

**CIBT**visas

**NewlandChase**  
A CIBT COMPANY

23 SEPTEMBER 2021

COVID-19 Immigration Guide



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<a href="#"><u>Change Log</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>China</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Hong Kong (SAR)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Mozambique</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Slovakia</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>European Union</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Colombia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Hungary</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Myanmar</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>South Africa</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Argentina</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Costa Rica</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Iceland</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Nepal</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>South Korea</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Aruba</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cuba</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>India</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>The Netherlands</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Spain</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Australia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cyprus</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Indonesia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>New Zealand</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sri Lanka</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Austria</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Czech Republic</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Iraq</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Norway</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sweden</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Azerbaijan</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Denmark</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Ireland</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Panama</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Switzerland</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Bahrain</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Dominican Republic</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Israel</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Papua New Guinea</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Taiwan</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Barbados</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Ecuador</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Italy</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Paraguay</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Tanzania</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Belgium</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Egypt</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Japan</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Peru</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Thailand</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Bolivia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Finland</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Kazakhstan</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>The Philippines</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Trinidad and Tobago</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Botswana</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>France</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Kenya</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Poland</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Turkey</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Brazil</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Germany</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Kuwait</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Portugal</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Ukraine</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Brunei</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Ghana</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Laos</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Qatar</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>United Arab Emirates</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Bulgaria</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Greece</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Macau (SAR)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Romania</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>United Kingdom</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Cambodia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Guatemala</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Malaysia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Russia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>United States</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Canada</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Guyana</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Malta</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Saudi Arabia</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Vietnam</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Chile</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Honduras</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Mexico</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Singapore</u></a>	

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect global immigration and international travel significantly. At times, it feels as though the world is being pulled in two directions. On the one hand, availability of vaccinations has increased in many countries, borders have begun a hesitant reopening, and corporate travel and immigration is on the rise; however, on the other hand, new outbreaks are reported daily, the vaccination effort varies drastically by region, and virus variants worry the general public and governments alike. All of these factors contribute to an ever-changing global immigration landscape that provides the industry with new challenges daily.

Newland Chase and CIBTvisas are here to help you navigate every twist and turn of these regulation changes. This comprehensive guide will keep you up-to-date on any immigration-related change in connection with the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing on topics such as immigration authority statuses, application processing timeframes, permit and visa restrictions or concessions, and adjusted immigration procedures, our guide compiles knowledge and data from government sources throughout the world.

Note that this document includes immigration-related changes associated with COVID-19 only. **For country-specific travel and entry details** – including quarantine and testing requirements, entry bans and country classifications, in-country experience, and transit restrictions – please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).

As the global leader in immigration and travel documentation, Newland Chase and CIBTvisas are at the forefront in providing the timely, accurate, and actionable information every employer and traveller needs to navigate this challenging era safely and securely.

We invite you to utilize our additional COVID-19 related resources including webinars, white papers, and FAQ sheets that address important changes on a global-, regional-, and country-basis. For information specific to your organization and employee population, contact your dedicated Newland Chase or CIBTvisas Client Services Manager. Don’t have a Client Services Manager? [Contact us today](#) to schedule a consultation.

### **Disclaimer**

*We have aggregated information about some immigration-related restrictions imposed by some countries in response to this situation. The information contained in this document has been abridged from laws and administrative rulings and should not be construed or relied upon as legal advice.*

## **CHANGE LOG**

- 23 September 2021:** Canada and Thailand.
- 22 September 2021:** New Zealand
- 21 September 2021:** Argentina and New Zealand.
- 20 September 2021:** Peru
- 17 September 2021:** No COVID-19 related immigration changes reported.
- 16 September 2021:** Indonesia, Iraq, and South Africa.
- 15 September 2021:** New Zealand, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania.
- 14 September 2021:** Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka.
- 13 September 2021:** New Zealand, Panama, Peru, and Vietnam.
- 10 September 2021:** Ireland
- 9 September 2021:** Azerbaijan, Paraguay, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam.
- 8 September 2021:** The Philippines
- 7 September 2021:** Malta, New Zealand, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.
- 3 September 2021:** India and the Philippines.
- 2 September 2021:** Chile
- 1 September 2021:** Azerbaijan, Colombia, Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, and Vietnam.
- 31 August 2021:** India, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, and Malta.
- 30 August 2021:** New Zealand, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates.
- 27 August 2021:** Macau, New Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam.
- 26 August 2021:** The United Kingdom
- 25 August 2021:** Bulgaria and the Netherlands.
- 24 August 2021:** Israel, Kuwait, New Zealand, Peru, and the United Arab Emirates.
- 23 August 2021:** New Zealand, the Philippines, and South Korea.
- 20 August 2021:** Brunei, Macau (SAR), New Zealand, the Philippines, and Thailand.
- 19 August 2021:** Czech Republic and Germany.
- 18 August 2021:** Austria and Bulgaria.
- 17 August 2021:** Azerbaijan, Peru, and Saudi Arabia.
- 16 August 2021:** Bahrain (added), Mexico (added), and the Philippines.
- 13 August 2021:** Australia, Denmark, Hong Kong (SAR), India, Japan, Norway, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam.
- 12 August 2021:** Belgium, Egypt, and Sri Lanka (added).
- 11 August 2021:** Finland.
- 10 August 2021:** Peru, Portugal, and Saudi Arabia.
- 9 August 2021:** Argentina, Japan, Kazakhstan (added), and South Africa.
- 6 August 2021:** Cambodia (added), China, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Myanmar, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam.
- 5 August 2021:** Austria, Macau SAR, the Philippines, and Thailand.
- 4 August 2021:** Saudi Arabia.
- 3 August 2021:** Israel, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom.

## **EUROPEAN UNION / SCHENGEN AREA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

- In the context of the coronavirus outbreak, visa holders present in the Schengen area who could not leave before the expiry date of their short-stay visa have had their visa extended up to a maximum stay of 90/180 days by the designated Member States' authorities. If the visa holders were compelled to stay beyond the extended period of 90/180 days, a national long-stay visa or a temporary residence permit should have been issued by the national authorities.
- Member States are encouraged to waive administrative sanctions or penalties on third-country nationals who during the period of travel restrictions were unable to leave their territory due to travel restrictions. Overstays due to the temporary travel restrictions should not be taken into account during the processing of future visa applications.
- For nationals of visa-waived third-countries who are compelled to stay beyond the extended 90/180 days, the competent national authorities should extend the validity of the authorisations for legal stay, issue a new one or take other appropriate measures that ensure a continued right to stay on their territory. Information is available on the websites of Member States' national authorities.
- EU citizens and their family members who are not in possession of a valid passport and/or visa should be allowed to enter the EU territory, if they can prove by other means that they are EU citizens or family members of an EU citizen. Possession of an expired passport should be deemed to constitute proof by other means in the current situation. Family members should always be able to prove that they are family members of the EU citizen.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **ARGENTINA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Normal processing
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Holders of the following visas/permits are eligible to enter Argentina – foreign residents. Note that, effective 7 August 2021, foreign nationals with direct family members in Argentina who are citizens or residents of Argentina are allowed to enter the country again. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- In-country immigration and registry services have resumed their activities.
- The extension of temporary residences can be requested online.
  - Once documentation is uploaded onto the immigration platform, authorities issue the Certificate of Residencia Precaria together with an appointment to complete the renewal process, at which the applicant will need to show original documents and biometrics will be taken.
- The Immigration Office Corporate Registry (known as "RENURE" = Registro Nacional Único de Requirientes Extranjeros) has allowed the submission of applications for initial registrations, and updates

of the same, via email, as long as all necessary documents are fully provided as legible scans and the support letters are signed by the local companies' President or Legal Representative. Once current restrictions have been lifted, it will be necessary to submit all original papers to the Immigration Office to complete the filing.

### Additional Notes

- The mandatory general rules of conduct are extended until 1 October 2021.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## ARUBA

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

- Online application services are available

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## AUSTRALIA

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open or partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays and temporarily pauses on certain categories
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Holders of the following visas/permits are eligible to enter Australia – New Zealand citizens, individuals in critical sectors or with critical skills, military personnel, foreign students, critical medical treatment for traveller or close family member. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices are still operational. Applications can still be submitted online and via post, though processing of applications has slowed considerably, and some have been placed on hold for now.
- The latest visa processing times are published [here](#).
- All Immigration Medical Examinations in Victoria have temporarily ceased.
- Where possible, Australian embassies, high commissions, and consulates are still operating in line with local regulations and restrictions. Priority is on assisting Australians overseas.
- Most offshore applications are on hold, particularly for permanent visas which would entitle the person to travel to Australia under an exemption.
- Biometrics collection services at Australian Visa Application Centres (AVACs) and Australian Biometrics Collection Centres (ABCCs) has resumed, dependent on in-country COVID-19 restrictions.

- In addition, collection centres will offer enquiry and assisted online lodgement services;
- Applicants can use their original *Requirement to provide personal identifiers (biometrics) letter* to book and attend an appointment. Applicants who have applied for a visa online have a copy of this letter in their ImmiAccount.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Applications for exemptions to arrival restrictions are being prioritized over visa applications; as such, there is a significant delay or temporary pause to many visa application categories (especially Business Visas).
- It is intended that changes will be implemented in early 2021 that would allow certain family visas, which have been applied for outside Australia, to be granted while the visa applicant is in Australia. This temporary concession will be for people who are in Australia and are not able to travel offshore to be granted the visa due to COVID-19 related border closures. The concession will apply to certain applicants for the following Family visa subclasses:
  - Child (subclass 101) visa;
  - Adoption (subclass 102) visa;
  - Dependent Child (subclass 445) visa;
  - Prospective Marriage (subclass 300) visa;
  - Partner (subclass 309) visa.
- Some visa holders impacted by Australia’s travel restrictions will soon be able to access a refund or a waiver of their Visa Application Charge (VAC):
  - **Temporary workers** granted a Temporary Skill Shortage or Temporary Work (Skilled) visa but unable to enter Australia because of COVID-19 travel restrictions before the visa ceased may be able to receive a VAC waiver for a future visa application.
  - Those who received a **Prospective Marriage visa** but were unable to enter Australia because of COVID-19 travel restrictions before the visa ceased may be eligible for a refund of their VAC to help them apply for another visa to come to Australia once travel restrictions are lifted. Prospective Marriage visa validity periods may also be extended in certain circumstances.
  - A VAC waiver will be available for **Visitor (Tourist) visa** holders whose visas expired while outside Australia following implementation of COVID-19 travel restrictions on 20 March 2020. This applies to those who held a Tourist, Approved Destination Status, Business Visitor or Sponsored Family visa, who were unable to travel to Australia for initial entry as well as those who had travelled and departed but were unable to return on a multiple entry visa. A new visa must be applied for before the end of 2022.
- Visitor visa holders should apply for a new visa before their current visa expires to maintain their lawful status. If a visitor has a “No Further Stay” condition on their visa (including 8503, 8534 or 8535) and less than two months’ validity remaining, they can request a waiver of this condition to allow them to lodge a new visa application.
- Visa applicants abroad are being provided additional time to provide documents, health checks, and police certificates due to closures and restrictions of service providers.

### **Immigration Red Flags**

- Temporary visa holders who are ineligible for entry into Australia will have their visa cancelled. Arrangements will be made to reinstate visas as appropriate following the lifting of these enhanced border control measures.

## Additional Notes

- Temporary Skill Shortage (subclass 482) and subclass 457 visa holders who have been stood down, but not laid off, will maintain a valid visa and businesses will have the opportunity to extend your visa as per normal arrangements.
- Businesses will be able to reduce their employees' hours without being in breach of their visa conditions or the business being in breach of their employer obligations.
- Those who have been laid off should find another employer within 60 days or make arrangements to leave Australia, where possible. If they cannot return to their home country, they need to maintain a valid visa and follow Australia's health advice where necessary.
- A special category of the Temporary Work Visa (Subclass 408) has been created to cater for temporary residents employed in critical sectors, like health, aged care or agriculture, who cannot return to their home country and have no other visa options.
- Those whose temporary work visa is expiring, are not working in a critical sector, are unable to return home because of entry restrictions and can't meet the requirements for another visa, may still be eligible for the COVID-19 Pandemic event visa. They will need to demonstrate why they can't meet the requirements for another visa. This could include a statement and evidence that they do not have access to sufficient funds to be able to pay a further visa application charge (VAC).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **AUSTRIA**

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Austria does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

- Applications filed with the immigration authorities require a pre-booked appointment
- First-time residence permit applicants can submit further required documents by email or post to but should expect delays. D visa applications for applicants outside Austria are not possible until the relevant consulate has reopened. D visa holders may be able to enter Austria but should note that they have six months to collect their residence permit in Austria, from the date of the notification by the Austrian consulate that they can apply for a D visa.
- First-time residence permit applicants in Austria whose permission to stay in Austria has expired should be notified by the authority of the requirement to make an additional application under § 21 (3) of the Settlement and Residence Act.
- Residence permit renewal applications can be submitted by email or post to the relevant branch office. Delays should be expected. A personal appearance is not required until the authorities resume normal operating hours.
- Holders of work and residence permits who have applied for renewal before their current permit expires can continue to work during processing of the renewal application.
- Residence permits cannot currently be collected in person. Applicants should contact the authorities by telephone, email or post to arrange collection or delivery.



