

Athens, 29 May 2008
Reference No: ...08. 2 .1

Information:
Anna Papadopoulou
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Mr

Dear Mr.....,

Thank you for submitting your ref. noletter to the Greek Ombudsman, with which you request information regarding the procedure of obtaining a residence permit in Greece.

Even though providing such information, outside the framework of investigating a case, is not among the competences of the Ombudsman (see law 3094/2003), in order to assist you we inform you of the following:

In accordance with the provisions of law 3386/2005, which regulate the entry and residence in the country of third country nationals (as an American citizen you fall under this category), in order for you to obtain a residence permit, for one of the reasons prescribed in the aforementioned law, you must first obtain, from the Greek Consulate closer to your place of origin-residence, an entry visa for that purpose. Thereafter, upon your arrival to Greece, and within the specified time of your visa, you must submit an application for the issuing of a residence permit, to the municipality in which you will live.

From your note we gather that at this moment you are presently in Greece as a tourist. The maximum that the tourist entry visa can be renewed, at the local police station, is nine months (two consecutive renewals of the initial three month period provided). There is no procedure /provision that permits you to change the purpose of your stay in the country from within it, that is, you can not change your tourist visa for a visa-permit to work or to remain in the country under the "with independent means" or for "exceptional reasons" category. For additional information and a copy of the relevant law in English please visit the ministry of Internal Affairs web site at: <http://www.ypes.gr>.

If we can be of any assistance to you in the future, on matters which fall within our jurisdiction, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Andreas Takis
Deputy Ombudsman for Human Rights