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Greek Inheritance law: Inheritance acceptance in Greece

There is a certain procedure we must follow in Greece, to accept a Greek inheritance and be declared as legal heirs to our Greek inheritance.

To inherit Greek property, if the deceased has not left a Will, you need to:

1. Engage a Greek Inheritance lawyer.
2. Forward all documentation, i.e. the Greek property deeds, drawings of the Greek properties, tax documentation, cadastre/land registry documentation (if the area the property is located has already being “put” in the land registry), to your Greek inheritance lawyer.
3. Give to your Greek lawyer a specific Power of attorney (POA), which will be prepared by your Greek lawyer, as per the Greek legal inheritance laws and requirements. This Power of attorney must be in Greek language. It must be signed at the Greek Consulate abroad, along with a translator you will hire, who will attend the Consulate, along with yourself (in case you do not speak, read, or write Greek).
4. Your lawyer with then must conduct a specific legal work in Greece, which may take 3-4 weeks to be completed if all documents are in order.
5. Upon completing the legal work, your inheritance contract will be enrolled at the local Greek Deeds bureau and at the local Greek Cadastre/Land Registry bureau. The bureaus will issue the ownership certificate. This certificate proves your inheritance rights, to the Greek property.

Greek Inheritance law: Decline/Reject your Greek Inheritance

Greek Inheritance laws request a certain process to be followed in Greece by your Greek Probate lawyer/your Greek Inheritance lawyer, to Decline/Reject your share of your Greek Inheritance.

To Decline/Reject your Greek inheritance, you need to:

1. Engage a Greek Inheritance lawyer/Greek Probate lawyer
2. Forward all documentation to your Greek lawyer. All relevant documents should be originals and if they are not in Greek language, they should be officially translated and have the Apostil seal on them, according to The Hague Convention

3. Give to your Greek probate lawyer a specific Power of attorney (POA), the draft of which shall be prepared by your Greek lawyer, as per the Greek legal inheritance laws and requirements. This Power of attorney must be in Greek language. It must be signed at the Greek Consulate abroad, along with a translator you will hire, who will attend the Consulate, along with yourself, (in case you do not speak, read, or write Greek). The translator should be over 18 years old and be bilingual.
4. Your Greek lawyer with then must conduct a very specific legal work in Greece, at the Appeal-Court in Athens, the Rejection/Decline Inheritance bureau. This work may take 1-3 weeks to be completed if all documents and certificates are in order.
5. Upon completing the necessary legal work, your Greek inheritance lawyer will receive an official declaration from the Appel-Court's department, stating that you rejected your Greek inheritance.
6. The rejection declaration should be enrolled in various Greek bureaus, by your Greek inheritance lawyer, to protect your legal status in Greece

Greek Inheritance law: Court's Inheritance Certificate-Inherit money existing in a Greek bank

If the deceased had opened a bank account solely in his name in a Greek bank, we need to follow a specific procedure, so that the heirs will be able to inherit/receive the funds and transfer them either to their own Greek bank account, or, abroad, to their country of residence.

The process varies, if the existing money is less than a '**given bound**' which is bank dependent and crudely ranges from 10,000-20,000 euros. Please notice that apart from the below briefly explained procedure, each Greek bank may have slightly different requirements, or additional requirements, to release the funds. Also note that some of the below described certificates required for this process, are usually valid for 1-3 months after the issuing date. There are times which those certificates must be reissued if we were unable to complete the process within the proper deadlines.

For money less than the 'given bound', the process in general is:

1. Engage a Greek Inheritance lawyer
2. Give your Greek inheritance lawyer a Power of attorney specifically for this work (to receive the funds which are under the given bound)
3. Your Greek Probate lawyer will have to apply and issue specific certificates which are issued from the Greek tax bureau (the inheritance department) and the Greek courts (the inheritance department), stating among others:
 - a. That the heirs' rights have not being contested
 - b. The heirs have not declined their inheritance
 - c. That there is no Will of the deceased. If there is a Will, a different process shall be followed by your Greek Probate lawyer
 - d. Certificate stating if there are other Wills and their content

- e. Court Certificate stating that if there are any outstanding lawsuits against the applicant-heir
- f. We need to present to the bank's legal department the original Death certificate. If the death certificate is not in Greek language, then, it must be officially translated and have the Apostil seal on the back of it (according to The Hague Convention).
- g. We will also present to the Greek bank's legal department, a specific declaration, stating those, who are the closest relatives to the deceased and are entitled to receive the funds
- h. All inheritance taxes shall be paid prior of us receiving the funds

For money greater than the 'given bound', the process in general is:

In addition to the above certificates and actions, we must apply to the Greek Court and receive a Court's Inheritance Certificate (which is called) -Certificate of the Inheritance- (KLIRONOMITIRIO in Greek), which will state:

1. Who are the heirs and their full details (name, surname, date and place of birth, passport details, their residence, etc.)
2. It will describe the heirs' inheritance rights and the portion which each one of them, is entitled to receive from the Inheritance (i.e. 20%, 45%, etc.)
3. It will have a full and detailed description of all assets, which are to be received (real estate, location of the Greek properties and other details according to the Geek property deeds, funds, name of the Greek bank and the specific branch where the funds are, safe deposit boxes, contents of the deceased's house, etc.)
4. Time and place of the birth and of the death of the deceased
5. The exact relationship between the applicant and the deceased person (i.e. daughter, wife, husband, uncle, etc.)

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