## **AZERBAIJAN**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Visa issuance temporarily paused, work and residence permit applications have notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Holders of the following visas/permits are eligible to enter Azerbaijan – heads and employees (and their families) of accredited foreign diplomatic missions and consulates; foreigners whose parent, spouse or minor child are Azerbaijani citizens; work permit holders; temporary or permanent residence permit holders; foreign students studying in higher educational institutions. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- The Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers may issue a special entry permit for foreign nationals seeking to enter Azerbaijan under extraordinary circumstances.
- Visa issuance is suspended, including via the electronic visa registration service, ASAN. Foreign nationals wishing to visit Azerbaijan are requested to apply for a visa through relevant local Azerbaijani embassies and consulates operating limited services.
- Initial and renewal Work Permit, Temporary Permit, and Permanent Permit applications can be submitted at the ASAN service centres and Regional Migration Departments with appointments booked in advance. Online applications are also available.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Residence Permit holders who cannot exit Azerbaijan due to COVID-19 restrictions may apply for a 30-60 day renewal. Once payment has been completed via the [online service](#), the foreign resident can continue to reside in Azerbaijan for the extension period.

## **BAHRAIN**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Holders of the following visas/permits are eligible to enter Bahrain – visas and residence permits (unless traveller has been to a Red List country within the previous 14 days). Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Designated local immigration offices are open and accepting manual requests with a pre-booked appointment.
- The Immigration Head Office remains closed to the public until further notice.
- In-person visits to the Labour Market Regulatory Authority and Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs offices are restricted to individuals over 18-years-old who are either fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or who have fully recovered from COVID-19. There must also be a pre-booked appointment prior to visiting the establishments.

### Permit and Visa Details

- The Bahrain authorities have resumed processing of new work permit applications for individuals outside Bahrain, unless those individuals are located in, or recently travelled to, a Red List country. Applications that were submitted while the employees are outside the country will be postponed for 21 days in compliance with the Labour Market testing in force.
- Foreign nationals whose Residence Permits expire while they are outside Bahrain are not eligible for a Residence Permit renewal and will have to cancel their existing permit and apply for a new one, and use the visa to enter the country before the visa expires.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **BARBADOS**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Temporarily closed

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **BELGIUM**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Holders of the following visas/permits are eligible to enter Belgium – includes, but is not necessarily limited to, Work Permit B holders (with additional permissions) and highly qualified third-country workers seeking a D visa with a position Single Permit decision. Note that Non-essential travel to Belgium is not permitted for travelers who are not citizens of the EU or Schengen zone countries and who have their main residence in a non-green zone third country. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Some communes are closed for all but urgent services.
- Government ministries are working from home, which is expected to lead to delays in application processing
- Visa applications have partially resumed at most Belgian consulates with processing D Visa applications for Single Permit and EU Blue Card applicants and essential-purpose Schengen visa applicants. Applicants should contact Newland Chase or the specific consulate directly to confirm current services as these are subject to change based on the current COVID-19 situation.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Residence Permit holders whose permits are nearing expiration and who are unable to return home due to COVID-19 restrictions in their destination country are able to apply for a temporary extension of stay for up to 90 days.
- The **Flanders authorities** will not take into account a period of temporary unemployment due to COVID-19 when calculating the salary threshold for work permits and single permits, whether or not the employee receives any benefit from the National Employment Offices (NEO). The **Brussels authorities** have stated that they will take the exceptional circumstances into consideration and be flexible with regards to salary thresholds. The **Walloon authorities** will not take into account periods of temporary unemployment between 1 March and 31 August 2020 when calculating salary thresholds, including for posted workers, on submission of certain documents.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **BOLIVIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Bolivia does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **BOTSWANA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Botswana does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Labour Department has reopened and is accepting renewal applications. Any foreign national holding a visa that will expire soon is able to submit their extension application and maintain valid legal status within Botswana.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **BRAZIL**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully and partially open with reduced staff/hours, depending on specific authority
- Immigration Application Processing: Normal processing, notable delays, and temporarily paused depending on the application type.
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Brazil. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Federal Police has restricted services nationally. Immigration registration and residence permits, CRNM, DRNM and passport delivery requests will only be accepted in urgent cases. Passport issuance requests will only proceed for applicants with proof of travel in the next 30 days. Naturalization requests will not be processed.
- The General Coordination of Labour Immigration has resumed its procedural deadlines for immigration processes.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Residence Permits are accepted and approved in regular processing times. Publishing on the National Gazette is also resumed.
- The deadlines for visitors are suspended. Visitors whose status expires will not be penalized.
- Document expiry dates are suspended. Immigrants with expired immigration documents will not be penalized.
- The deadline for immigration regularization of foreign nationals who have identification documents which expired from 16 March 2020 is extended until 16 September 2021. Regularization can be carried out, regardless of the application of fines for late registration or excess of stay which occurred in that period.
  - The service protocols referring to immigration regularization, national immigration registration cards and other documents related to the activities of the Immigration Police, produced by the Federal Police, expiring from 16 March 2020 must be accepted as valid for all purposes and may be used until 16 September 2021, including for the purposes of entering, registering, renewing or changing the term.

- In the process of immigration regularization, documents which expired after 16 March 2020 will be accepted, provided that the immigrant has resided in the national territory and seeks to regularize themselves by 16 September 2021
- This deadline extension will not be valid if the document holder travels abroad for more than 30 days in total.
- If a foreign national is unable to leave Brazil within the period of stay granted, due to restrictions imposed by a third country, the visitor may justifiably request an extraordinary extension of their date of departure, even if they exceed the limits of the immigration year. The decision must be submitted to immigration control.
- The National Passport System - SINPA will no longer automatically cancel passports not withdrawn within the set deadline.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **BRUNEI**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Brunei does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- All immigration offices remain closed and visa/permit processing is suspended. Case-by-case issuance of "Travel Pass" for specific categories of foreign nationals will be accepted, especially for short term essential business travellers (including those from Singapore).

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Permanent Residents and foreign nationals holding a Brunei Identification Card are currently barred from exiting the country. Exemptions (special approval required) exist for individuals departing to seek medical treatment or resume overseas studies.
- Current visa and permit holders are required to renew their status documents; Brunei authorities are not providing any automatic renewals at this time.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## **BULGARIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays

- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Bulgaria. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Permit and Visa Details

- The terms of validity of most types of Bulgarian identity documents, including residence permits for foreign nationals, which expire before 31 January 2021 are extended by 6 months past their expiration date.
- If a third-country national fails to submit a temporary residence permit renewal application within the statutory 14 days prior to the permit's expiry date, their residence will not be deemed interrupted for the duration of the state of emergency if and when the third-country national applies for long-term or permanent residence.
- Any absence of a long-term or permanent residence permit holder from the territory of the EU member states for the duration of the state of emergency will not count towards the 12 months of permitted absence (which, if exceeded could lead to permit annulment).
- If a third-country national's current temporary residence permit expires during the state of emergency, they can enter Bulgaria without a visa within 14 days of the end of the state of emergency.

### Additional Notes

- The Bulgarian authorities have extended the emergency epidemic situation in the country until at least 30 November 2021.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **CAMBODIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Cambodia. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Certain authorities, especially in Phnom Penh, have resumed operations but staffing and hours may be limited. Applicants should expect processing delays.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Issuance of tourist visas, visa-on-arrival, and visa-waiver travel is suspended. Only foreign nationals with essential reasons (including working for a Cambodian company) will be allowed to apply for a visa.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## CANADA

For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Canada. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- If the visa application centres or other biometrics collection sites in the applicant's country or region are still closed, and their extension to give biometrics is ending, they won't have to give biometrics until the biometrics collection sites reopen. This applies, even if the biometric instruction letter (BIL) says that the deadline is 30 or 90 days. No application in progress will be closed or refused because of documents that are missing due to COVID-19. Applicants should keep checking online to see when the VACs and other biometrics collection sites start to reopen. Once they are able, they should complete the steps, including making an appointment to give biometrics, as soon as possible to avoid delays.
- Ports of Entry remain open, but service hours at various land border crossings have been reduced.
- Canadian embassies, high commissions and consulates are operating but with delays. However, most Visa Application Centers are closed, and the processing of biometrics therefore on hold. The Canadian government may allow extra time for the submission of biometrics.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Certain visitors are eligible to apply for employer-sponsored work permits without departing Canada until 28 February 2022. Applicants will need to meet the following conditions: be in Canada as a visitor on a valid temporary resident status; file the employer-specific work permit form: Application to Change Conditions, Extend my Stay or Remain in Canada as a Worker; legally stayed in Canada without a lapse in status before and after submitting their application; and file the application before the window closes on 28 February 2022.
- Foreign nationals whose immigration status expires between 30 January 2020 until 31 May 2021, and who have remained in Canada, had until 31 August 2021 to restore their status (instead of 90 days as previously).
  - Applicants for restoration must meet the requirements for the type of status and authorisation they are applying to restore.
  - Former work-permit holders who have applied to restore their status are now permitted to work pending a decision, provided they have a job offer, supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) and that they notify IRCC through the new process established for this purpose (previously this was not permitted).
- Foreign workers already in Canada with a valid immigration status, an existing work permit or work permit exemption and a new job offer backed by a valid Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) can get approval to start work while their work permit application is being processed. The applicant must send an electronic request to IRCC, which will be reviewed in 10 days and, if approved, will permit them to start working. This program does not apply to business visitors or those who are work permit-exempt for a short-term assignment under on the Global Skills Strategy.
- Ordinary rules apply for those seeking to extend before current work permit expiry (implied status).

- Foreign workers already in Canada whose status has been expired more than 90 days can seek a temporary resident permit, or a change of status, and will need to explain the need to remain.
- The automatic extension of deadlines for provision of required information in immigration applications is cancelled.
  - IRCC will soon begin sending notices to applicants with applications in process, advising them that they have 30 days from the date of such notice to provide required information.
  - If an applicant still has difficulty securing a particular piece of required information (if for example the VAC in their area is still closed) they may write to IRCC requesting a 30-day extension. This will require ongoing 30-day extension requests until the reason for the inability to comply is Failure to seek or obtain an extension may lead to application refusal.
- Canadian citizenship applicants who are unable to travel to Canada can reschedule their knowledge tests, retests, interviews, hearings or Oaths of Citizenship for a later date.
- Permanent resident visa holders can request an extension of their Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR) if their visa will expire within the next 90 days and they are unable to travel to Canada. No application in progress will be stopped. Applicants have 90 days to comply with document request and procedural requests. Landing appointments will be held by telephone.
- Applicants for visitor visas, work permits, study permits or permanent residence who cannot complete the next steps in their application will be given an automatic extension.
- Visitors, international students and foreign workers whose legal status in Canada will soon end, can apply for an extension, if eligible.
- IRCC has acted to speed up spousal application processing by increasing by 66% the number of decision makers on spousal applications, digitizing paper applications, implementing facilitative biometrics measures and conducting interviews remotely.
- New work permit applications are permitted in various circumstances:
  - For visa-exempt foreign nationals entering Canada from the United States (not only US citizens or permanent residents), work permits can still be sought essentially as they were pre-COVID. Information should be provided to stress the importance of the work in Canada).
  - For those seeking work permits from any country other than the United States, an application must be online, and only those relating to work in 'essential services' will be processed, based on procedures in place. Essential services are defined to include work in sectors including health, food, transportation, utilities, manufacturing and others.
- Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) will not be issued for positions in Alberta except for the following exempt positions:
  - Computer and information systems managers (and certain other computer-related fields);
  - Pilots;
  - Certain types of physicians;
  - Producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations;
  - Farm workers;
  - Occupations where the work is for 30 calendar days or less and requires proprietary knowledge or entails installation, inspection or repair of equipment where the warranty requires that work be done by workers designated by the manufacturer;
  - In support of a permanent residence application;
  - Global Talent Stream;
  - Certain in-home caregiver positions.
- Non-essential work permits will not be issued at the border.

## Additional Notes

- Priority processing has been extended to foreign workers in the film and television industry.



