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Thimphu TechPark
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TTPL/ADM/2016/

15 February 2016

1. WHO NEEDS WORK PERMIT OR BUSINESS VISA?

Business Visa or Work Permit is required for all foreigners visiting Bhutan to engage in business activities with a company or organization in Bhutan. For Indians, Bangladeshis and Maldivians, visa or permit would be stamped on arrival at the airport without the need for prior approval, but they should clearly show the invitation letter from the organization in Bhutan to the Immigration Officer at the port of entry and state that the reason he or she is visiting Bhutan for so that this can be reflected in their 'entry permit' or visa. **Foreigners engaging in business/official activities under 'Tourist Visa' are liable to be penalized.**

Important Notes:

1. The visiting foreigners should show a copy of the invitation letter to the Immigration Officer at the Immigration Desk at the port of entry and clearly state that he or she is visiting for business reasons. If a tourist visa is issued by mistake, it would not be possible for the visitor to apply for a Work Permit without exiting the country and re-entering.
2. Based on the Invitation Letter, the Immigration Officer at the Port of Entry may issue Business Visa or Temporary Permit (for Indians) for 15 days that may be extended up to 30 days by visiting the Immigration Office in Thimphu later. For stays beyond 30 days, work permit should be applied for and obtained. This is not possible for those foreigners who have entered Bhutan under the 'Tourist Visa'.

2. APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR WORK PERMIT

Step 1: Approval Letter from Dept. of Labour

- a. You need to obtain username and password to use the Labournet system for your company. If you don't already have it, you can register to get one from this link: <http://www.molhr.gov.bt/labournet/#>
- b. Once you have the username and password, login to the labournet system through this link: <http://www.molhr.gov.bt/labournet/> and submit application for work permit approval.

Step 2: Once you have the approval from the Department of Labour, you will have to submit the following documents to the Department of Immigration.

1. Duly Filled Work Permit Application Form (download from <http://www.mohca.gov.bt/forms/14wpform.pdf>)
2. Approval letter from the Dept. of Labour obtained in Step 1 above.
3. A copy of Passport of the employee. If the employee is Indian, Voter Card ID is acceptable.
4. Medical Fitness Certificate (original). This must be obtained from JDW National Referral Hospital, Thimphu, Bhutan.

5. Original entry permit or copy of entry visa stamped in the passport. **Note:** It is not possible to apply for work permit under 'Tourist Visa'. Therefore, it is important that the visitor clearly show the invitation letter from the company in Bhutan to the Immigration Officer at the port of entry.
6. Notarized Copy of Professional /academic certificate and Curriculum Vitae.
7. All supporting documents submitted to the Department of Labour in Step 1.
8. Work Permit Card fee of Nu. 200.
9. Copy of visa clearance (for visa holders)
10. Duly Signed TWO Undertaking forms (One each from Employer and employee)

Step 3. Once the work permit is obtained, you will need to apply for visa extension in accordance with the work permit since the visa is initially given only for 15 days, extensible by another 15 days only.

3. PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING FOR BUSINESS GUEST VISA

1. For FDI companies,

Submit the duly filled-up Business Guest Application form (available here <http://www.bcci.org.bt/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/guest-application-form-2.pdf>) to the FDI Division along with the following documents:

- a. Visa Application Form signed by the applicant (the guest) (Form is available here: <http://www.mfa.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/bhutan-visa-application-form.pdf>)
- b. A cover letter from the FDI company registered in Bhutan clearly stating the reason for inviting the person and the activities he would be engaged in while in Bhutan;
- c. Passport copy of the guest;
- d. Work permit approval from Department of Labour (if already approved)
- e. Copy of Trade/Industry license of the FDI company.

The FDI Division will submit the application to the Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, who will sign and forward the application to the Department of Immigration for final approval.

It is advisable that you follow up and take the application with the forwarding letter until the Department of Immigration.

2. For non-FDI private companies

Submit the duly filled-up Business Guest Application form (available here <http://www.bcci.org.bt/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/guest-application-form-2.pdf>) to the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) along with the following documents:

- a. Visa Application Form signed by the applicant (the guest)

- b. A cover letter from the FDI company registered in Bhutan;
- c. Passport copy of the guest;
- d. Work permit (if applicable);
- e. Copy of Trade/Industry license of the FDI Company.

BCCI forwards the application with their endorsement to the Policy and Planning Division (PPD), Ministry of Economic Affairs. The PPD will submit the application to the Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, who will sign and forward the application to the Department of Immigration for final approval.

It is advisable that you follow up and take the application with their forwarding letters yourself from each agency until the Department of Immigration.

Note:

1. The duration of the visa will be for the actual duration of stay or **30 days** whichever is less, and an undertaking to this effect will have to be signed by the Bhutanese applicant or his/her authorized person (legal stamp required)
2. Should any false or misleading information be provided or this privilege be abused, then the applicant is liable to be penalized

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