

**LAW OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
Adopted in December 17, 2003**

ON TOURISM AND TOURIST ACTIVITIES

**CHAPTER 1.
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Article 1. The Subject of the Regulation of the Law

This Law regulates the relations in the sphere of tourism in the Republic of Armenia and the relations in the sphere of tourist activity, which occur in the process of execution of the rights of citizens to rest, traveling and free movement.

Article 2. Main concepts of the Law

The following main concepts are used in the Law:

- ***Tourism*** – activity of citizens traveling from their permanent place of residence (country) to another place (country) with familiarization, rest, health improvement, sports, religious, visiting relatives, professional, business and other purposes with the maximum term of one year without intervals.
- ***Visitor*** – a citizen traveling from his/her permanent place of residence (country) to another place (country) for a maximum term of one year with no intervals the main purpose of whose travel is not paid labor activity in the place (country) of destination and who receives no remuneration for his/her main labor activity in the place (country) of destination.
- ***Tourist*** – a visitor who stays at the place (country) of destination at least for overnight during the travel.
- ***Internal tourism*** – the travel of the citizens residing in a country within the boundaries of their country.
- ***Outbound tourism*** – the travel of citizens residing in a country to another country
- ***Inbound tourism*** – the travel of citizens to a country, which is not their place of residence
- ***Tourist activity*** – the activity of providing tourist services by legal entities, sole entrepreneurs
- ***Tourist services*** – accommodation, hotel, transportation, tour, food organization and serving, cultural, sports events, rest, leisure and other services provided to tourists and targeted at the satisfaction of their needs.
- ***Subject of tourist activity*** – a tour operator or a tour agent
- ***Tour operator*** – a legal entity or a sole entrepreneur implementing the activity of formation, promotion and sale of the tourist result, thus providing a tour package
- ***Tour agent*** - a legal entity or a sole entrepreneur implementing the activity of promotion and sale of the tourist result, thus providing a tour package
- ***Tourist result*** – a complete set of tourist services.
- ***Tourist event*** – a tourist result, which consists of at least two tourist services integrated in one program and is provided with a unified tariff within a minimum term of 24 hours or which covers at least one overnight stay.
- ***Tour*** – a tourist event, which envisages a change in the settlement of tourists

- **Tour package** – a set of tourist services covering at least two functions of service provision related to transportation (or associated) and hotel (or associated) services, as well as to services, which are not connected with transportation and hotel services and which make an essential part of the tourist result. The duration of the service provided under a tour package shall be over 24 hours or shall include at least one overnight stay.
- **Group of tourists** – a group consisting of tourists the members of which travel together with the same itinerary and with similar service conditions.
- **The leader of the group of tourists** – a person accompanying the tourists and ensuring the fulfillment of the conditions of the agreement on tourist services, who is the representative of the subject of the tourist activity and who acts on its behalf.
- **Guide** – a person providing tour –informative and organizational services and professional assistance to tourists under the agreement on the provision of tourist services
- **Travel escort** - a person providing organizational services and professional assistance to tourists under the agreement on the provision of tourist services
- **Tourist region and (or) center** – an area, which has significant importance for tourism with centralized natural, socio-cultural and health resort resources subject to priority development, the boundaries and status of which are identified and declared by the Government of the Republic of Armenia.
- **Tourism resources** – historical-cultural, religious, natural, human, socio-economic and other resources targeted at the satisfaction of mental, material, physical and other needs of tourists
- **Tour itinerary** – a trip (journey) with certain itinerary and concrete timelines provided with a set of tourist services (reservation, accommodation, provision of food, organization of the rest, transportation, excursion etc.)
- **Tourist object** – a historical, cultural or natural object, which is of interest for tourists.
- **Citizen** – a citizen of the Republic of Armenia, a foreign citizen, a person with no citizenship.

