

Relocating to Costa Rica: Legal Checklist 2026

Your step-by-step legal checklist — and exactly where AG Legal handles the process for you

Prepared by Sergio Monge Astúa, Senior Associate — Immigration Department, AG Legal

This is a full-service checklist, not just a to-do list. For each stage, you'll see what you need to gather on your own, and what our immigration team handles directly on your behalf — including certified translations, scheduling and attending your appointments before Costa Rica's immigration authorities, and following up on your case until it's resolved.

☐ What you provide ☒ What AG Legal handles for you

Time-sensitive: the reduced Inversionista investment threshold (USD \$150,000) is widely reported to expire around July 14, 2026, reverting toward a higher minimum unless renewed. Confirm the current figure with our team before wiring any funds.

1. Confirm Your Legal Pathway

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ Your profile: income source, family situation, and relocation goals

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ We evaluate your eligibility and recommend the correct category — Pensionado, Rentista, Inversionista, Digital Nomad, or Work Permit — and build your filing strategy

2. Documents & Apostille

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ Original birth certificate, marriage certificate (if applicable), and criminal background check from every country you've lived in — apostilled in your country of origin

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ Official Spanish translation of every apostilled document, done in-house by our certified official translators
- ☒ Full compliance review and preparation of your complete filing dossier

3. Prepare Your Financial Proof

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ Bank statements or income certification matching your chosen category

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ We verify your documentation against current DGME requirements and confirm the applicable income or investment threshold before you commit funds

4. File Your Application

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ Signed power of attorney and application forms, and government filing fees

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ We file your case with the Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería (DGME), schedule and attend your appointments before Costa Rica's immigration authorities on your behalf, and follow up on your file until it's resolved

5. Health Insurance & CAJA

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ Private international health insurance covering your application waiting period

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ We coordinate your CAJA enrollment once residency is approved and confirm your contribution requirements

6. Time Your Move (Customs & Belongings)

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ A valued inventory of the household goods you plan to bring

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ We confirm your exact duty-free import window, coordinate with customs, and review your shipping documentation so nothing arrives before your residency is approved

7. Housing & Local Logistics

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ The property you want to rent or buy

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ Legal review of your lease or purchase agreement and full title / due-diligence check before you sign

8. Family, Pets & Long-Term Planning

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

- ☐ Your pet's health certificate and vaccination records

WHAT AG LEGAL HANDLES

- ☒ We confirm pet import permit requirements and map out your path to permanent residency and, eventually, citizenship

You Don't Have to Navigate Costa Rican Immigration Alone

From your first document to your final appointment before DGME, AG Legal manages the process end-to-end — translations, scheduling, filings, and follow-up.

Sergio Monge Astúa · AG Legal · info@aglegal.com · +506 2257-0006 · aglegal.com/contact

This checklist is for informational purposes only and does not constitute individualized legal advice. Immigration requirements, income thresholds, and processing timelines change; confirm current figures with our team before making financial or moving decisions.