**MINIMUM EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS FOR PAWNSHOP ENTITIES**

**1. PRELIMINARY DOCUMENTS**

* 1. **­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­**Application letter on company letterhead indicating interest/intention to apply for a Pawnshop exemption, containing the names of the Applicant, postal address and email address
	2. A certified copy of Certificate of incorporation for companies, certified copy of business registration for business and company extract from CIPA
	3. Proof of BURS registration (company tax certificate)

*No applications will be accepted from Trusts.*

 **2. OWNERSHIP & MANAGEMENT**

2.1 Resolution of Board/Directors to apply for a Pawnshop exemption, to state the proposed

 Principal Officer and AML/CFT Compliance Officer

2.2 Individual shareholders, members of board of directors, senior management, Principal

Officer, AML/CFT Compliance Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer should submit:

1. Personal questionnaire - Available on NBFIRA website
2. SV Form 1 - Available on NBFIRA website
3. Certified copy of national ID/Passport for non-citizens;
4. Work and residence permit for non-citizens
5. 2 passport size photos
6. Copy of CV/Resume
7. Certified copies of academic and professional qualifications
8. Individual Bank reference
9. Original copy of Police Clearance from country of residence where individual

stayed for six months or longer

**\*All of the above are to have been certified/updated not more than six (6) months prior to submission**

*All vetting documents being from any other jurisdiction outside Botswana will need to be notarized and authenticated by a duly registered Notary Public.*

*Controllers and Key persons are required to meet the Fit and Proper Rules, 2017(Available on the NBFIRA website)* <http://www.nbfira.org.bw/fit-and-proper-rules-3>

*All forms are to be downloaded from the NBFIRA website* [*www.nbfira.org.bw*](http://www.nbfira.org.bw)

*Where shares are held by unnatural persons, shareholders should submit an Affidavit declaring the details of ultimate beneficial shareholders, which should include names of institutional shareholders, the full names of natural persons who are beneficial owners of shares in the institutional entity and their respective percentage shareholding*

2.3 Proposed organizational structure- The Role of AML/CFT Compliance Officer and

 Principal Officer must be identified on the organizational structure. The AML/CFT Compliance

 Officer must comply with the directive for the AML/CFT Compliance Officer. Link below

 <https://www.nbfira.org.bw/sites/default/files/AML%20desig.pdf>.

*The AML/CFT Compliance officer shall ensure the entity complies with the provisions of the Financial Intelligence Act, and the Principal Officer shall ensure compliance with other financial services laws. The Chief Executive Officer, AML/CFT Compliance Officer and the Principal Officer should be full-time employees of the micro lender.*

2.4 Where the applicant is a member of a group of companies, a group corporate structure

 showing all the subsidiaries and related companies should be submitted.

3. **MINIMUM FINANCIAL REQUIRMENT**

* 1. Proof of financial liquidity – **P20 000** to be maintained at all the times by the Pawnshop.

 A certified bank statement in the name of the applying company should be submitted.

* 1. All sources of income or funding should be fully disclosed by submitting documentary

 evidence which may include copies of the facility letters and shareholders loan agreement.

**4. BUSINESS PLAN.**

The Business Plan should include but not limited to the below:

* 1. **Identifying Information:**
1. Name and location of the applicant which should include the physical

 addresses of all branches.

1. A brief background of managers and owners of the applicant
	1. **Market Analysis**
2. Identification of the market(s) to be served by the applicant
3. SWOT Analysis
	1. **Business strategy and objectives**
4. Brief description of the products and services to be offered by the applicant, which should

 include, loan threshold, Limits on Amount of Pawn Loan and Pawn Duration etc

1. Description of goods being pawned, all of which should be movable property
2. Breakdown of charges i.e. interest rates, administrative costs, any other charges, and the

 justification of the charges

1. Discussion of the major strategies to be implanted by the company to enable it to achieve

 its objective

1. Payment Collection methods
	1. **Financial Performance**
2. Financial projections and forecasts for a minimum of three years from commencement date.

 This should include an income statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement.

1. Key assumptions considered to be of importance to the institution’s operations. The

 assumptions should include the following:

* Inflation supporting projections
* Market interest rates
* Institutions projected lending rates
* Bad debt ratio
* Economic growth

4.5 Audited financial statements for company- for the year immediately preceding the application

 (Where applicable)

4.6 Any other business information

**5. OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

5.1  **Loan Underwriting Policy/Credit Policy** to provide guidance to employees on lending and

practical steps to be followed to access the credit-worthiness of a borrower to ensure compliance on an ongoing basis.

