



INA:NUNA Advokat ApS

Lawyers in Greenland Rules and regulations – Everyday life

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- To be a lawyer in Greenland demands creativity, flair for practical solutions, strong nerves – and a deep love for the country.



- Of course you must know the law just like any other lawyer but this is a big country with few people in most of the populated areas, and all law offices are placed in Nuuk.



Lawyers in Greenland in numbers

- 4 offices with 3-5 lawyers on each office
- 4 sole practitioners
- About 10-15 lawyers in Denmark with regular clients in Greenland (estimate)



So people have survived without lawyers for generations, which is probably good for the time gone.

But mainly since the 80'ties the society have developed so fast that common sence is no longer enough to manage a lot of the problems in a modern society.



Rules and regulations

- The rules and regulations on lawyers (solicitors and barristers) in the Greenlandic Administration of Justice Act are in principle identical to the danish rules and in all main areas they refer to the provisions in the danish act
- We are appointed by the danish Secretary of Justice



- Cases about or against lawyers commence proceedings at the Court in Greenland – the judicial first instance – with appeal to the High Court of Greenland sitting in panels with 3 High Court judges – 1 from Greenland and 2 from Denmark



How do we work

- There are at least as many answers as there are lawyers
- But some characteristics are common:
- We are few but forced to deliver full service and we are particularly vulnerable when our specialists leave
- We have basic recruitment problems



- We to pay for private accommodation and transportation because we have to import employees from Denmark
- We use a lot of money on interpretation
- We are vulnerable in relation to disqualification due to conflicting interests and economic dependency of the local authorities



Stories from real life

Or the death of all cases :

- The district courts
- The authorities as counterpart
- Geography and mobility

Since the good old times are just 20 years back and there is a huge distance between the generations, even small problems can be rather complicated to solve, when things go wrong



And how does this affect people
and business in modern
Greenland?

I can give you a picture through my
experiences from the boardrooms.



- The public housing company INI (means room or boarding)...
- Arrears are growing sky high while we are waiting for the police and the court to enforce evictions.



- The small business IT-consultant company
...
- When the public telecom company shuts down the internet, the private businesses loose money, but nobody wants to sue.
We fear for the consequences.



- The private institution for abused and mistreated children ...
- The authorities shut down an institution on grounds based on rumors. 3 years later the Ombudsman declared the action unlawfull. The owner is bankrupt and not able to sue in order to get restitution.



- The greenlandic Red Cross ...
- Well .. we do not want to sue the authorities. We do not make political statements, but try to make a difference by doing something instead of talking.



- Nuuk is a small town in european context with 16.000 inhabitants. In 2013 we handed out approximately 350.000 to 150 families with all together 315 children.
- None of these families had received social assistance. Why? I am not sure, but I am certain that they deserved the assistance we gave them.



- That was not legal matters, I just wanted to tell it to you.
- Thank you for the occasion and your patience.

