



OWNERSHIP · BUYER'S COUNSEL

Do you need a property lawyer in Bali? What they check and what they charge

October 5, 2026 · 11 min read · Ownership and tax

A Bali notary has to stay neutral between buyer and seller. The lawyer you hire yourself is the one professional who answers to you alone.

Read online: <https://riserealbali.com/guides/bali-property-lawyer/>

IN SHORT

No law makes you hire one, but a Bali property lawyer is the only professional in the deal who works for you alone. A licensed Indonesian advocate checks the title, the seller's authority, zoning, permits and the contract. Published 2026 price guides put a flat-fee review at Rp 5–30 million. The notary must stay neutral.

Rp 5–30 mn

published flat-fee range for a buyer-side review (two 2026 guides)

1–3 weeks

typical review time (The Indonesian Lawyer, September 2026)

7

baseline checks, from certificate to boundaries

2 years

of apprenticeship before an Indonesian advocate qualifies

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01 / 09

Do you need a lawyer to buy property in Bali?

No rule we found makes you hire one. What the law does require is a PPAT deed to register a sale of land rights, and it requires notaries to stay non-partisan between the parties. Both officials serve the transaction, and neither is your advocate. The notary and PPAT guide shows what each one signs and charges.

Three situations make a lawyer close to essential. A leasehold is a contract, so the paper is the asset you're buying. A purchase through a PT PMA sets up a company and a land right at once. And on an off-plan villa, you pay before there's anything to inspect.

Source: PP 24/1997, Art. 37(1); Notary Law 2/2014, Art. 16(1)(a)

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Who can legally work as a property lawyer in Indonesia?

Only an advocate (advokat) under Law 18/2003. The law asks for Indonesian citizenship, a law degree, a passed bar exam and two years of apprenticeship at a law firm. The candidate must also be 25 and take an oath at a High Court before practicing.

Foreign lawyers can't do this work. Article 23 bars them from appearing in court, practicing law or opening an office. An Indonesian firm may employ one as an expert in foreign law, with ministry approval and a work permit. So a lawyer from home can explain your own country's tax rules, but not Indonesian law.

Check the person, not the firm's name. Ask for the advocate ID card, issued through PERADI or another bar organization, and for the High Court oath record. The bar is in flux, too. Since a 2015 Supreme Court letter, High Courts swear in advocates from several organizations, and a Constitutional Court ruling of June 17, 2026 gave lawmakers two years to rewrite the law, which stays in force meanwhile. A "legal consultant" label on a business card isn't an advocate's qualification.

Source: Law 18/2003, Arts. 1, 3, 4, 23; Supreme Court letter 73/KMA/HK.01/IX/2015; Constitutional Court Decision 126/PUU-XXIV/2026

Who does what in a Bali purchase?

Five parties touch a typical deal, and they answer to different people. Only one of them works for you alone.

Who does what in a Bali purchase: agent, lawyer, notary, PPAT and land office

ROLE	ANSWERS TO	WHAT THEY DO	WHAT THEY DON'T DO
Agent	Whoever pays the commission (at Rise Real Bali, the seller or developer)	Presents properties, arranges viewings, relays offers	Certify title or give legal opinions
Buyer's lawyer	You alone	Checks papers, authority and zoning, then negotiates the contract	Sign land deeds or register rights
Notary	The law: neutral between both sides	Drafts leases, powers of attorney and company deeds	Advise you on risk or negotiate for you
PPAT	The land ministry, as a supervised official	Signs deeds that change the land register	Act as your counsel
Land office (BPN)	The state	Keeps the register, records the transfer	Vouch for zoning, permits or the seller's authority

Source: Law 18/2003; Notary Law 2/2014; PP 24/2016

What does a buyer's lawyer actually check?

Seven checks form the baseline, according to The Indonesian Lawyer's September 2026 price guide. The lawyer confirms at the land office that the certificate is genuine and the seller is the current owner, then reads the type of right and its expiry date. Next come mortgages, disputes and inheritance claims. Zoning, building permits (PBG and SLF), unpaid taxes and boundaries follow. Our due diligence checklist covers the lookups, and the zoning guide shows how to read a plan.

Lookups are only half the job. The rest is judging whether this seller can sell at all. If a company sells, the lawyer pulls its profile, with shareholders and directors, from the AHU Online register. Article 102 of the Company Law (40/2007) requires shareholder approval to sell or pledge more than 50% of net assets, so the lawyer asks for the resolution. If a person sells, the lawyer asks about marital status, because joint property can be disposed of only with both spouses' consent.

