

APPLYING FOR CITIZENSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA

This document aims to guide people through applying for citizenship in South Africa based on being born in South Africa and reaching the age of 18 years. This is covered by Section 2(3) and Section 4(3) of the Citizenship Act.

In this document, we will look at three things:

- The requirements for citizenship under Section 2(3) and Section 4(3)
- If you are eligible, what documents you need to apply
- How to apply

WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP?



Citizenship is your legal tie to a country. You get citizenship either by being born in a country, having parents from there, or going through a legal process.

WHAT IS SECTION 2(3) AND SECTION 4(3)?



YOU CAN APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP UNDER SECTION 2(3) IF:

- You were born in South Africa
- One or both of your parents were permanent residents
- Your birth was registered, and you have a birth certificate (this is usually a handwritten birth certificate. A few are printed but without an ID number).
- You are 18 years old or older

YOU CAN APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP UNDER SECTION 4(3) IF:

- You were born in South Africa
- Your parents are not permanent residents or South African citizens
- Your birth was registered, and you have a birth certificate (this is usually a handwritten birth certificate. A few are printed but without an ID number)
- You are 18 years old or older

If you meet all these requirements, you can apply for citizenship in South Africa.

If you hold a permanent residence permit, you will not be able to apply under Section 2(3) or Section 4(3). However, you can apply for naturalisation after using permanent residency for five years.

PLEASE NOTE

The Scalabrini Centre does not assist with these types of applications, but it is fairly straightforward and you can approach the Department of Home Affairs for more information.



WHAT DOCUMENTS WILL I NEED TO APPLY?



If you meet the requirements above, then you need to make sure that you have all your documents together, to apply.

You will need:

- Your original birth certificate. It cannot be a copy. It must be the original.
- Your complete school records for every year of school attended. These can be:
 - Providing report cards from every grade or,
 - A letter from each school that you attended – confirming your start date and end date
 - CEMIS school transfer letters are not accepted.
- A copy of your parents' documentation.
 - This could be a refugee permit, an asylum permit, a work permit, etc.
- If either of your parents have passed away, you will need to provide a death certificate.
- You may still be able to apply for citizenship if you cannot supply these documents.
- A copy of your documentation. (It is okay if you do not have documents).
- You may also include your clinic card if you have it. This is not a required document but can be included.

You may still be able to apply for citizenship if you cannot supply these documents.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A BIRTH CERTIFICATE?



If you were born in South Africa, but you do not have a birth certificate, this might mean that your birth was not registered. You may need to apply for Late Birth Registration (LRB).

Please contact our Children's Team for more information. You can send them a WhatsApp message on: 078 205 5597

If you lost your birth certificate, you may be able to get a new one.

You can get a new birth certificate by:

- Taking a copy of your birth certificate to Home Affairs and requesting a new original birth certificate.
- If you do not have a copy of your birth certificate, you can still get a new one, but it will take longer. Go to the Department of Home Affairs where your birth certificate was originally requested and ask them for a new original one. For this, you should take your proof of birth and/or maternity certificate

FIND OUT MORE ON THE NEXT PAGE





HOW TO APPLY?

Currently, there is no formal application process for citizenship. Applications are made on affidavits.



Step One: Firstly, you need to make sure that you have gathered all the documents required – we mentioned these documents above.



Step Two: Send all your documents to anya@scalabrini.org.za
Scalabrini will draft the affidavit for you



Step Three: Once your affidavit has been drafted, you will come to the Scalabrini office, where you sign all the documents. You will then take copies of these documents to the Department of Home Affairs and submit them.



Step Four: You will pay R300 when you submit your application. Please keep your receipt after paying.



After you have submitted your application and paid, you will wait for the outcome. The only way to track your application is to visit the Dept. of Home Affairs where you applied and show them your receipt.

The Dept of Home Affairs is planning on publishing regulations which may create new or different requirements. They will also introduce an application form. We do not know when the formal regulations will be published, so please be aware that the requirements or process could change at any time.

PLEASE NOTE:

As there is a certain in-person requirement to the application process, you will also need to be in the Western Cape. If you are not in the Western Cape, please let us know and we can refer you to other organizations in South Africa who can assist.