- Processing of work permits for this industry for arrivals from non-US destinations (or visa nationals in the US) is now under a 14-day service standard.
- An additional special request, using specified language, must be submitted via the IRCC web form platform. Thereafter, the request will be reviewed, and if qualified, processed as a priority.
- Processing of work permits at ports of entry for non-visa nationals arriving from the US continues to operate as normal.
- The government has issued additional guidelines for employers of foreign workers in light of the COVID-19 situation. These include that employers comply with all applicable requirements vis-à-vis the employee (salary, etc.) from time of arrival, not conclusion of the 14-day self-isolation period.
- Flagpoling (exiting Canada briefly for the purpose of making an immigration application upon re-entry) is once again permitted but returning workers may be required to meet the 14-day quarantine requirement.
- Immediate family members who intend to reunite with a family member currently in Canada need written authorization from the government of Canada.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **CHILE**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays or temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Chile. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has put an unofficial and temporary pause on processing initial online consular work and residence visa applications for foreign nationals currently residing outside of Chile.
- The Migration Department has suspended all in-person services. Payments, visa stamps and visa renewals (except Mercosur visas) are available online.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Online Permanent Residence applications are now available for citizens of the following countries: Brazil, China, Cuba, Haiti, and Peru. Previously, these nationalities were required to apply in-person. Note that in-person validation of supporting documents will still be required as of 30 September.
- Foreign nationals' ID cards which expired in 2019 and 2020 or will expire in 2021 are automatically extended until 28 February 2022. Foreign nationals who have recently requested a change of status or a visa extension for ID cards that expired in 2019 or 2020 must have their immigration status certified through the vouchers provided by the Department of Immigration and Migration or by a Provincial Government.

### **Additional Notes**

- The time allowed to inform the Migration Department about a change of employer is extended to 180 days from the ending date of the contract.

## **CHINA**

**For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).**

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Normal processing and notable delays, depending on specific authority
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter China. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Shanghai SAFEA has temporarily suspended the submission of physical documents for work permit applications (including renewal, information updating and cancellation).
  - The online process with commitments from Chinese employers has been fully implemented, and companies are exempt from submitting paper documents at the authority.
  - Processing times can be reduced by two working days.
  - Category B work permits can now be granted for up to two years, provided all the requirements are met.
  - Shanghai SAFEA has also simplified the required application documents to facilitate a change of employer - the new employer does not need to submit a certificate of no criminal record, certificate of physical examination, or work qualification certificate.
- Labour authorities **in other cities** have suspended the submission of physical documents for work permit applications (suspended processes may include initial, renewal, information updating, transfer, and cancellation, depending on the local authority). Applications will be processed online only during this period, with a commitment letter provided by the Chinese employer. The commitment letter should affirm the authenticity and validity of their online submission and original documents should be kept for further check.
- Medical authorities have the discretionary power to permit or refuse foreign nationals to undergo a medical examination based on their entry, residence, travel and other documents.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The China National Immigration Administration has announced a temporary pause in issuing entry and exit documents for non-essential and non-urgent exits from China. This pause includes ordinary passports for Chinese nationals, permits, and endorsements for travel to and from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. Note that the new measures will not be applied to Chinese citizens with confirmed overseas study, employment, or business purposes.
- The provincial Foreign Affairs Offices (FAO) in several cities in China have tightened up the requirements for **issuance of PU letters** and require more concrete evidence demonstrating that the proposed visit is truly essential. Processing times for PU letters have therefore increased in many cases.
- Some FAO offices may temporarily suspend the issuance of PU letters depending on the local pandemic prevention and control measurements (including to essential business travellers and workers).

- Almost all cities in China have suspended the issuance of PU letters to family dependents and many Chinese consulates of suspended the issuance of visas to family dependents even if they are holding a valid PU letter.
- A PU (invitation) letter from the Chinese government for business or work purposes no longer guarantees the approval of the visa application. Consulates also require a detailed explanation of why it is essential for the applicant to enter China at this time – such as a letter of invitation from the Chinese company.
- Chinese immigration authorities will exempt foreign nationals whose temporary visas or residence permits expire during this period of disruption from penalties, or impose lighter penalties, depending on the circumstances. Newland Chase’s team in China is available to provide guidance and assistance with renewals and de-registration.
- Holders of valid endorsements to Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan who are affected by the epidemic and fail to enter the above places within the validity period can re-apply for certificates of the same type and validity period for free when the outbreak is over.
- In **Shanghai**, high-level foreign talents over the age of 65 are exempted from submitting the insurance policy, commitment on insurance or commitment letter from tri-parties while applying for the work permit in Shanghai;
- The processing times for work permit cancellation in Shanghai will be reduced from 10 working days to 3 working days.
- In **Shanghai**, E-signature on employment termination letter or emails as well as WeChat messages can be accepted as evidence in support of the termination of employment relationship between the Chinese employer and foreign employee during the epidemic control period.
- While renewing the work permit in **Shanghai**, the authority accepts the tax payment evidence uploaded online by the Chinese employer. The foreign employee (who made the commitment on salary/ IIT before) does not need to go to the tax authority to get a printout of their tax payment record, which was previously required by the SAFEA authority.
- Foreign employees in **Shanghai** are allowed to submit their online application for work permit renewal before its expiry date during this epidemic control period. Previously, such a renewal application shall be submitted online 30 days before the expiry date.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **COLOMBIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Colombia does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Migración Colombia has reactivated the following services, available by prior appointment only.
  - Issuance of Foreign nationals’ ID Card and duplicates;
  - Foreign Registration for both minors and adults;

- Certificates of Migratory Movement;
- Certificate of Migratory Movement and Nationality;
- Safe conduct SC-1 and SC-2.
- Special Permit of Permanence for the Promotion of Formalization (PEP-FF).
- Temporary Stay Permits (PTP) for extensions of stay in the national territory and for category change.
- Migración Colombia has resumed the procedural terms for administrative sanctions.

### Permit and Visa Details

- The deadline for filing immigration-related processes handled by Migración Colombia (e.g. visa registration, requests for identity cards, etc.) has been set as 16 September 2021. As such, foreign nationals who have Migración Colombia procedures delayed by COVID-19 restrictions have until that date to request a filing appointment.
- The term of stay will be resumed for foreign nationals holding entry and stay permits which have been suspended due to the health emergency.

### **Additional Notes**

- The state of emergency is expected until at least 30 November 2021.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been requesting additional documentation in support of visa applications. due to the COVID pandemic, including (but not limited to):
  - Undergraduate diploma, duly apostilled. In case the document is in another language than Spanish, it must be officially translated and duly legalized in Colombia;
  - International health insurance in which an amount of coverage of not less than \$70,000 dollars is evidenced;
  - Previous labour certifications;
  - Social Security forms.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **COSTA RICA**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Costa Rica. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- A new online platform (“[TramiteYa!](#)”) permits foreign nationals to submit immigration applications and electronic copies of their documents.
  - Eligible users will not need to appear before immigration officials (including to submit biometrics or to register with their home consulate, unless the DGME request this on a case-by-case basis.

- Once the application is processed, a digital decision will be sent to the applicant.
- Residence appointments can be scheduled [online](#) or by phone (by calling 1311).
- Appointments to request file copies can be scheduled by appointment only by calling 1311 or through [www.migracion.go.cr](http://www.migracion.go.cr).
- Minor's exit permit requests and the issuance of Costa Rican passports continue to work as normal and by appointment only. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 1311 or through [www.migracion.go.cr](http://www.migracion.go.cr).

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The issuance of initial and renewal immigration identification documentation (DIMEX) at the General Immigration Directorate is suspended. Certain residents can book appointments for initial or renewal DIMEX applications through the Banco de Costa Rica or Correos de Costa Rica.
- Effective 5 March 2021, a new grace period of 6 months has been approved to allow people with DIMEX cards and Costa Rican nationals who hold a foreign driver's licence to homologate their document to complete their local driver's license request before the COSEVI.
- Individuals with applications in progress, duly filed at the Immigration Department can legally drive until 30 September 2021 even if their foreign drivers' licenses expired after 20 March 2020. Those who have a residency application in progress must always carry:
  - Passport with valid entry stamp.
  - Foreign driver's license.
  - Application filing receipt (plantilla showing your expediente number). The law does not state that the plantilla needs to be recently issued.
  - Carry a copy of Resolution 2021-000196 (click to download the PDF) and the clarification email below.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **CUBA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Foreign nationals with valid residence in Cuba who are stranded abroad due to COVID-19 travel restrictions can extend their stay outside Cuba for another year without losing their status and benefits as residents.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **CYPRUS**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays

- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Cyprus. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Civil Registry and Migration Department has reopened at its new office at Makarios III Avenue, Nicosia. It will continue to serve the public only for urgent issues, only with appointment and only for health-related matters, or in the event where there is a vital need for a person to enter or leave the Republic of Cyprus.
- Applications for urgent passport issuance will be handled by the Nicosia District Administration Office.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Third-country nationals currently in Cyprus for visiting purposes, with national or other visas such as Schengen visas, whose validity expired from 15 March 2020 onwards, as long as flight restrictions are in force, are not required to take any further action and no measures will be taken against them, nor shall their details be placed on the Stop List upon their departure, provided they depart immediately and as soon as possible after the restrictions are lifted.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter the Czech Republic. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices are currently processing residence card applications, arrival registrations, and bridging labels. Applications can be submitted via appointment only.

### Permit and Visa Details

- All foreign nationals (both visa-required and visa-free nationals) can legally stay in the Czech Republic for an additional 60 days after the end of the state of emergency. They do not need to request an extension of their visa or visa-free stay. Visas will not be extended and exit orders will not be issued.
- Upon departure from the Czech Republic, each foreign national will be issued an “exit stamp” into the passport, which will indicate the legality of their stay in the Czech Republic. This stamp will include the date of exit and will indicate legality of stay to the authorities of those states through which the foreign national might transfer when homeward bound, to avoid any possible penalties. The exit stamp is in use by the alien police inspectorate as of 4 May.

- According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs the 60-day bridging period concerns also employment permits issued by Labor Office of the Czech Republic, i.e. holders of Schengen visas for the purpose of employment and employment cards can continue to work.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **DENMARK**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Fully open or temporarily closed.
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Significant delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Denmark. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- All SIRI's branch offices (in Copenhagen, Odense, Aarhus, Aalborg, Aabenraa and Bornholm) have reopened. The online booking system has reopened and it is now possible to book appointments [online](#). Longer processing times can be expected in all cases (30-45 days for initial cases and 90-100 days for extensions).
- Note that employers must inform SIRI if their assignees' employment terms have changed, regardless of the reason (including government-approved reduced time/salary packages). This also applies if the salary (including a possible reduction) still meets minimum salary requirements. The minimum salary threshold overrules collective agreements and must be met regardless of any support package.
- The immigration Service's Citizen Service is open, but it is only possible to get personal service if you book an appointment in advance. You can book an appointment for the following types of service:
  - Biometric features for residence permit
  - New passport
  - Re-entry permit
  - Short term visa extension
  - Laissez-passer (pick up).
- The Immigration Service will continue to process all types of cases to the extent possible.
  - Certain parts of the case processing can be delayed or limited because it among other things was not possible to appear in person at the Citizen Service for a limited period of time.
  - It is also possible to submit digital (online) applications to us. Paper-based applications can be scanned and sent to us via our contact form.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Processing times for Fast-Track Scheme applications are currently taking upwards of two (2) months rather than the normal one (1) month due to high volume.
- Residence permit holders who cannot enter Denmark within the first 6 months of their residence permit's validity due to coronavirus measures can apply for dispensation from their residence permit lapsing.
- Residence permit or short-stay visa holders whose status has expired but cannot leave Denmark on time due to coronavirus measures will not be penalised for late departure.

- International House in Copenhagen will issue CPR numbers for Copenhagen-based assignees on the basis of an application form and the applicant's power of attorney and will send health cards directly to assignees' homes. In-country biometrics recording will not be possible, but work permit applications will still be processed.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **ECUADOR**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Ecuador does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The MFA has implemented an appointment system for residence visa renewals and other services.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The expiration dates of visas and the maximum stay abroad for temporary and permanent residents are suspended. Once the health emergency is declared over, foreign nationals will have thirty days to proceed with immigration regularization to avoid paying any fine.