Article 3. The legal regulation of the Tourist Activity

1. The tourist activity in the Republic of Armenia is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, Civil Code of the Republic of Armenia, this law, other laws and legal acts of the Republic of Armenia.
2. In case norms other than those envisaged in the law are defined by international agreements of the Republic of Armenia, the norms of the international agreements of the Republic of Armenia are applied.

CHAPTER 2 STATE POLICY IN THE SPHERE OF TOURISM

Article 4. Main Principles of the State Policy in the Sphere of Tourism

Main principles of the state policy in the sphere of tourism are as follows:

- 1) Recognize tourism as a priority sector of economy
- 2) Support tourist activity and create favorable legal, economic and structural conditions for the development of its priority directions,
- 3) Define priority directions of the development of tourism.
- 4) Create the image of the Republic of Armenia as a favorable country for tourism
- 5) Create conditions for the protection of the lawful interests and rights of tourists and subjects of tourist activity
- 6) Ensure the development of international cooperation in the sphere of tourism
- 7) Support public associations/unions established by subjects of tourist activity in the manner defined by the law

Article 5. Main Goals, Priorities and Measures of State Policy in the Sphere of Tourism

1. Main goals of the state policy in the sphere of tourism are as follows:
 - 1) Ensuring the execution of the rights of citizens arising during the travel
 - 2) Creation of a system of tourism, which meets the needs of traveling citizens and contributes to the creation of new job opportunities, increase in the income of the state and its citizens, development of international relations, protection of the resources, which are attractive for tourists and the environment, rational use of historical-cultural heritage and nature.
 - 3) Ensuring the development of tourist regions and (or) centers with natural, socio-cultural and health resort resources
2. The development of and support to inbound and outbound tourism are the priority directions of the state policy in the sphere of tourism
3. The state policy in the sphere of tourism is implemented through:
 - 1) Undertaking of measures to protect the rights and lawful interests of tourists, as well as to ensure their security
 - 2) Licensing, introduction of a quality system, standardization in the system of tourism
 - 3) Definition of rules for entering and departing from the Republic of Armenia aimed at the development of tourism
 - 4) Support in the presentation of the formed tourist result in internal and external tourist markets and establishment of institutions of corresponding representative infrastructures
 - 5) Funding aimed at the development and implementation of targeted state programs in the sphere of tourism
 - 6) Formation of favorable investment environment in the system of tourism
 - 7) Ensuring the staffing of the system of tourism
 - 8) Tax and customs policy
 - 9) Development of scientific researches in the system of tourism
 - 10) Assistance in the participation of tourists and subjects of the local tourist system in international tourist events and formation of the corresponding representative infrastructures
 - 11) Collection and dissemination of information on international tourism and related spheres, as well as provision of consultancy and other measures.

Article 6. Authorizations of the Government of the Republic of Armenia in the Sphere of Tourism

The Government of the Republic of Armenia:

- 1) Develops and implements programs on the development of tourism and its material and technical base and directions
- 2) Defines the procedure and conditions of provision of hotel services
- 3) Defines procedure and grades of qualification of objects of the hotel industry
- 4) Defines tourist regions, centers and routes, makes decisions on their inclusion in resettlement and regional development programs of the Republic of Armenia
- 5) Concludes international agreements in the sphere of tourism within its competence
- 6) Realizes other authorizations defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia

Article 7. Authorizations of the State Governance Body Authorized by the Government of the Republic of Armenia in the Sphere of Tourism

