



Charity No. 2985

FACT SHEET 06

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Providing support and information to the English speaking community from Pilar along the coast through Torreveija to La Marina Urb. and inland to Orihuela and Albaterra

LEGAL ADVISORS IN SPAIN

There are five main types of legal advisors you can consult here in Spain, depending on the sort of problems you have.

1. The Abogado

These are trained professionals who handle a wide range of situations and problems, such as if you are starting up a business, applying for a work permit, purchasing property, investing in a Spanish business, making a Spanish will etc.

They will be able to check out work contracts, investigate property deeds, advise on the legality of any will you wish to make and generally smooth the way with all the necessary paperwork. All reputable lawyers in Spain belong to a national association the "Llustre Colegio do Abogados", a professional body which watches standards and defends the interest of its members. The association has branches in each province and will handle any complaints about the services or activities of its members.

Lawyers fees can vary widely as they depend on the amount of work involved. They will normally provide a free consultation and this first meeting is the ideal opportunity to work out how much the work is likely to cost, although no guarantees can be made.

Lawyer's fees will tend to be higher than many other advisers and it is for this reason that people tend to use the offices of other professionals listed below. However if you need to take a case to court, get divorced or are arrested, you will need a qualified lawyer.

On the Costa Blanca there are lawyers who can speak English and who are accustomed to dealing with foreign clients and their particular problems.

2. The Notario

This is a public official who works in a capacity similar to that of a judge. They are in charge of making sure that certain matters such as wills, property deals, mortgage agreements, company charters etc., are officially noted and registered. They are required to give clearance on foreign investments and register your foreign money contribution when you buy a property and their stamp makes any paperwork official and available for public record.

Unlike the other legal representatives, they do not work for individual clients although their services will be charged directly to the customer.

3. The Asesor Fiscal

The nearest translation to this in English is an accountant and this person is the one to contact if you need help with income tax, investments and business affairs although they frequently deal with the buying and selling of houses as well. They are able to advise you the best ways to save money and also on the ever-changing tax laws. Their services are particularly useful to non-residents who spend most of their time out of the country, but need to keep track of tax payments etc.

4. The Administrador de Fincas

This person handles all matters concerned with property, such as seeing that taxes are paid, managing rental payments etc., and is often employed by property owners associations to handle the administrations of community fees, minutes of meetings or any other transaction and general matter. They can advise on any aspect of owning, leasing or purchase of property. Again most reputable Administrators belong to an official Colegio.

5. The Gestor

There is no direct translation for Gestor in English as Gestorias are institutions peculiar to Spain. They are licensed by the Government and act as middlemen between the customer and bureaucracy, dealing with often simple but time-consuming paperwork.

For a small fee the agent will take over the application for a resident's permit, social security payments, driving licences, car papers, property registration and advise on all sorts of transactions. Using a "Gestor" will save lots of time, hassle and headaches as they often know a shortcut with the red tape.