### **Additional Notes**

- For foreign emergency residents of Ecuador who are unable to return to Ecuador during the period, their maximum time to remain abroad will not be affected.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **EGYPT**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*



## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Egypt does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration and work permit authorities have resumed services.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Visitors who remain in Egypt beyond the duration of their tourist visa have up to 14 extra days to attend the Passports, Emigration and Nationality Administration to renew their status, after which time they will have to pay an overstay fine, unless this is waived on a case-by-case basis.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **FINLAND**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Finland does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Finnish government has again started to grant first residence permits for applications submitted from abroad that become valid on the day the application is decided. However, for the time being, consulates cannot hand over residence permit cards as usual.

### Permit and Visa Details

- The deadline for residence permit applicants to prove their identity at a Finnish consulate or service point has been extended until 31 December 2021. Normally, it is necessary to visit a service point or Finnish mission within three months of application submission.
- Effective until 31 December 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service may grant residence permit extensions even if the applicant’s income is lower than required for up to six months, due to coronavirus.
  - If a coronavirus exception is made to the income requirement, the residence permit will only be extended for up to one year, rather than up to four years as usual.
  - For work-based residence permit extensions where the income has decreased temporarily due to coronavirus, the income requirement is exceptionally considered to be met at the gross amount of labour market subsidy, that is, EUR 724 per month.

- An exception to the income requirement for permits for family members requires that the income that secured the means of support of the family has decreased temporarily, due to coronavirus.
- An exception can be made to the sufficient progress requirement for extensions of residence permits for studies, if studies did not progress as planned due to coronavirus.
- The police may extend the validity of a visa in the event that flight cancellations, for example, prevent the visa holder from leaving Finland before their visa expires.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **FRANCE**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – France does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- All in-country authorities are open.
- The Paris Prefecture of Police has launched a web portal to enable foreign nationals to apply for postal delivery of their residence permits that were supposed to be delivered during lockdown.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- [Online submission](#) is available for certain residence permit applications.
- Holders of short-stay visas which are going to expire who cannot return to their country of origin can, in case of justified urgency, receive a provisional residence permit. They are invited to make contact with the prefecture in the area of residence to extend their short-stay visa or receive a provisional residence permit.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **GERMANY**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Germany. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices in several cities have reopened with limited services (mainly for emergencies only) and on an appointment basis.
- Services at the alien offices in Berlin are unavailable without an appointment. Immigration offices in other cities are closed or offering only limited or emergency services.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Holders of expired Schengen visas in Germany who are unable to return home are no longer permitted to stay in Germany without being required to obtain a residence permit.
- Foreign residents living in Berlin will not be penalized for the expiry of temporary residence documents while alien office services are restricted. However, exiting and re-entering Germany is only possible with a valid residence document.
- Foreign residents may have their permits extended by submitting an extension application (online or by fax) before the validity expires. They should obtain a confirmation letter or other proof of submission, which however would not grant re-entry into Germany.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **GHANA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Ghana does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The immigration authorities are back to work. All new and renewal applications can be submitted. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is closed and legalisations cannot be processed.
- Ghana Immigration Services is open to all applicants for extensions and new work permits.

### **Additional Notes**

- The requirement to undergo a medical examination at the Ghana Immigration Service clinic has been extended to all applicants for indefinite residence permits, right of abode, naturalization and the renewal of all immigration residence permits.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **GREECE**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Not applicable – Greece does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- The Directorate of Migration has now started accepting both initial and renewal permit applications with a pre-booked appointment.
- The Ministry of Migration is largely closed to the public until further notice. Available services include handover of issued permits with a pre-booked appointment; submission (via courier) of additional documents for incomplete files submitted before COVID-19 closure; and application (via courier) of application for change of status (i.e. passport, address etc.). Initial and renewal permit applications are not yet available. Permits that are due to expire are treated separately with an extended application date. Services at the tax and social security authorities, the EU registration authorities and municipality offices are not available without an appointment, and appointments are only available for urgent requests.
- Foreign nationals can sign authorisations and private declarations online rather than in person via a new web portal (in Greek only – please contact us for English language user manual).

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- The Ministry of Migration reminds residence permit holders not to exceed the allowed period outside Greece, as permit renewals require at least 6 months spent in Greece.
- The validity of residence permits or blue receipts that expired or will expire between 1 January 2020 and 30 December 2021 are automatically extended until 31 December 2021.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **GUATEMALA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Not applicable – Guatemala does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- The Central Immigration Offices has resumed certain services:

- Residency notification;
- Temporary and permanent residence registration;
- Application of single-entry and multiple-entry visas;
- Visa transfer;
- Data modification;
- Annual fees for foreign nationals;
- Update of information/data;
- Issuance of certificates.
- The Ministry of Labour has resumed its activities in every office.
- The Work Permit for Foreign nationals Office is open Monday to Friday for notifications and for corrections of previous notification; and Thursday and Friday only for submission of new work permit applications, extensions, cancellation and withdrawals.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The expiration term for foreign nationals who entered Guatemala and cannot leave due to border closure is suspended until the end of the state of emergency.
- Permanent residents outside the country for longer than a year are permitted to re-enter Guatemala without losing their immigration status, provided they left Guatemala during the state of emergency.

#### **Additional Notes**

- All foreign documents valid from 5 March and duly apostilled can be submitted in support of applications or processes to the Foreign Operations Office.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **GUYANA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

#### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Guyana does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **HONDURAS**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

#### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Honduras does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The immigration office is open with a restricted schedule. Pre-booked appointments are mandatory. Most online services are available.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Holders of permits and visas that expire while immigration offices are closed, and their employers, are exempt from penalties.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **HONG KONG (SAR)**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open with staff working from home
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Hong Kong does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Immigration Department has resumed normal services, but many officers are working from home.
  - The Employment and Dependant Visa has resumed normal services. Processing timeline may continue to be impacted for some time despite resumption of normal services.
  - Employment and Dependant Visa extension applications can only be submitted within one month of visa expiry date under the General Employment Policy (GEP) and under the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talent & Professionals (ASMTP).

### Permit and Visa Details

- Applicants who are not able to return to Hong Kong due to the COVID-19 pandemic and whose period of stay is due to expire within 4 weeks, or which expired less than 12 months previously, are permitted to submit an application for extension of stay along with a letter explaining why they are unable to return to Hong Kong.
  - Normally, applications for extension of stay must be submitted in person from within Hong Kong, supported by an original passport.
- Extension (renewal) applications can currently be submitted maximum one month prior to visa expiry date. Approval notification will be sent approximately within 2 to 4 weeks of application filing date.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **HUNGARY**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Hungary. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices are open. An appointment is always required and application documents must be submitted online in advance of the appointment.
- Consular application submission and processing are suspended.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Driving licences and other official documents that are due to expire during the current state of emergency are automatically extended until 60 days after the end of the state of emergency.
  - This includes documents whose validity was extended during the previous state of emergency.
- Residence permits that expire during the state of emergency are extended until 30 days after the end of the state of emergency.
- Residence permits and EU registration cards can be extended via a streamlined online process that reduces personal contact – this is recommended.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **ICELAND**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Iceland. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Directorate of Labour has resumed the expedited processing of applications for work permits.
- The front desk of the Directorate of Immigration is only open to those who have a pre-booked appointment.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **INDIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours and temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter India. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Foreign nationals are not permitted to visit the Foreign nationals Regional Registration Office (FRRO) or Foreign nationals Registration Office (FRO) without a prior appointment until further notice.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Electronic Visa processing has resumed for [certain nationalities](#) for all categories except e-tourist visas.
- Consulates have begun to process non-tourist visa applications again. Processing delays should be anticipated, however.
- Regular visa or e-visa or stay stipulation of period of foreign nationals stranded in India due to COVID-19 may be considered as deemed to be valid till 30 September 2021 on gratis basis without levy of any overstay penalty. Such foreign nationals may not be required to submit any application to FRRO/FRO concerned for extension of their visas. Before exiting the country, they may apply for any exit permission, which would be granted by the FRRO/FRO concerned on gratis basis without levy of any overstay penalty.
- The validity of OCI card of foreign nationals presently in India shall remain.
- The deadline for Person of Indian Origin (PIO) cardholders to convert their PIO cards to Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cards has been extended until 31 December 2021. If any deadline has been notified by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) invalidating PIO cards, PIO cardholders may have to obtain valid visas from Indian consulates.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **INDONESIA**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours and temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- 1. Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Holders of the following visas/permits are eligible to enter Indonesia – Service visa; Diplomatic visa; Visit visa (awaiting confirmation if all types of visit visa are open now or only the Single Entry Business Visa (which previously was the case)); Limited stay visa; Service stay permit; Diplomatic stay Permit; Limited Stay Permit (ITAS) – this includes all types of ITAS, including working ITAS, Spouse ITAS, Investor ITAS and Retirement ITAS; Permanent Residence Permit (ITAP); and APEC card holders. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.



## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- New work permit applications by Foreign Investment Companies (PT PMA) which are not related with National Strategic Projects, can be approved by the Ministry of Manpower as long as there is a recommendation letter from the Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM).

### Permit and Visa Details

- Visa exemptions and visa-on-arrival issuance remains suspended.
- All foreign nationals who are currently outside Indonesia and are holders of a limited stay permit (ITAS) which needs to be extended, must cancel their permit and reapply for a new permit.
- Effective 16 July 2021, renewals will resume for *offshore* Limited Stay Permit (ITAS) Although no official date has been announced, renewals are anticipated to resume for *offshore* Limited Stay Permit (ITAS) or Permanent Stay Permit (ITAP) holders shortly. Previously, ITAS/ITAP holders who were outside of Indonesia when their permit expired were unable to file renewal applications as they were required to appear in-person for the filing. However, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights will now allow these applications to proceed with the following requirements:
  - The sponsor submits a copy of the foreign national's passport alongside the standard extension requirements.
  - Upon entry into Indonesia, the sponsor will report the foreign national's presence to the local immigration office in 30 days.
  - Until an official implementation date is announced, the previous regulations will still apply: Holders of an ITAS/ITAP who are currently residing outside Indonesia and whose permits have expired will need to apply for a new ITAS/ITAP. In case for ITAP holders the Re-entry Permit (MERP) has expired, this will also result in the expiration of the ITAP.
- Holders of a limited stay permit (ITAS) or permanent stay permit (ITAP) and who have received an emergency permit, can apply for an extension of their ITAS/ITAP. In case the ITAS cannot be extended, foreign nationals can apply for a new ITAS. Since the visa approval is in the form of an eVisa, they are not required to leave Indonesia.
- All applications for extension of Long-Term Work Permit (RPTKA and Notification) can be submitted to the Ministry of Manpower.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **IRAQ**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Iraq does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Ministry of Interior (MOI) is now processing multiple entry/exit visa (MEEV) renewal and exit visa applications.
  - For MEEV renewal, the MOI now requests a COVID-19 test in addition to an HIV test.
  - For exit visa, the MOI requests a valid flight ticket in addition to a valid visa for the destination country.
- The MOI continues to issue new letters of approval (LOAs).
- The MOI at ALASAD air base is issuing multiple entry visas (MEVs) for arrivals with valid LOAs.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Foreign nationals in Iraq must regularize their visa status as quickly as possible or face penalties for non-compliance. Although the Iraqi authorities were previously not issuing monetary fines or other penalties for foreign visa holders who overstayed their visa validity due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, this leniency will soon be phased out. As such, foreign visa holders with expired visas should seek to renew their visas or make plans to depart the country.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **IRELAND**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours and temporarily closed
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Ireland. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Registration Office in Burgh Quay, Dublin is open to the public.
  - Customers with appointments for first time registrations are being contacted directly by the Immigration Service to reschedule their appointment as soon as possible.
  - All other applicants who wish to register their permission for the first time in the Dublin metropolitan region can make an appointment online at <https://burghquayregistrationoffice.inis.gov.ie/>.
  - Renewals in the Dublin area are processed online at <https://inisonline.jahs.ie>.
  - Registrations outside of the Dublin area are processed by the Garda National Immigration Bureau through the Garda Station network.
- Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) has temporarily stopped accepting visa applications. Online applications are available as usual, but applications will not be processed, apart from emergency visas for essential workers, and visas for immediate family members of Irish citizens, legal residents and EU citizens. Any application made online will remain valid until restrictions are lifted.