1. The state regulation in the sphere of tourism is implemented by the State Governance Body Authorized by the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter Authorized Body), the authorizations of which in the sphere of tourism are defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.
2. The Authorized Body implements the following within the framework of the authorizations specified by this law:
 - 1) Prepares recommendations on the directions and perspectives of development of tourism and its material and technical and social base and submits them to the Government of the Republic of Armenia
 - 2) Cooperates with ministries, regional governance and local self-governance bodies, subjects of tourist activity in development of programs for reception of tourists and providing services to them, organization of tours, database formation, preparation of development programs and marketing, administers the administrative statistics of the sphere.
 - 3) Contributes to the organization and implementation of information, advertisement and publication activities connected with tourist activity.
 - 4) Submits recommendations on the definition of tourist regions, centers, routes and objects and their inclusion in resettlement and regional development programs of the Republic of Armenia to the Government of the Republic of Armenia
 - 5) Implements the licensing of the types of activities in the sphere of tourism envisaged by the law and control over the fulfillment of licensing conditions
 - 6) Adopts decisions on the application of sanctions against entities for the violation of the requirements of the law
 - 7) Issues and changes the qualification grade of objects of the hotel industry, rejects applications for qualification grades, deprives of the qualification grade, controls over the conditions of qualification
 - 8) Supports the creation of favorable environment for national and foreign investments in the sphere of tourism
 - 9) Submits recommendations to local self-governance bodies on renovation, refurbishment and proper maintenance of tourist regions, centers and objects located at their territory.
 - 10) Supports the training, retraining and requalification of specialists in the sphere of tourism and the implementation of scientific research activities in the sphere of tourism.
 - 11) Represents the Republic of Armenia in its relations with the corresponding bodies of other states and international tourist organizations, partakes in the conclusion of international agreements related to the sphere of tourism
 - 12) Implements other authorizations defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia

CHAPTER 3. ORGANIZATION AND PROVISION OF SERVICES

Article 8. Hotel services

1. Hotel services are accommodation, overnight, organization and provision of food services as well as other paid services related to accommodation. The following services provided on a daily basis are minimum hotel services: making the bed, cleaning of the accommodation of the customers and the lavatory.
2. Hotels, motels, hotel like settlements, resorts, rest and specialized camps or homes, boarding houses, tourist youth and camp settlements (complexes), tourist homes are considered as objects of the hotel industry.

Article 9. Objects of the Hotel Industry

1. **Hotels** are objects of the hotel industry, where hotel services are provided in one or several buildings with at least 10 rooms at least 5 from which have single or double suits.
2. **Motels** are objects of the hotel industry, which are located nearby the roads and where hotel services are provided in one or several buildings with at least 10 rooms at least 5 from which have single or double suits. Services of parking and technical maintenance of cars are also delivered in motels.
3. **Hotel like settlements** are objects of the hotel industry, where hotel services are provided in one or several buildings with at least 5 rooms.
4. **Health resorts** are objects of the hotel industry, where special services including health resort, treatment and rehabilitation services in addition to hotel services are provided.
5. **Rest and specialized camps or homes** are objects of the hotel industry, where hotel services are provided to people of certain specialties (archeology, agriculture, environmental protection, scout, sports, hunting, fishing, climbing, mountaineering etc.) in a building or adjacent premises.
6. **Boarding houses** are objects of the hotel industry, where at least three meals a day are provided in addition to minimum hotel services.
7. **Tourist settlements (complexes)** are objects of the hotel industry, where services related to the accommodation of tourists are provided, self-service possibilities are available and which have at least 20 beds.
8. **Youth settlements (complexes)** are tourist settlements, which are envisaged for tourists at school age.
9. **Camp settlements (complexes)** are objects of the hotel industry, where overnight in tents, food preparation and parking services for motor vehicles are provided.
10. **Tourist homes** are objects of the hotel industry, where overnight service is provided in one building or apartment and where food services are organized and delivered.