Ask about the certificate's form, too. Conversion to an electronic certificate is voluntary, but once land is converted, the land office withdraws the paper original.

Source: The Indonesian Lawyer, September 23, 2026; Law 40/2007, Art. 102; Mondaq, March 31, 2023; Law 1/1974, Art. 36(1); Permen ATR/BPN 3/2023

What does a lawyer look for in a Bali lease or contract?

Start with the language. Article 31 of the Language Law (24/2009) requires Indonesian in agreements with Indonesian parties and adds a version in the foreign party's language or English when a foreigner signs. A 2015 Supreme Court decision upheld the nullity of an English-only loan agreement. Supreme Court Circular 3/2023 later said a missing Indonesian text voids a contract only where bad faith is shown, though some scholars dispute that reading. The safe course is a bilingual lease that says which text controls.

Next come the clauses that decide what you can do with the lease. Extension: the price formula, the notice date, who must agree. Assignment: whether you can sell the remaining term, and whether the landowner must consent. Succession: what binds the new owner if the landowner sells or dies. Exit: who can end the lease early, and why. Our guide to leasehold extensions goes through six of these clauses, and the glossary defines lease assignment.

Source: Law 24/2009, Art. 31; Supreme Court decision 601 K/Pdt/2015; Supreme Court Circular 3/2023; Hukumonline, January 10, 2024; Neginski, 2025

How much does a Bali real estate lawyer cost?

Two 2026 price guides put a flat-fee review at Rp 5–20 million (Global Investments, June 13, 2026) and Rp 8–30 million (The Indonesian Lawyer, September 23, 2026). Complex deals and company structures cost more. The second guide says firms also bill by the hour. We found no published hourly rates, so we don't quote one.

Against a Rp 3.5 bn villa, the combined range works out to roughly 0.1–0.9% of the price (our calculation). Notaries and PPATs price differently, as a share of the deal value, typically 0.5–1%, and the law caps both.

Ask what the fee leaves out. Official fees such as the land office's certificate check, notary and PPAT charges, taxes and certified translation usually sit outside it. Request a written breakdown that separates them. Law 18/2003 lets lawyer and client set the fee by agreement, so negotiate the scope of work before the rate.

How a Bali lawyer's fee is usually quoted

MODEL	HOW IT WORKS	PUBLISHED FIGURE
Flat fee	One price for review and contract check	Rp 5–20 mn (June 2026); Rp 8–30 mn (September 2026)
Hourly	Time spent, billed as agreed	No published rate found
Share of price	Notaries and PPATs, capped by law	0.5–1% typical
Official fees	Passed through at cost	Set by the land agency, not the lawyer

Source: Global Investments, June 13, 2026; The Indonesian Lawyer, September 23, 2026; Law 18/2003, Art. 21; Expatica, August 18, 2026

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How do you avoid a conflict of interest when hiring a Bali lawyer?

Hire your own. A lawyer introduced by the seller, the developer or an agent paid from the seller's commission isn't necessarily biased, but you can't tell. The advocates' code of ethics makes a lawyer who ends up serving two parties withdraw completely once their interests collide, which is a bad moment to find out. Rise Real Bali is paid by the seller or developer, so we say the same about ourselves: choose the lawyer, and ask who pays whom.

Then get an engagement letter. It should name the scope, the written report and its language, the deadline, the fee with its exclusions, and who pays official fees. It should also disclose any past work for the seller, landowner, developer or agent. Confidentiality is already the lawyer's duty under the Advocates Law and the code, and it outlasts the engagement. If you can't attend the signing, limit any power of attorney to one property, one deed and an expiry date.

Source: Advocates' Code of Ethics (2002), Arts. 4(h) and 4(j); Law 18/2003, Art. 19

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When should you hire the lawyer, and how long does the review take?

Before the deposit. The review takes one to three weeks, according to The Indonesian Lawyer, and InvestLand Bali's 2026 checklist gives two to three weeks for a simple file and four to six for a complex one. A reservation that holds the property for two weeks is too tight for a complex file. Write the review period into the reservation agreement, together with the grounds for a refund. The step-by-step buying guide shows where the review sits.

Shortlisting? Browse properties or start from the areas, then take the questions below to your lawyer's first call.