5.2 **Bad Debts /Delinquency Policy** to provide guidance to employees on how to treat non-

performing loans and including that the penalties with a maximum not exceeding the outstanding principal amount.

5.3 **Comprehensive Complaints Policy and Procedures Manual** - Proposed dispute resolution and complaints guidance (after approval of exemption it has to be displayed prominently at the entity’s business premises). This should include details of the person who will deal with complaints and the time it will take to resolve the complaint. It must include referrals to NBFIRA pending resolution. The same to include a complaints register.

5.4 **AML/CFT Policy and Procedures** to ensure that it has adequate internal anti-money laundering policies, controls, guidelines and training programs upon commencement of business that will prevent criminals from laundering proceeds obtained from criminal activities. This should comply with the Financial Intelligence Act and Regulations of 2022.

5.5 **Standard Loan Forms and Pawn Register** which the institution intends to use. They include loan application and loan agreement. - they should contain reference to identify the agreement, name and address of the borrower; principal amount of the credit extended to the borrower; date on of the pawn agreement; total amount payable in respect the pawn agreement; and penalties, charges and other incidental costs which are to be paid by the borrower.

5.6 **Standard consent of spouse form** for customers. A form that will be completed by all spouses of customers married in community of property.

5.7 **Service Level Agreements** (if any) - Where the applicant seeks to use agents or other third

 parties to provide services, applicant to provide details and copies of the contracts (where

 applicable)

5.9 **Proof of availability of pawnshop premises** - Including storage facility for pawned goods held

as security (lease agreement or letter of intent for that purpose)

5.10 **Proof of assessment to determine originality** – Provide information on how you assess that goods belong to the person pawning the, i.e. not stolen

5.11 **Asset Evaluation Mechanism and Procedure –** provide description of the valuation method of security/collateral for each asset class

*All applicants are encouraged to read and acquaint themselves with the NBFIRA Act, 2016 and Financial Intelligence Act, 2022 as they will be required to comply on an ongoing basis with the obligations stated therein.*

*Pawnshop business should operate from formal business premises. They shall not operate from premises that are also used for residential purposes. A lease agreement should be submitted to NBFIRA for the head office and all branches 5 days with resumption of business operations.*

**Applicants should note that any falsification and misrepresentation of facts may lead to denial of the exemption being applied for.**

**6. THE EXEMPTION PROCESS**

6.1 The applicant will be required to firstly submit all documents listed under point 1(Preliminary Documents) to gain access to the RBSS web portal which will enable the applicant to make a full submission as per the requirements.

*Note: Application are* ***ONLY*** *processed on the RBSS Portal*

6.2 Upon receipt of a complete application on the RBSS Portal, NBFIRA shall within 90 days, review the application and determine whether an exemption should be granted to the applicant or not. Applications deemed incomplete are not accepted by the NBFIRA and will be rejected.

6.3 An application is considered to be complete when **all the necessary documents have been submitted**. Upon receipt of a complete application the Authority shall, within the stipulated days for consideration of an application referred to in 6.2 above commence assessment.

6.4 Once a complete application is received, NBFIRA will assess the documents submitted to determine if the applicant has satisfied all the conditions as prescribed by the respective Acts. In order to complete its determination, NBFIRA may require the applicant to submit additional information or may instruct the applicant to make changes deemed necessary. **While NBFIRA awaits a response of these, the application ‘clock’ will be halted and only resume upon receipt of the requested information**. Incomplete applications will not be referred to a decision-maker.

6.5 Once an applicant has satisfied the requirements, the application will be approved and a letter of exemption issued. If however, the assessment is completed and it is determined that the applicant has not satisfied the conditions as stipulated by the respective legislation, NBFIRA will inform the applicant in writing of the rejection, stating the reasons for the rejection and informing the applicant of the right to an appeal.

6.6 If the exemption application process is not completed within 6 months, due to outstanding items required from the applicant, NBFIRA may require a new application, a further application fee and updated supporting documentation (e.g. a refreshed business plan and financial information).

6.7 It should be noted that the onus is on the exemption applicant and relevant persons connected with the exemption applicant to satisfy the Authority that they are fit and proper, not on the Authority to prove that they are not.