Article 10. Qualification of the Objects of the Hotel Industry

1. Qualification of objects of the hotel industry is implemented in the Republic of Armenia
2. The qualification of the objects of the hotel industry is implemented on a voluntary basis
3. The qualification of the objects of the hotel industry is implemented by the Authorized Body in compliance with the order and procedure of qualification asserted by the Government of the Republic of Armenia
4. Objects of the hotel industry, which receive qualification, are provided with a corresponding certificate.
5. The qualification may be granted to those objects of the hotel industry, which meet urban development, sanitary-hygienic and fire requirements defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia and the minimum requirements stipulated in this Law

6. Hotels and motels in the Republic of Armenia are rated in 5 qualification grades, which are manifested by five-point stars.
7. Hotel like establishments, rest homes, health resorts are rated in four qualification grades, which are manifested by five-point stars.
8. Rest and specialized camps or homes, boarding houses, tourist youth camp settlements, tourist homes are rated in three qualification grades, which are manifested by Roman figures.
9. Persons providing hotel services shall use names which comply with those mentioned in Article 9 of this Law for clear identification of the object of the hotel industry, as well as for advertisement and other purposes and grades of qualification mentioned in clauses 6-8 of this article in case of being granted with a qualification grade in the manner defined.
10. Persons providing hotel services may use only the grades of qualification of objects of the hotel industry, which were granted in the manner defined.

Article 11. Requirements Set Forth for the Objects of the Hotel Industry

1. The person providing hotel services shall display the following information prominently for customers:
 - 1) Information on the name and qualification grade (if available) of the object of the hotel industry
 - 2) The list of services being provided and the price list of main services related to the accommodation (overnight and, if available, provision of food)
 - 3) Information, which proves the possibility of provision of services to the disabled.
2. The information provided for in clauses 1 and 3 of section 1 of this article shall be visible from outside as well.
3. The person providing hotel services shall approve and operate internal regulations to ensure the security of customers and their estate.
4. The definition of the requirements for the corresponding name and qualification grades of the object of the hotel industry as well as the complete price list of services shall be available and provided to customers at their first request.

Article 12. Licensing of the Types of Tourist Activities

1. The activity of guides and travel escorts is subject to licensing.
2. The license is issued to the person with qualification received in the manner defined by the Government of the Republic of Armenia.
3. The legal relations occurring as a result of the process of licensing are regulated by this Law and the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Licensing.
4. State duty for issuing licenses for the types of activities mentioned in this article is subject to levy (payment) in the amount and manner defined by the Law of the Republic of Armenia on State Duty.

Article 13. Tour Operators and Agents⁴

1. The activities of a tour operator are conducted by those who prepare and implement:
 - 1) Tours and services of organization of accommodation
 - 2) Services directly connected with the organization of accommodation and tours, especially transportation contracts and ticket sale, reservation of rooms in objects of the hotel economy, as well as accommodation of tourists and organization and provision of food.
 - 3) Services organized for tourists for rest and familiarization visits especially to museums and monuments
 - 4) Tour packages

- 5) Services included in clauses 1-3 that are provided during the organization and conduct of congresses, summits and other similar events.
2. The provisions of section 1 of this article are not valid for those who
 - 1) Provide the result produced by themselves when implementing the activities mentioned in clause 2 of section 1 of this article
 - 2) Realize elevated transportation of passengers and use intermediary services of one or several passenger transportation entities
 - 3) Realize only air transportation from services included in section 1 of this article and additional related transportation of passengers by themselves or other transporters.
 - 4) Realize only railway transportation from services included in section 1 of this article and additional related transportation of passengers by themselves or other transporters.
3. The activity of a tour agent is the activity of intermediary sale of the tourist result and covers the sale of the result received from the activities of the tour operator stated in this article, including the sale of tour packages.

Article 14. Requirements Set Forth for Subjects of the Tourist Activity

The requirement set forth for the person realizing tourist activity is the availability of an office space on the base of ownership or use.

The office shall meet the following requirements:

- 1) Availability of a plate with the name and type of activity of the tour operator
- 2) Availability of modern means of telecommunication

Article 15. Obligations of the Subjects of the Tourist Activity

The person conducting activities of a tour operator is obliged to display the following information for customers prominently:

1. Copy of state registration certificate
2. A model contract being concluded with the consumer
3. Copies of documents prepared for the sale of the tourist result
4. Advertisement materials related to the tourist result prepared by himself
5. Information, advertisement and other materials representing Armenia.

