guardianship of RA citizens shall retain RA citizenship notwithstanding his/her parents' renunciation of RA citizenship. In such a case the child may renounce its RA citizenship upon petition of his/her parents provided their parental rights have not been terminated.

Article 22: Circumstances requiring the Child's Consent for Changing its Citizenship.

For a child between the ages of 14 and 18, if a parent's citizenship changes, the child may change his/her citizenship of his/her own accord as set forth in this Law.

CHAPTER 4: Cessation of RA Citizenship

Article 23: The bases for Cessation of RA citizenship.

RA citizenship shall cease:

- 1) in case of changing of RA citizenship;
- 2) in case of loss of RA citizenship;
- 3) in cases provided for by the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia;
- 4) based on the provisions of this Law.

Article 24: Changing RA Citizenship.

Any citizen of the Republic of Armenia who is 18 years of age may change RA Citizenship by the renouncing RA Citizenship and acquiring the citizenship of another state.

The request for renouncing RA Citizenship may be denied, if the person renouncing the citizenship:

- 1) has been indicted;
- 2) has been convicted by the decision or sentence of court that is pending enforcement;
- 3) if renunciation contravenes the national security interests of the Republic of Armenia;
- 4) has unsettled obligations related to interests of State, commercial and non-governmental organizations, or citizens.

Article 25: Loss of RA Citizenship.

RA citizenship may be revoked:

- 1) if the person has acquired RA citizenship under Article 13 of this Law, has been a permanent resident abroad and has failed to file for consular registration for 7 years without reasonable justification;
- 2) if RA citizenship has been acquired through false information or documents;
- 3) if the person has acquired citizenship of another State in violation of the law relating to citizenship.

CHAPTER 5: Bodies regulating the issues of RA Citizenship.

Article 26 : The President of the Republic of Armenia.

The President of the Republic of Armenia takes decisions by his decrees on the issues of the acquisition of RA citizenship, restoration of RA citizenship of the Republic of Armenia, the granting of RA citizenship by the group, and cessation of RA citizenship, determines the procedure for consideration of applications relating citizenship.

Article 27 : The Committee on Citizenship Affairs at the President's Office.

The Committee on Citizenship Affairs at the President's Office is appointed by the President. The rules of the Committee on Citizenship Affairs shall be established by the President of the Republic of Armenia.

Article 28: The Government

The Government shall:

- 1) ensure the conformity of the normative acts of the Government, ministries and other governmental agencies to this Law;
- 2) establish the procedure for the issuance and delivery to citizens of documents evidencing RA;
- 3) establish the list of documents necessary for acquisition and cessation of citizenship;
- 4) adopt the resolutions for due implementation of this Law.

The relevant Bodies of the Government shall:

- 1) receive application and other documents concerning RA citizenship check their authenticity and supporting information;

- 2) deliver applications, petitions and other such documents along with their recommendation to the President of the Republic of Armenia;
- 3) deliver its the recommendation on the cessation of RA Citizenship to the President of the Republic of Armenia;
- 4) conduct the registration of RA citizens;
- 5) determine according to this Law whether persons residing on the territory of the Republic of Armenia hold RA citizenship.

CHAPTER 6: The Procedure for Filing and Hearing cases relating to RA Citizenship.

Article 29: Proceedings on filing and ruling on applications and petitions relating to RA Citizenship

All applications and petitions concerning citizenship shall be in written form. Applications concerning the issues of citizenship shall be ruled upon within one year of filing. In the event of denial, an application may be duly filed again no sooner than one (1) year after the denial.

Article 30: Appeals of illegal actions of officials in connection with Citizenship matters.

Refusal by officials to receive an application, violation of the time periods for taking action, as well as other illegal actions may be appealed to court.

**President of the Republic of Armenia
Levon Ter-Petrosyan**

**November 16, 1995
N-061-1- RA Law-16**