- The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment ('DETE') are still accepting and processing employment permit applications and related applications (Stamp 4, Trusted Partner and Reviews) and are issuing permits electronically, once granted.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Effective 13 September 2021, Short-Stay Entry Visa processing will resume. This marks the end to all restrictions on entry visa and preclearance processing.
- EU Treaty Rights and Domestic Residence applications can be filed with the Department of Justice via email until 1 October 2021.
- Current valid permissions to reside in Ireland which are due to expire between 21 April 2021 and 20 September 2021 are automatically renewed until 20 September 2021.
  - Any permission that was renewed by previous notices (including the latest extension up to 20 April 2021) is automatically renewed by this notice.
  - The renewal of permission is on the same basis as the existing permission and the same conditions attach.
  - Holders of a valid permission should ensure they renew their registration in the normal way as soon as possible, and by the extension deadline.
  - A new IRP or permission letter will not be issued for this automatic renewal.
  - This renewal of permission also applies to:
    - Persons granted permission to land at a port of entry on condition they register at Burgh Quay or their local AGS registration office within 3 months but have yet to do so.
    - Persons in the country on a short-stay visa who have been granted permission to remain for less than three months who may be unable to leave Ireland and return home due to uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - The periods of automatic renewal of permission count as reckonable residence for citizenship purposes only in circumstances where the person in question already held a nature of permission that counted as reckonable residence.
  - The renewal of permission also applies to students, non-EEA nationals on visitor status who have applied for a Stamp 0 status.
  - Employees can present their previous Irish Residence Permit (IRP) Card and a copy of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) notice to their employers to show that they can continue to work.
- Customers renewing their Immigration Registration Permission will no longer need to submit their original passport to have an immigration stamp attached by their Registration Office.
  - From now on, immigration stamps will no longer be attached to passports, and the Irish Residence Permit (IRP) will prove that the applicant is legally registered in Ireland.
  - This applies to renewals made in the Burgh Quay Registration Office in Dublin and renewals made in local Registration Offices at Garda Stations nationwide.
  - In Dublin, applicants have to upload scanned copies of their passport personal information page to the online system.
  - Elsewhere, applicants still need to present their passport as proof of identity but do not need to leave their passport at the registration office.
- Processing times for Irish Residence permits in Dublin have decreased to about 2-4 weeks. There may still be further delays in returning documents by post.
- The [online Registration Renewal System](#) for immigration registration has been extended to all Dublin-based non-EEA nationals seeking to *renew* their immigration registration, who have less than 30 days left on their permission.

- The renewal registration process involves completing an online form, uploading supporting documents, paying a fee and then submitting the passport and current IRP Card via registered post to ISD Burgh Quay. No attendance at Burgh Quay is required.
- Visa-required nationals, currently outside Ireland, with an expired IRP card are required to apply for an entry visa through their local consulate / VFS Global office.
- Those residing in Ireland on a Stamp 2 (student permission) who wish to avail of their Stamp 1G under the Third Level Graduate Programme, can now apply by emailing the registration office at Burgh Quay.
- Expired employment permits do not need to be sent back to DETE within four weeks of expiry during the COVID-19 emergency period.
- During the pandemic, in-person citizenship applications are suspended and instead, applicants must sign an affidavit declaring loyalty to the state. eTax clearance and eVetting are also to be introduced for citizenship applicants.

### Additional Notes

- DETE have confirmed that non-EEA nationals can work remotely but a notification to the DETE is required.
- DETE will allow employees to change their start date with their new employment, if they cannot take up the job as a result of COVID-19.
- During the emergency period, employees who withdraw their application because of the emergency will receive a full refund of their application fee.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## ISRAEL

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Israel. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Processing time for urgent visas for critical machine repair and installation is currently 2-3 weeks. An application to the relevant government department and approval by the Ministry of Health are required (in addition to applications for a work permit and a visa). The company is required to report on the location of the housing of the foreign national. The foreign national must report a body temperature over 38° Celsius (equal to 100.4° Fahrenheit) or any other known coronavirus symptoms which existed before the flight to Israel, during the stay in Israel and 14 days after departure.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The Ministry of Interior announced that the entry permit and B-1 work visa process will revert to the pre-pandemic process. As such, foreign employees traveling to Israel for the first time will be required to process their entry permit and B-1 work visa applications at an Israeli Consulate in their home country.
- The Work Permit Unit is now issuing initial and renewal Work Permits on a limited basis.

- Delays in obtaining Entry Permits for Employees and Dependents travelling to Israel have been newly reported.
- Where a foreign worker changes employer, it will be necessary to apply for a work permit under the normal procedures, with an application to transfer the employee to the new employer.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **ITALY**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Not applicable – Italy does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Public offices throughout Italy are partially open but services are limited. Employers and assignees in Italy should be prepared for delays in the processing of immigration and work authorisation applications.
- Certain regional immigration offices may allow for applications to be submitted and work permits approved by email. Original documents will be required at immigration office appointment, however.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Deadlines for residence permit application and issuance are suspended for 30 days. Normally, initial residence permit applications must be submitted within 8 working days of arrival in Italy and renewal applications within 60 days of permit expiry.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **JAPAN**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Fully open or partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Not applicable – Japan does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Immigration Bureau is accepting applications for Certificate of Eligibility (CoE) for medium to long-term stays, and other applications such as extension or change of status.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Visa extensions or change of status applications are available for many foreign visa holders who are unable to return to their home country due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. If changing status, the foreign national will transition to a Designated Activities visa that may not permit work activities – please reach out to Newland Chase for a case-specific assessment.
- Effective 21 January 2021, the validity of visas already issued under the Business Track and the Residence Track and visas issued based on “new measures for border enforcement” are suspended.
- Certificate of eligibility which were issued between 1 January 2021 and 31 July 2021 will be valid until 31 January 2022.
- Certificate of eligibility which were issued between 1 August 2021 and 31 January 2022 will be valid for 6 months from the date of issue.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **KAZAKHSTAN**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays and temporary pauses.
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Kazakhstan does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Permit and Visa Details

- Visa-waiver regime for 57 countries has been suspended until at least 31 December 2021.
- Kazakh authorities have suspended issuance of certain visa and work permit documentation (including entrance permits and letters of invitation); however, if the sponsoring company has state-related projects, the authorities may process document requests on a case-by-case basis. Requests for documentation can be submitted to the Interagency Committee for consideration.
- Work Visa (C3) holders will be able to extend the visa prior to the work permit extension being granted. Traditionally, the work permit extension must first be obtained.
- Online work permit application systems have been implemented (<http://egov.kz/cms/kk> and <http://elicense.kz/>). These are expected to continue after COVID-related restrictions are lifted.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **KENYA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Not applicable – Kenya does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Online applications to renew Visitors' and Resident Permits/Passes that expire during COVID-19 related restrictions can be submitted [here](#).
- In-country immigration services have resumed, but there is a significant backlog of cases. Follow-ups in person are not possible. Permit and pass processing is now taking 1-2 months, compared to 2 weeks before the pandemic. Applications are to be submitted on Mondays at 7:30am only, and working hours are reduced (9am to 1pm).

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Foreign nationals with an expired Residence Permit and without a renewal application in process will be required to exit Kenya or risk facing overstay penalties.
- Visa and work permit endorsement can be completed for those who need to travel out of Kenya.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **KUWAIT**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Significant delays or temporarily paused
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Not applicable – Kuwait does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Immigration offices are closed until further notice or working at very limited capacity. The authorities have temporarily stopped issuing visas and first-time work permits.

#### **Additional Notes**

- Starting 1 December 2020, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) daily rates for fines will apply to any residence violators.
- Work authorization holders are allowed to exit Kuwait and work remotely from their home country as long as they do not exceed the maximum allowed stay outside of Kuwait (currently 12 months).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **LAOS**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Laos. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Immigration Department has reopened, but operating with limited capacity.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The government will extend visas in country and suspend overstay penalties if visas expire due to COVID-19 restrictions.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **MACAU (SAR)**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Normal processing, but new visa application processing is temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Macau does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices are open for services to foreign nationals already in the country.
- All individuals entering a government building (even those accompanying applicants) must hold a Personal Health Declaration from the Macau Health Bureau. Obtained online, the declaration is valid for one day.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- New visa application acceptance is temporarily suspended.



## **MALAYSIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Malaysia. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Effective 2 August 2021, MYXpats & Immigration Putrajaya will resume counter operations via appointment only. The immigration counter has increased the number of appointments available and companies can reschedule existing appointments if earlier slots are available. No walk-ins will be allowed.
- Effective 21 July 2021, the eXpats Service Centre will resume limited counter services, including services for the Immigration Unit. The following controls will be in place, however:
  - This update applies to MSC/ICT status companies applying for Employment Passes, Dependent Passes, and/or Long-Term Social Visit Passes via the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) only.
  - Only urgent cases with confirmed appointments will be accepted (e.g. urgent/emergency cases, prolonged overstays, etc.). Companies can make appointments by emails [expatctr@mdec.com.my](mailto:expatctr@mdec.com.my).
  - Walk-ins will not be accepted. All counter transactions will be based on confirmed appointments made via the MyHelp Online Appointment system. Manual appointments approved by MYXpats Centre beforehand have been forfeited with immediate effect and strictly no walk-ins.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Effective 2 August-31 December 2021, holders of Employment Passes (EPs), Dependant Passes (DPs) and Long-term Social Visit Passes (LTSVPs) that have expired during the Movement Control Order (MCO) will no longer need to apply for a Special Pass before endorsement of any new or renewal of Passes. In other words, endorsements for any new or renewals of EPs, DPs and LTSVPs can now be done immediately without the need to apply for a Special Pass.
- Company representatives and Residence Pass - Talent (RP-T) holders are required to apply for MyHelp Online Appointment before proceeding with any passport/ payment submissions and endorsement processes at both the Expatriate Services Division (ESD) in Putrajaya and MYXpats Centre in Mutiara Damansara.

## **MALTA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Malta does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Identity Malta has started to accept new single permit applications.
  - Applicants should submit a single permit application online via <https://singlepermit.gov.mt/>, once the employer has registered on [singlepermit.ima@gov.mt](mailto:singlepermit.ima@gov.mt) and s/he has initiated the application process. Employers encountering difficulties using the online single permit platform should send an email to [singlepermit.ima@gov.mt](mailto:singlepermit.ima@gov.mt). The online platform also accepts renewals as well as change in employment applications.
  - Pending applications which were put on hold will be reassessed in the light of the current labour market situation and requirements.
  - Identity Malta will issue new letters of approval in principal with extended dates to successful single permit applicants who are still abroad and whose letter of approval in principle has expired.
  - Applicants who were notified to proceed to Malta and were granted a visa from a Maltese consulate, which has now expired, will need to submit a new visa application once service has resumed at the relevant Maltese consulate. Such applications may be granted if it is possible to travel to Malta again, the employer declares that they still wish to engage the applicant and there are no new restrictions imposed by the Health Authorities which may impede travel to Malta.
  - Family members and other third-country nationals holding a temporary residence permit which has recently expired, who originate in safe corridor countries, can apply for a new visa, and should send an email to the Central VISA Unit on [cvu.ima@gov.mt](mailto:cvu.ima@gov.mt) in order to seek their authorisation.
- Identity Malta Agency is only accepting new single permit applications for highly skilled workers (Key Employee Initiative) and workers in the health sector and social care for the elderly and the disabled. New applications for highly skilled workers and medical professionals, as well as renewals and change in employment should be submitted to <https://singlepermit.gov.mt/>, after the employer sends a registration email to [onlinesinglepermit.ima@gov.mt](mailto:onlinesinglepermit.ima@gov.mt).
- Interviews of couples confirming whether the foreign spouse enjoys freedom of movement rights, are temporarily suspended.
- The Central Visa Unit will be open to the public from 08:00am to 11:00am and customers will be seen by appointment only. Appointments can be booked by sending an email to [visa.ima@gov.mt](mailto:visa.ima@gov.mt).

### Permit and Visa Details

- Effective 1 September 2021, a new online system will be in place for applications for exceptional travel authorisations from dark red countries/zones. From this date, this new online system will replace the requests previously received through the email [covid19.vetting@gov.mt](mailto:covid19.vetting@gov.mt). Requests received via email prior to 1 September 2021 will still be processed per the previous procedure.
- Processing of residence cards is suspended for UK nationals in the context of Brexit. UK nationals with a residence card appointment should still attend. Residence cards that have already been issued to UK nationals remain valid until a new residence card is issued.