The person conducting activities of a tour agent is obliged to display the following information for customers prominently:

1. Copy of state registration certificate
2. A model contract being concluded with the consumer
3. Copies of documents prepared for the sale of the tourist result
4. Advertisement materials related to the tourist result prepared by himself
5. Information, advertisement and other materials representing destination countries
6. The list of countries with dangerous infections
7. Information materials on passport and visa issuance
8. Information on the national traditions, religious rites, sacred places, nature, culture, history and other objects of interest for tourists, maintained monuments, legislative, religious requirements and prohibitions, which is necessary during the corresponding tour.
9. When using (providing) services of a guide and (or) a travel escort the subjects of the tourist activity shall only use the services of guides and (or) travel escorts possessing a license in the manner defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.

CHAPTER 4.
LEGAL INTERESTS RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF TOURISTS

Article 16. Protection of the Legal Interests of Tourists

1. The tourist result is provided by the subjects of tourist activity by conclusion of a written contract with the consumer in the manner defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.
2. The subject of the tourist activity shall provide the tourists with the following information on destination or transit countries included in the package prior to the conclusion of the contract:
 - 1) Passport, entry and exit requirements
 - 2) Requirements (required injections etc.) and restrictions related to health in destination or transit countries
 - 3) Transportation dues and special fees
 - 4) Customs restrictions required for transportation of passengers
 - 5) The exchange rate
 - 6) Requirements or guarantees in case of accidents as well as in relation to health and life insurance
3. Prior to the provision of the tour package the subject of the tourist activity is obliged to provide the customs with:
 - 1) Information on the location (address) and telephone numbers of the partners whom the tourists may apply to in case of problems
 - 2) Information on how to contact directly the child or the person responsible for the child at the place where tourist events for children are held
 - 3) Information on the duration of the planned tour, places and timelines of stops and parking
4. The following shall be mentioned in the contract concluded between the subject of the tourist activity and the tourist:
 - 1) The location or place of residence, telephone number, bank account of the subject of the tourist activity, as well as the name, family name of the signatory
 - 2) The place of accommodation of the tourist and (or) the tour itinerary
 - 3) The duration of the tour itinerary or the timelines specified in the tour package
 - 4) The types of services provided during the tour, their quality indicators and timelines, including:
 - type, classification of the means of transportation, preliminary timelines, hour and places of departure and arrival
 - the location, types, grade of the object of the hotel industry in the country or place of destination
 - Frequency, conditions of organization and provision of food services
 - Programs of visits to sights, routes and other services covered by the cost of the package
 - 5) The cost of the tour package with details on all required payments, taxes and dues (if they are not included in the cost), as well as clear formulation of conditions, which may cause a change in the cost
 - 6) Type and conditions of payment
 - 7) Type and amount of tour insurance (if available)
5. The cost of the tour package defined under the contract shall not change if the contract does not mention the possible bases for this and, by the way, in case of an increase in the cost the subject of the tourist activity is obliged to provide documents justifying this increase, which may be related only to:
 - 1) Transportation expenses
 - 2) Customs duties, dues and fees related to airports and ports

3) Exchange rate

The cost specified in the contract shall not rise within a term of 20 days prior to the departure.

6. When assigning a guide or a travel escort to the leader of the group of tourists or to the tourists in case of his absence, the subject of the tourist activity shall provide the guide or the travel escort with a written instruction with the location and duration of the delivery of tourist services, as well as with a document certifying the authorizations within the framework of the tourist event.
7. When organizing outbound tours the subject of the tourist activity shall ensure the presence of a guide who speaks the language of universal use in the country of destination or the language agreed upon in the contract with the foreign partner unless otherwise is envisaged by the contract.
8. When organizing inbound tours the subject of the tourist activity shall provide guides or travel escorts speaking the required language or the language agreed upon in the contract with the foreign partner to ensure smooth interaction with the tourists unless otherwise is envisaged by the contract.