Source: The Indonesian Lawyer, September 23, 2026; InvestLand Bali, Due Diligence Bali Property 2026

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15 questions to ask before you sign

Ask for the answers in writing, and treat a vague reply as a warning sign. The first five questions test the lawyer. The other ten test the deal.

✓ Are you a sworn advokat, and can I see your advocate ID card and High Court oath record?

- ✓ Any past work for the seller, developer, landowner or agent?
- ✓ What does the fee cover, and which official fees come on top?
- ✓ Who does the work, and when do I get a written report in English, with the contract changes marked up?
- ✓ What is out of scope, such as valuation?
- ✓ Is the certificate paper or electronic, and who is the registered holder today?
- ✓ If a company sells, where are the shareholder resolution and the signatory's authority to sign for it?
- ✓ If a person sells, does a spouse or an heir hold a claim?
- ✓ What does the zoning plan allow on this plot? Where is the written confirmation?
- ✓ Are the PBG and SLF in hand, and does the building match them?
- ✓ Is the contract in Indonesian and English, and which text controls if the two differ?
- ✓ What are the extension price, the notice date and the consent terms?
- ✓ Can I sell or assign the remaining term, and does the landowner need to agree?
- ✓ What happens to my rights if the landowner sells the land or passes away?
- ✓ Where does my deposit sit? What must happen before each payment is released?

What this means for buyers

- 01 No law makes you hire a lawyer, but notaries and PPATs must stay neutral. Only your own advocate works for you.
 - 02 Only an Indonesian advocate can give an Indonesian-law opinion. Ask for the ID card and the High Court oath record.
 - 03 Published 2026 flat fees run Rp 5–30 million, roughly 0.1–0.9% of a Rp 3.5 bn villa. Ask what the fee leaves out.
 - 04 Hire the lawyer before the deposit, and write a review period of one to three weeks into the reservation agreement.
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FAQ

Do I need a lawyer to buy property in Bali?

No rule we found requires one. The law does require a PPAT deed to register a sale of land rights, and it requires notaries to stay neutral. A lawyer is the only professional who works for you alone. Hire one for any leasehold, PT PMA purchase or off-plan contract.

What does a real estate lawyer do in Bali?

A buyer's lawyer verifies the certificate with the land office, checks that the seller can legally sell, reads zoning and building permits, and reviews the contract. You get a written report and a marked-up draft. Published prices for this work are usually flat fees, not hourly rates.

Can a foreign lawyer handle my Bali property purchase?

Only on foreign law. Article 23 of Law 18/2003 bars foreign advocates from practicing in Indonesia, appearing in court or opening a firm. An Indonesian firm may employ one as an expert in foreign law, with ministry approval. Advice on Indonesian law has to come from an Indonesian advocate.

How much does a property lawyer cost in Bali?

Two dated 2026 price guides quote flat fees of Rp 5–20 million (June) and Rp 8–30 million (September) for a due diligence review and contract check. Hourly billing exists, but we found no published rate. Official fees, notary and PPAT charges, taxes and translation usually come on top.

What law governs property purchases in Bali?

National Indonesian law applies across the island. The Basic Agrarian Law (5/1960) sets the land rights, PP 24/1997 governs registration and PPAT deeds, and PP 16/2021 covers building approvals. Bali's provincial regulations add zoning rules. A lawyer reads these together with your contract.

How we know this

Statute texts come from Law 18/2003, Law 2/2014, PP 24/1997, Law 24/2009, Law 40/2007 and Law 1/1974, each checked against a second source. The two fee ranges come from dated 2026 price guides that don't agree, so we show both, and we found no published hourly rates. The share of a villa's price is our calculation. Some scholars dispute the Supreme Court's 2023 reading on contract language, and sources differ on paper certificates after conversion, so we describe the checks, not a rule. We rate no firm. This isn't legal advice.

— Law No. 18 of 2003 on Advocates, Articles 1, 3, 4, 19, 21, 23 and 31

— Constitutional Court Decision 126/PUU-XXIV/2026, June 17, 2026

— Notary Law 2/2014 (amending Law 30/2004), Article 16(1)(a)

— PP 24/1997 on land registration, Article 37(1)

— Law No. 24 of 2009 on language, Article 31; Supreme Court Circular 3/2023

— The Indonesian Lawyer, Property Legal Assistance in Indonesia: Costs, Steps, Risks 2026, September 23, 2026

— Global Investments, full buying costs breakdown for Bali, June 13, 2026

Rise Real Bali is a real estate agency in Bali. We write from the deals we handle and from public data, and we name our sources.

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