- EU, EEA and Swiss nationals, as well as their family members, who have either been in Malta for (3) three months and have not yet registered their residence or whose residence document has expired, should send an email to [eu.ima@gov.mt](mailto:eu.ima@gov.mt). Applicants will receive a confirmation email as proof of their registration.
- Those who do not intend to apply for a visa or residence permit to extend their stays in Malta are to leave the territory immediately upon the expiry of their authorisation to stay.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **MEXICO**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open and mostly fully staffed
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays.
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Mexico does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Mexican authorities have implemented new programs to address application processing delays and most delays are currently being seen in obtaining a presentation appointment.
- All offices of the National Institute of Migration (INM) are currently open, have most of the staff working, and some offices have extended the working hours. Pre-booked appointments are required to submit applications.
- The following authorities have resumed services, although reduced staff/hours and delays should be expected:
  - Civil Registry – federal branches have resumed vital document issuance, but local offices may be limited to pre-booked appointments.
  - Federal Police – Police Clearance Certificates (PCC) can be requested online and picked up in person via pre-booked appointment (currently booked out 1-2 weeks). Applicant must attend in-person and the PCC will be issued same-day.
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs – document legalisation and passport services (limited) have resumed. Naturalisation applications remain temporarily paused.
  - Ministry of Interior – apostille services are available again, but can only be obtained on certain days of the week and delays should be expected.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Based on guidance from the Ministry of Health, the INM has suspended all deadlines for immigration processes for foreign nationals with temporary or permanent residence status.
- Foreign residents of Mexico who hold an exit/re-entry permit, but are stuck outside of Mexico due to COVID-19 travel restrictions while their exit/re-entry permit expires may be granted an extension. Please reach out to Newland Chase for a case-specific assessment.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **MOZAMBIQUE**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Mozambique. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Immigration offices are not officially closed but have significantly reduced staff.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Work Permits are being issued although the Labour Department is still working on rotation so delays should be expected.
- The issuance of official documents (e.g. visas and travel documents, vehicle registrations, drivers' licenses, and marriage certificates) is suspended until further notice.
- Counting has been suspended for the length of stay of foreign non-resident technical experts providing services to government projects, to avoid the establishment of residence for tax purposes.
- All DIRE (residence permits) and temporary visas, drivers' licenses, identity cards, and car vehicle import clearances are automatically extended until 30 June.
- In relation to foreign citizens holding Residence Permits who are out of the country, they will be allowed to renew their DIRE when they return, provided that they prove that they were unable to return to the country before the documents expired, due to the restrictions resulting from COVID-19.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **MYANMAR**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced/staff hours, only processing urgent applications
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Myanmar. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Immigration offices are only processing urgent initial and renewal applications.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **NEPAL**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Nepal does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Effective 20 May 2021, the Department of Immigration (DoI) has suspended all visa services except for the following:
  - Departure facilities for foreign nationals stranded in Nepal;
  - Deportation of foreign nationals detained at DoI and those handed over from jail or other authorities;
  - Minors possessing a foreign passport and departing during this period;
  - Other emergency services.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Visas of foreign nationals departing within the shutdown period will be regulated from the Immigration Office TIA at the time of arrival.
- Foreign nationals willing to prolong their stay in Nepal can regulate their visa amicably once services resume.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **THE NETHERLANDS**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter the Netherlands. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Dutch consular representations are gradually reopening abroad, and long-term entry visas (MVV) are being processed and approved at a growing number of locations.
- Appointments at the IND desk continue as usual.
- The Dutch government will be more lenient in controlling people whose residence document has expired if they cannot extend it or leave the Netherlands on time.

## Permit and Visa Details

- Non-EU/EEA/Swiss nationals staying in the Netherlands as a family member of an EU/EEA/Swiss citizen are temporarily unable to submit an application at the IND for verification against EU law. However, these individuals can continue to live in the Netherlands if they meet the necessary conditions and regardless of whether they have a residence sticker in their passport (full list of conditions found [here](#)).
- Until further notice, the Dutch Immigration Services (IND) is only allowing appointments for collection of first regular residence document. The IND will contact the applicant to schedule an appointment. Applicants who have received a positive decision on a first residence permit and entered Netherlands without a temporary residence permit (MVV) should call the IND to schedule an appointment to provide biometrics.
- While it is possible to apply to the IND for a temporary residence permit (MVV), and the application may be approved, MVVs will not be issued and cannot be collected (except in urgent cases for employees, researchers or highly-skilled workers in [essential professions or vital processes](#)). MVVs can be collected within 3 months of issuance.
- Foreign nationals with a short-stay visa which has expired or will expire within one month but cannot leave (flight cancelled, cannot book new flight, tested positive for COVID-19) can apply for an extension if they still meet the conditions for a short-stay visa.
  - This visa extension is only valid within the Netherlands.
- Foreign nationals whose regular provisional residence permit (MVV) has been approved but are currently in the Netherlands and cannot travel to their country of origin to collect the MVV due to coronavirus do not have to collect the MVV if they meet all the following 4 conditions.
  1. They were in their country of origin or country of continuous residence when they or their sponsor applied for an MVV. (Continuous residence means that they can lawfully reside in that country for more than 3 months. They have a valid residence permit there or are waiting for a decision on their application for a residence permit.); OR they travelled to the Netherlands on or after 15 June 2020 and before 23 January 2021, and applied for an MVV in Netherlands while they had legal residence there.
  2. They travelled to the Netherlands with a short-stay visa. Or, if they did not need a visa, in the permit-exempt term;
  3. They could not return to their country of origin or continuous residence before 15 June 2020 due to travel restrictions.
  4. The IND approved their MVV application when they were already in the Netherlands.
- The Dutch government will be more lenient in controlling people who have overstayed their visa-exempt term of 90 days out of 180 days if they cannot leave the Netherlands on time but are trying to leave.
- Holders of issued MVVs which have expired and who could not travel to the Netherlands in time can apply to the consulate once it reopens for reissuance of their MVVs.
- Foreign nationals in the Netherlands who have received a positive residence permit decision (via a letter to their sponsor) but who have not yet received a residence sticker, have the rights associated with their residence permit (including the right to work if applicable).
- The IND has arranged for some residence documents to be delivered at home, so clients need to travel less.

## **Additional Notes**

- Employers must report to the IND if their employees cannot come to the Netherlands due to measures against coronavirus.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **NEW ZEALAND**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status**: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing**: Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry**: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter New Zealand. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- Immigration authorities are beginning to reopen offices. Offshore offices of Immigration New Zealand are closed until further notice, however.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Effective 21 September 2021, Auckland and Upper Hauraki have moved to Alert Level 3 as planned.
- Working holiday visas that are expiring between 21 June 2021 and 31 December 2021 are being extended for a further six months.
  - Visa holders must be in New Zealand on 14 June 2021 to qualify.
  - The conditions of extended Working Holiday visas remain varied to allow holders to work as part of a Working Holiday Scheme in any employment except permanent employment.
  - Immigration New Zealand will contact visa holders by 25 June 2021 confirming their extension.
  - Working Holiday visa holders can use the confirmation email from Immigration New Zealand as proof of their right to work when engaging with prospective employers.
  - If you do not hear from Immigration New Zealand by 25 June and believe you are eligible for an extension you can request an extension check.
- Supplementary Seasonal Employer (SSE) work visas expiring between 30 June 2021 and 31 December 2021 are being extended for six months.
  - Visa holders must be in New Zealand on 14 June 2021 to qualify.
  - From 14 June 2021 SSE visa holders will have open work rights allowing them to work in any sector.
  - Immigration New Zealand will contact visa holders by 25 June 2021 confirming their extension.
  - If you do not hear from Immigration New Zealand by 25 June and believe you are eligible for an extension you can request an extension check.
- Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) visa holders who came to New Zealand through the border exception can apply for a new visa and will be able to stay beyond the normal maximum period.
- INZ has introduced a new online form for those who have not yet received a visa extension notification from INZ, but think they are eligible.
  - This form allows visa holders to request that INZ review their visa status and check whether they are eligible for an automatic visa extension. INZ will then aim to confirm visa duration and eligibility for the visa extension within 10 days of the request being submitted.
- Visitor visas have been automatically extended by two months from date of expiry for those who are in New Zealand on 19 February and with visas due to expire between 19 February and 31 March inclusive.
  - There is no application fee and no application needs to be submitted.
  - The extension does not apply to COVID-19 short-term visitor visas.

- Although the new expiry dates are not yet visible on visas, the extension is valid. Visa holders who are eligible for the extension are not considered unlawful, even if an automatic extension notification has not yet been issued. New expiry dates will be available on the Visa Verification Service after 5 March.
- Visitor visa holders who wish to remain in New Zealand for longer, you will need to apply for another visa before your visa expires.
- The rule where visitor visa holders can only be in New Zealand for nine months out of an 18-month period has been waived temporarily. This applies to people in New Zealand who apply for visitor visas before the end of June. If all other requirements for a visitor visa are met, applicants will be eligible for a visitor visa of up to six months.
- The following categories of work visas will be automatically extended by 6 months if they are due to expire between January 2021 and 30 June 2021:
  - Essential skills work visa; work to residence visa; special and skilled work visas for China, Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea and Vietnam; employer-specific work visas granted under section 61 of the Immigration Act 2009; fishing crew visa; religious worker visa; Silver Fern practical experience visa.
  - Partners and dependent children of eligible work visa holders will also have their visas extended.
  - Impacted individuals will be contacted by INZ in March 2021, confirming their visa extension. Visa extensions may also be confirmed by checking the Visa Verification Service, from March 2021.
- A new short-term visitor visa is introduced with the purpose of granting more time for migrants stuck in New Zealand to arrange their travel home.
  - Successful applicants will be granted a two-month visitor visa.
  - Applicants must show they have a current valid passport, proof they meet character requirements, a genuine reason for staying in New Zealand and genuine reason they cannot leave New Zealand but will at the end of their stay.
  - Applicants do not need to show they have enough money, existing travel arrangements, good health or whether they have met any previous time limits for their stay in New Zealand on a visitor visa.
- The duration of low-paid essential skills work visas will be reduced from 12 months to six months. This applies to any application received by INZ from 10 July 2020 and will be in place for at least the next 18 months.
- Lower skilled temporary healthcare workers that are currently in New Zealand will be able to work in New Zealand for an additional 12 months before they are subject to the stand down period. This will allow those who have worked in NZ for three years already, an additional 12 months before they are subject to a stand down period where they must leave New Zealand. This extension will also apply to partners and dependents of affected workers.
- For work visa holders who cannot enter or return to New Zealand, their visa will remain valid until the travel restrictions are lifted, unless the job is no longer available.
- For skilled migrant and residence for work visa applications, first priority is given to applicants who earn more than \$106,080 per year; or who hold current occupational registration (where required). Prioritised applications are being allocated to a case officer within two weeks of entering the queue. Other applications are put in a low-priority queue – processing of these cases is currently beginning about six months after submission, and applicants in New Zealand may need to renew their temporary entry visas.
- For temporary entry visas, first priority is given to applications for critical work to support the COVID-19 response, applications with an urgent humanitarian need, applications to travel under the APEC travel programme, diplomatic visas and all other applications where the applicant is already in NZ.



## Additional Notes

- Beginning in early November, the penalties for non-compliance with COVID-19 regulations will significantly increase as follows (monetary fines listed in NZD):
  - The penalty for failing to comply with a COVID-19 requirement that has been specified as an infringement offence will increase to a maximum infringement fee of \$4,000 (previously \$300) or a \$12,000 maximum court imposed fine, up from \$1,000. Examples of infringement offences include failure to wear a face covering in places where it is mandatory.
  - A person who intentionally fails to comply with a COVID-19 order, thereby committing a criminal offence, is now liable on conviction for a fine of up to \$12,000, up from \$4,000, or six months imprisonment.
  - That could include offences such as a person travelling without permission, or travelling for a purpose other than what was permitted, from an Alert Level 4 or 3 area to Alert Level 2.
  - A maximum infringement fee of \$12,000 or maximum criminal offence fine of \$15,000 has also been introduced for body corporates who fail to have systems and processes in place in accordance with the Health Order.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **NORWAY**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Norway. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Authorities have resumed processing immigration applications.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The following foreign nationals are permitted to begin or continue their work activities:
  - Foreign nationals in Norway who have not yet activated their work permit, but have a scheduled appointment to do so with the Norwegian police.
  - Foreign nationals in Norway who have registered work permit renewal or permanent residence permit applications and who have paid their fee before expiration of their current status, but who are unable to complete their in-person appointment with the Norwegian police. However, these individuals must make all efforts to secure an appointment as soon as it is possible.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **PANAMA**

For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Not applicable – Panama does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- The Labour Immigration Department has resumed operations:
  - Lawyers can submit consultations and affiliations, conduct marriage interviews and obtain the issuance of previously paid-for work permit cards from already notified work permit decisions, and carry out online notifications, payments, issuance of digital work permit cards and reconsideration motions;
  - The public is served only by appointment.
  - From 15 July, all processes for new work permit applications and renewals must be carried out via the “Panama Digital” platform.
- For an in-person process, an appointment should be requested through the Ministry of Labour website.
- The National Immigration Department will continue in-person services for lawyers and the public.
- The Notifications Department of the National Immigration Authority will allow lawyers to receive notice on their ongoing immigration processes provided they show (i) a copy of the relevant temporary ID card, and (ii) a copy of the relevant passport pages (data page, registration stamp, last entry stamp and multiple entry visa), therefore, it is not required that they submit originals of either the temporary ID or passport.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- Effective immediately and during the State of National Emergency, the pre-registration and submission of the application for a residence permit as an employee of a multinational company (SEM Visa) are now authorized prior to the arrival of the executive and their dependents in Panama.
  - Once the application is pre-registered, all fees paid and the application submitted, the executive and their dependents are considered residents and are thus permitted to enter Panama.
  - Once the executive enters Panama, they have a period of 45 days to complete the application.
- Panamanian authorities have allowed the automatic extension of residence permits (temporary ID-cards, provisional ID-cards, non-resident visas, judicial stay ID-cards and “Crisol de Razas” ID-cards) to expire as of 30 June 2021. As such, individuals holding these permits who have not filed a renewal application will be subject to overstay penalties.
- Permanent residents who are outside Panama can now remain outside Panama until 30 June 2021 without this affecting their residence status.