Article 17. The Rights of Tourists

1. Tourists are entitled to the following in transit and temporary residence places:
 - 1) Set of tourist services envisaged by the contract and the tour plan
 - 2) Personal security, life, health protection and protection of estate and rights of consumers
 - 3) Bringing an action in case of failure to fulfill or incomplete fulfillment of the contract in the manner defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia
 - 4) Receiving complete and impartial information from the subject of the tourist activity in the language they understand on the laws related to tourism and rules of residence, traditions of the locals, public and religious observances, rules of behavior, cultural, archeological, architectural, historical and natural values, insurance conditions, conditions of the contract on the delivery of tourist services in the country (place) of destination.
 - 5) Exercise other rights defined by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia
2. The disputes between the subject of the tourist activity and the consumer of tourist services already provided or to be provided are solved on the basis of the reasonable explanations of the consumer provided in handwriting if no provisions subject to mandatory specification in the contract envisaged by the law or a written contract are available.

Article 18. Obligations and Responsibilities of Tourists

1. At transit or permanent places of residence the tourists shall:
 - 1) Adhere to the conditions and rules envisaged by the contract on the delivery of tourist services
 - 2) Respect the traditions, customs, religious principles of the country (region) of destination
 - 3) Observe the public order, adhere to fire safety rules and fulfill the requirements of laws functioning at the territory of the destination country
2. Tourists bear responsibility in transit and temporary accommodation places in the manner defined by the law including the compensation for the material damage caused as a result of their illegal actions.

Article 19. Rights and Obligations of Citizens of the Republic of Armenia Traveling in Foreign States

The rights and responsibilities of citizens of the Republic of Armenia traveling in foreign states are regulated under the legislation of the destination country and international agreements.

Article 20. Obligations of the State Towards Citizens of the Republic of Armenia Traveling in Foreign States

1. The state ensures the rights and lawful interests of foreign tourists in compliance with the functioning legislation of the Republic of Armenia and international contracts of the Republic of Armenia.
2. The state shall undertake all possible measures to ensure the protection of the rights and lawful interests of the citizens of the Republic of Armenia conducting outbound travel.

CHAPTER 5. SECURITY OF TOURISTS

Article 21. The system of ensuring the security of tourists

1. The subjects of tourist activity develop measures to ensure the security of tourists participating in tours, hikes, excursions and other events organized by them and to prevent accidents and damages.
2. The subjects of the tourist activity shall immediately inform the corresponding state bodies about emergency cases related to tourists.

CHAPTER 6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR VIOLATION OF THIS LAW

Article 22. Responsibility for Violations in the Sphere of Tourism

1. The violation of the requirements of this Law brings to responsibility in the manner defined by the laws of the Republic of Armenia.
2. The violation of the requirements in sections 7-8 of article 10 of this Law causes imposition of a fine in the amount of twenty hundred times the defined base due.
3. The violation of the requirements of article 11 of this Law causes imposition of a fine in the amount of fifty times the defined base due.
4. In case of failure to pay the fine imposed by the decision of the Authorized Body within 30 days a penalty in the amount of 0,15 percent of the sum is imposed for each day of delay but for not more than 365 days.
5. The proceeding defining the application of the responsibility is implemented in the manner and under conditions defined by the Code of the Republic of Armenia.

CHAPTER 7.
CONCLUDING AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 23. Concluding and Transitional Provisions

1. This Law comes into effect from the 10th day after its official promulgation.
2. The period from the moment this Law comes into effect until December 31, 2004 is considered as transitional.
3. All people providing tourist services shall ensure the compliance of their activities with the requirements of this Law until the end of the transitional period except for the rules defined in chapter 4 of this Law the observance of which is mandatory in three months from the moment this Law comes into effect.
4. The norms of responsibility defined by this Law are applied towards people providing tourist services in case of conducting activities with violation of the requirements of the Law after the end of the transitional period.

PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

R. KOCHARYAN