### **Additional Notes**

- Effective 1 October 2021, the legal term of stay for tourists in Panama (3 months for visa-waiver nationals, 1 month for visa-required nationals) will be re-established.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Not applicable – Papua New Guinea does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### **Immigration Authority and Application Processing**

- The Labour Department and Immigration and Citizenship Authority (ICA) are open, but with limited capacity and staffing. Communication must be done through email and phone.

#### **Permit and Visa Details**

- For foreign nationals who are unable to travel out of Papua New Guinea due to the international travel ban, the Immigration and Citizenship Authority of Papua New Guinea is extending visas and considering Change of Status applications.
  - This applies to short-term business, tourist, visitor, yachtsperson, restricted employment, journalist and reporter visas, as well as to students and occupational trainees and temporary resident visa holders and their dependents.
  - Short-term visa holders in 14-day quarantine are allowed to apply for a thirty-day extension to compensate for the loss of days spent in quarantine.
  - Non-citizens who are temporary residents in the country and have not met the change of status requirements are exempted from exiting the country and are eligible to apply for a new visa onshore;
  - Non-citizens on short-term visas who are intending to apply for change of status in the country will be given special consideration on a case-by-case basis.
  - Change of status in-country is available for:
    - All classes of visitor visa changed to a dependent of a principle applicant who is working in the country;
    - All classes of visitor visa who are 18 years and under changed to a dependent of a citizen residing in the country;
    - Single business visa to working residence employment;
    - Restricted employment visa to working residence employment;
    - Consultant specialist visa to working residence employment.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **PARAGUAY**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Paraguay does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Most government offices, including the National Immigration Directorate, have resumed operations but are not operating as normal.

## Additional Notes

- Paraguay has extended all existing COVID-19 related restrictions until at least 28 September 2021.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **PERU**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Peru. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Current COVID-19 related restrictions have been extended until at least 1 November 2021.
- Migraciones offers more than 15 procedures [online](#), including change of immigration status, residence renewal and special travel permit. Fingerprinting will no longer be required for these services until the COVID-19 restrictions allow fingerprint capture. It will thus be possible to initiate all previously suspended scheduled procedures. However, users of the new system have experienced several problems with its functionality.
- The Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion authorises the use of digital signatures for signing addenda for the renewal of employment contracts expiring during the current mandatory social isolation period.
- Migraciones has authorised the rescheduling of appointments for after the State of Emergency is lifted. Regularization is permitted until 45 days after the lifting of the state of emergency.

### Permit and Visa Details

- The suspension of administrative deadlines and fines for foreign nationals in Peru whose legal stay in the country expired on or after 16 March 2020 will end on 20 August 2021. Individuals who did not regularize their status in Peru before 16 August 2021 may be subject to monetary fines.

- Individuals who have received an exit order from the Peruvian authorities had until 31 August 2021 to exit the country.
- Foreign nationals who have registered for issuance of a Foreign Card or Temporary Stay Permit (PTP) Card but have not been issued a card due to coronavirus restrictions, can download a certificate from [www.migraciones.com.pe](http://www.migraciones.com.pe). The certificate will have the same validity as the card until the issuance of the card.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **THE PHILIPPINES**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Fully operational, but with majority staff working from home.
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Significant delays and visa issuance is temporarily paused.
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter the Philippines. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Government agencies are fully operational, but with a skeleton workforce on-site and other staff working from home.
- The Department of Foreign Affairs in the National Capital Region (NCR) and all Temporary Off-Site Passport Services (TOPS) facilities are operating with limited hours and reduced staffing and will only accept emergency cases at this time.
- Most immigration authorities (including the Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Justice, Bureau of Immigration, and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority [PEZA]) continue to be partially open with significantly reduced staff and hours. Appointments are required and most offices are limiting the number of daily appointments permitted. Significant processing delays are expected.
  - The Bureau of Immigration will operate with a skeleton workforce of 50% capacity and shortened hours of 0800H to 1700H.
  - The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) – Currently accepting a very limited number of in-person applications via appointment only. DOLE-NCR clients are encouraged to file all DOLE requests electronically through its online [e-Filing Services platform](#).
  - PEZA Head Office is only accessible via appointments. Significant delays should be expected.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- All visa-free travel privileges remain suspended until further notice.
- **[Temporarily suspended until further notice]** Certain visa issuance has resumed at Foreign Service Posts (FSPs):
  - **9(a) Tourist Visa** for foreign spouse, parent(s), and/or children of Filipino citizens – Entry Exemption Document (EED) no longer needed.
  - **9(e) and 9(c) Crew Visas** – EED no longer needed.
  - **9(g) and 47(a)(s) Visas** – only after FSP received approval from the Department of Foreign Affairs-Office of Consular Affairs (DFA-OCA) and subject to the following regulations:

- 9(g) Visa applications to be filed with the Bureau of Immigration (BI) through a Philippine-based employer. Long-term workers (more than six months) must apply for an Alien Employment Permit (AEP) from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) through their Philippines-based employer as a prerequisite for a 9(g) visa. In other words, the Philippine-based employer will be allowed to process and obtain the AEP or a Certificate of Exemption/Exclusion and the 9(g) visa while the foreign national is outside the country.
- 47(a)(2) Visa applications are currently limited to foreign-funded government projects only; all other traditional categories under this visa remain suspended. Eligible applications must be filed with the Department of Justice (DOJ).
- 9(g) and 47(a)(2) Visa holders are no longer required to obtain an EED to enter the Philippines, but will be subject to the prevailing COVID-19 entry restrictions (Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.)
- The Bureau of Immigration (BI) will:
  - Provide a non-extendable grace period of six months from a visa’s expiration date for the holder to submit their extension/renewal application. This is applicable only to visa holders whose visas did not expire while they were outside of the Philippines;
  - Accept the submission of affidavit of guarantee and other supporting documents in lieu of hearings in person for visa applications;
  - Suspend the imposition of orders to leave for Temporary Visitor Visa (TVV) holders who: 1. Have reached the 24-month maximum period of stay for visa-required nationals or the 36-month maximum period of stay for visa-waiver nationals as of 1 March 2020, or 2. Have overstayed beginning 1 March 2020 regardless of whether they have been in the country beyond the maximum period of stay for their nationality. Foreigners covered by this regulatory relief shall be assessed and pay, in lieu of the order to leave the country, updating fees, penalties/fines in the form of Immigration Arrears Release Certificate (IARC) and express lane fees.
- All non-tourist visa holders whose visas expired from 16 March 2020 to 7 July 2021, and who were unable to submit extension/renewal/amendment applications due to COVID-19 and quarantine protocols will have until 30 November 2021 (non-extendable) to file these application. This is applicable only to visa holders whose visas did not expire while they were outside of the Philippines.
- Holders of temporary visitor’s visas who have stayed in the country less than one year and who are departing the Philippines are temporarily allowed to acquire their Emigration Clearance Certificate (ECC) at the international airports. ECCs for those leaving for good must still be obtained from the Bureau of Immigration Main Office or Satellite Offices which are open.
- Foreign nationals whose visas will expire during the duration of the ECQ are allowed to submit their applications for extension without penalties, provided that they submit their applications within thirty days from the lifting of the Enhanced Community Quarantine.
- Biometrics capturing and fingerprinting, and the issuance of Special Security Registration Numbers (SSRNs) as requirements for processing of ECC are temporarily suspended. The Bureau of Immigration (BI) will still conduct derogatory records checking before issuing the ECC to ensure that any foreign national who wishes to leave the country has no pending case or has no pending obligation with the Philippine government.
- Departing passengers with pending extension applications of their immigrant or non-immigrant visas will no longer be required to secure a Grace Period Order. In lieu of the Grace Period Order, the subject foreign nationals shall submit certain documents to the Immigration Officer (during departure formalities). The requirement for a National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) clearance for an Order to Leave is temporarily suspended.

- Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), balikbayans, and foreign nationals leaving for abroad through any of the ports in Luzon shall be allowed to leave the Philippines at any time for the duration of the Enhanced Community Quarantine, provided they meet certain criteria.
- Travel restrictions are lifted for Balik-Manggagawa overseas Filipino Workers returning to mainland China except for Hubei province.

### Additional Notes

- The authorities have extended COVID-19 related restrictions throughout the country until at least 30 September 2021.
- Effective 1 March 2021, all foreign nationals holding visas (apart from 9(a) visas) and departing from the Philippines but not holding an Emigration Clearance Certificate (ECC) are required to obtain a **Travel Pass** from the same agency which issued their visa, valid for 30 days for a single use.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **POLAND**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Poland does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration authorities are reopening offices with reduced staff and working hours.
- Immigration offices are again allowed to issue negative decisions in immigration applications.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- In-person submission of residence permit applications is suspended at immigration offices. All previously-booked appointments are cancelled, and further appointments will not be made until further notice. Application and document submission by post is welcomed.
- It is possible once more to submit acceleration requests to a higher authority (ponaglenie).
- Countdowns to the deadlines to complete immigration formalities (e.g., to submit missing documents in pending applications or to submit obligatory notifications) have resumed.
- The countdown to the deadline to submit EU registration applications has resumed. It is recommended to submit EU registration applications by post before Immigration offices reopen.
- Citizens of Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia and Moldova will be able to apply for Polish national visas in their countries without personal visit to consulate. The exact process of remote submission will be determined by each consulate.
- Eligible seasonal workers are exempt from the requirement to hold a work permit until 30 days after the end of the state of emergency, provided they already held a proper work authorisation after 13 March 2020.

- The validity of already-issued work permits and declarations of entrusted work are automatically extended until 30 days after the end of the state of emergency, if they expire during the state of emergency.
- The right to stay in Poland of foreign national holders of Schengen visas, residence permits or long-term visas issued by other Schengen countries, and foreign nationals staying visa-free, is extended until 30 days after the cancellation of the state of emergency, provided that they were already in Poland on 14 March 2020. Those who were not in Poland on 14 March will also have their right to stay in Poland extended until 30 days after cancellation of the state of emergency, provided that they submit a residence permit application by the end of the extension period. If they do not submit a residence permit application, but e.g. simply leave Poland after cancellation of the state of emergency, then they will be considered to have stayed in Poland illegally.
- The validity of Polish national visas and residence permits which expire during the state of emergency is automatically extended until 30 days after the cancellation of the state of emergency.
- Foreign nationals whose residence cards (plastic identity card with a photo) expire before 30 days from the end of epidemic state, will not be obligated to exchange their cards to avoid a fine – the cards' validity will be automatically extended.
- Pole Cards (Karta Polaka) which expire during the state of emergency are automatically extended for three months beyond the end of the state of emergency, during which period the holder should apply for a new card.
- Residence cards of family members of EU citizens that would expire during the state of emergency will be automatically extended until 30 days after the end of the state of emergency.
- Immigration offices now have the right to allow applicants to review their case file electronically. The files can be sent to the applicant to an e-mail address provided to the authority.
- Immigration offices now have the right to substitute a mandatory personal visit to the office with a video chat or teleconference (e.g. in case of an obligatory interview during dependent residence permit proceedings). Please note that obligatory fingerprint submissions will still have to be done in person.
- Moreover, deadlines for foreign nationals to leave Poland are postponed.
- Permanent residence permits and long-term EU residence permits are indefinite, so an expired residence card based on these permits does not render the stay illegal. An application for a new residence card can be submitted after immigration offices resume regular operations.

### Additional Notes

- Anti-crisis measures made available to employers (ordering home office, unilateral reduction of working time, unilateral reduction of remuneration during stoppage) may be applied to foreign nationals without triggering non-compliance with immigration law.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **PORTUGAL**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Portugal does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.



## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration authorities have begun to reopen their offices with limited staffing and hours. Appointments are available for urgent/emergency services.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Residence Cards and Residence Visas with pending renewal applications are automatically extended until 31 December 2021. Note that this status does not allow for travel within the Schengen Area based on the pending status alone.
- Foreign nationals who have registered an expression of interest for obtaining a residence permit under Articles 88, 89 and 90-A can prove their immigration status with a document downloaded from the relevant online platform.
- Foreign nationals with pending applications for new or renewal residence permits can prove their immigration status with an application receipt or documentary evidence of an appointment booking.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **QATAR**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Qatar. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices are closed to the public and only online applications are accepted. Applications for Qatar ID renewal and business visa extensions are being processed.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **ROMANIA**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Romania does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Romanian immigration authorities are only accepting pre-booked appointments based on the prior online submission of application files. This will trigger around 2-3 weeks' delay in the immigration process.
- The Ministry of Education is only receiving requests for acknowledgement of foreign qualifications by post.

### Permit and Visa Details

- The immigration authorities are only accepting work permit applications, and only with appointments booked online.
- The immigration authorities are not currently accepting applications for permanent residence.
- Expiring documents, including residence and work permits and EU registration certificates and residence cards, will be automatically extended until the end of the state of emergency, and can then be exchanged within 90 days of the end of the state of emergency.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **RUSSIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Russia. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- In Moscow, the Migration offices responsible for work authorisation (Sakharovo and Greenwoods) accept work permit and patent applications and issue documents (only for foreign nationals already in Russia and accept notifications. The Migration office responsible for visas (Petrovka) is not accepting or issuing any applications or documents (including invitation letters for entry and work visa extensions) with the exception of exit (transit) visas. District migration offices have ceased in-person acceptance of applicants. The head Migration office of the MIA (Boyarsky Pereulok) is accepting notifications and work permit correction applications and issuing corrected work permits.
- Migration authorities in St. Petersburg and other regions continue to accept applications as per latest reports. District migration departments continue to accept documents on the basis of preliminary online appointment. It is necessary to check in advance the regime of work of the particular office.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Address registration can be currently done only through the post office, Extension is possible in a few local migration offices and multi-functional government centres in Moscow – this must be verified for each case.

- The suspension of the following terms for foreign citizens has been extended until 90 days after the resumption of regular transport communications with the foreign citizen’s country of citizenship or permanent residence.
  - Permitted terms of stay in Russia
  - Terms of valid migration registration (i.e., notification on arrival of the foreign citizen at the place of stay)
  - Terms for temporary/permanent residence permit and highly qualified specialist’s work permit termination in case the foreign citizen stays outside Russia for more than six months
  - Duration terms for the following documents:
    - visa
    - migration card
    - temporary/permanent residence permit in case the foreign citizen stays outside Russia.
- From 16 June to 30 September 2021 inclusive:
  - No decisions will be made on expulsion / deportation / ban on entry in relation to foreign citizens in Russia
  - Foreign citizens who arrived in Russia before 15 March 2020 and are illegally in the country as of 16 June 2021, have the right to apply to state authorities to settle their legal status or to leave the Russian Federation.
- From 16 June to 31 December 2021 inclusive:
  - Duration terms are suspended for:
    - temporary or permanent residence of foreign citizens in Russia;
    - registration at the place of stay (not the same as “migration; registration/notification on arrival” – this one is for holders of temporary/permanent residence permit);
    - documents on refugee or temporary asylum status;
  - Citizens of the EAEU countries can conclude labour or civil law contracts without taking into account their purpose of entering Russia (as stated in their migration cards);
  - Visa-free foreign citizens have the right to issue (re-issue) a work patent without taking into account the period of application and their purpose of entry into Russia;
  - Employers (companies) with a corporate work permit have the right to apply for an extension / issuance of personal work permits without taking into account the purpose of the foreigner workers’ entry into Russia;
  - Work permits / patents issued during the above period, labor or civil contracts concluded during the above period are to remain valid in accordance with the terms specified in them.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SAUDI ARABIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Saudi Arabia does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Most government agencies have reopened although staffing and hours may be limited.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Visa-on-arrival and e-visa issuance has been suspended.
- The Saudi authorities have confirmed an automatic extension of visit visas until at least 30 November 2021 for individuals currently outside of Saudi Arabia who cannot enter the country due to current travel restrictions. This extension is free of charge.
- Holders of business, tourist, medical treatment, trading or family visit visas can request a visa extension upon payment of a fee.
- The period of international flight suspension will not be counted towards the overall duration of any issued tourist visa and its associated insurance policy. This applies to visa holders who have not yet used their tourist visa and those who were in Saudi Arabia at the time of the suspension.

### Additional Notes

- Effective 1 August 2021, the Saudi government advised that individuals working in both public and private sector jobs must be vaccinated against COVID-19 (with a vaccine approved by the Ministry of Health) in order to work in-person on premises. Proof of full vaccination status can be shown in the Tawakkalna app. For further details and specific measures for unvaccinated individuals, please reach out to a dedicated labor and employment attorney.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SINGAPORE**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays and some temporary pauses
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Singapore. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Permit and Visa Details

- Effective 6 August 2021, fully vaccinated work pass holders and their fully vaccinated (if eligible) dependents can apply for entry approval, unless they have recent travel history to Brunei, Hong Kong, Mainland China (including Jiangsu Province), Macao, New Zealand and Taiwan.
- The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has confirmed that unless a medical examination is required, passes may be issued (activated) while the pass holder is serving their Stay Home Notice (SHN). However, if they are required to attend the registration of biometric data, they first need to complete the SHN and be tested negative for COVID-19.
- Counter services at the ICA Building have resumed in a limited and controlled manner, strictly for selected services and by appointment only. Members of the public should continue to use ICA's e-

Services available at [MyICA](#). Please refer to section "Services offered online" below for the list of available e-Services.

- Employers of pass holders due for card registration can make an appointment for them to visit the Employment Pass Services Centre or MOM Services Centre (Hall C). Appointments should not be made yet for pass holders who first need to undergo a medical examination for card registration (clinics will likely resume this service in Phase 2 (Safe Transition); or for those currently staying in dormitories gazetted as isolation areas. If pass holders are unable to obtain an appointment, the expiry date of their notification letter will be automatically extended.
- Card delivery services have resumed. Authorised recipients will be notified of delivery by SMS two days before delivery.
- Pass holders can remain in Singapore with their notification letters or card replacement letters. Those who telecommute or work in permitted services approved by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) may use the letters as proof of the validity of their passes.
- In line with MOM's advisory to defer bringing pass holders into Singapore due to COVID-19, employers should plan ahead for the impact of [upcoming salary threshold changes](#) on postponed work pass applications.
- Employers cancelling the Singapore work pass of any Malaysian national employee must ensure that the employee completes an exit declaration form, prints the acknowledgement and presents it on departure; advise the employee that they may need to present a medical certificate certifying that they do not display COVID-19 symptoms; and [notify MOM online](#) to cancel the work pass.
- The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has announced that all employers are strongly urged to defer bringing pass holders into Singapore. MOM will continue to accept online application submissions of new and renewal work and dependent pass applications. However, approvals will be very limited, and processing delays are expected. MOM may issue passes to foreign nationals already in Singapore.
- Employers or Employment Agents acting on behalf of the hiring company will not be allowed to proceed with the issuance of work passes for employees during their SHN period. After the SHN, the usual procedures for issuance of work pass i.e. send workers for medical examination, fingerprinting, attend the Settling-In Programme and safety courses, may then proceed.
- The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) requires all new and existing Singapore long-term pass holders planning to enter or return to Singapore from any country to obtain MOM entry approval before commencing their journey. Employers are to make this MOM Entry Approval request at least 3 days before their intended travel into Singapore using this online facility. Applications submitted by 12pm will receive the outcome on the same day (after 12pm will receive the outcome the next day). Applications are processed on a 'first-come-first-served' basis. Approval is not guaranteed but it is important that the approval is received before arranging for the pass holder to enter Singapore. If the approval is rejected, a fresh approval request is to be submitted.
- MOM requires all new and existing work pass holders (including dependants) planning to enter Singapore from Malaysia to obtain MOM's entry approval before they commence their journey. This is applicable regardless of the mode of travel into Singapore. Only those Malaysians and work pass holders conveying essential services or supplies (e.g., lorry, vegetable, frozen supply truckers) via land and sea crossings will be exempted from this MOM entry approval and SHN requirement. MOM will reject all new work pass applications for foreign workers from mainland China until further notice. Renewal applications for existing pass holders will not be affected.
- Holders of Long-Term Visit Passes (LTVP) issued by the Immigration Checkpoint Authority (ICA) or Student Passes issued by the Ministry of Education (MOE), including those granted In-Principle Approval (IPA), need to request and obtain Entry Approval from the relevant authority before they commence their journey to Singapore (preferably before they make any travel plans). If permission is granted, applicants will be issued an approval letter of entry valid for 2 weeks, which must be presented to airline staff on check-in and to the immigration officer at the checkpoint on arrival.

- MOM will automatically extend the validities of all new in-principle approvals (IPAs) by an additional 2 months. This means the IPA holder has 8 months (instead of 6) to enter Singapore and complete the post-arrival process in Singapore. IPA holders approved a new S Pass now have 4 months (instead of 2 months). It is recommended that the validity is checked on a case-by-case basis using the Employment Pass Online (EPOL) portal to verify the exact IPA expiry date.
- MOM will give all pass holders up to 3 more months to complete medical examinations (if applicable). Please note that passes can continue to be issued or renewed without medical results. If a pass has been cancelled and a longer stay is required for the pass holder, a request for an 'extension of stay' can be made via an online facility. The extension of stay is only to be submitted if the pass holder's short-term visit pass is expiring within 7 days.
- MOM will automatically extend Short-Term Visit Passes by 14 days and, on request, extend the work pass issuance deadline.
- Employers who have cancelled a pass and the foreign national is unable to return home due to travel restrictions, should request for an extension of the foreign national's stay using the relevant online form.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SLOVAKIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Slovakia does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Foreign Police department has reopened and will handle online clients.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The validity of temporary, permanent or tolerated residence, which is due to expire during the period of crisis or within one month of the end of the period of crisis, is automatically extended for two months after the end of the period of crisis.
- Third-country nationals who legally entered Slovakia but have no legal residence are permitted to stay in Slovakia until 1 month after the end of the period of crisis.
- Third-country nationals currently outside Slovakia can submit consular applications for permanent residence or for renewal of temporary residence.
- The police department can accept documents which have become older than 90 days during the crisis period in support of residence applications, as long as the third country national has not travelled outside of the territory of the Slovak Republic before the date of application for initial residence or renewal of residence (note that this does not apply to the documentation of foreign nationals meeting certain criteria).
- Some legal periods will be extended for the duration of the crisis situation, e.g. obligation to enter Slovak Republic and begin residence within 180 days from date the residence was granted. Some legal

periods will not continue to expire until the declaration of the end of the crisis situation, e.g. deadline for notification of change of address, deadline for submission of medical check or health insurance. The execution of decisions on administrative expulsion will be postponed for the duration of the crisis situation. The Ministry of Interior can further pardon the expiration of other legal periods.

- Conditions regarding financial coverage of third country nationals who apply for renewal of residence permit for business purposes may not apply if the foreign national can declare that business was impacted by the crisis situation.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SOUTH AFRICA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant and notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – South Africa does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Processing time for Qualification Equivalency Evaluations from the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) are significantly delayed. Traditionally taking 4 weeks, certificate issuance is now up to 3-4 months due to backlogs and staffing issues.
- The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has resumed normal operations, which implies the full resumption of the processing of all visa, permit, passport and identity document applications at the central permitting hub in Pretoria. It has also started adjudicating applications for all categories of Temporary Residence Visas including, but not limited to, visitor's, work, study, crew, medical treatment, relative's, retired persons', business, corporate, exchange visas, waiver requests and appeal and review requests in respect of adverse decisions taken.
- The South African Missions abroad and the provincial Visa Application Centres within South Africa have resumed accepting the abovementioned Temporary Residence Visa applications, waiver requests and appeal/review applications.
- Applications for Lesotho Exemption Permits and Zimbabwe and Exemptions Permits have also reopened.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Individuals granted new Permanent Residence status have until 31 December 2021 to enter South Africa to activate their status.
- Long-term visas issued before 15 March 2021, which expired during the national State of Disaster or which will expire before 30 September 2021, including the undermentioned categories, are automatically deemed renewed until 30 September 2021, to allow the holders sufficient time to submit applications to either renew their visas or change their statuses to any other appropriate category of visa, even if their current visa has expired.
  - While their renewal applications are in process, they may continue conducting the activities allowed by their current visas.
  - This applies to:

- Visas issued for more than 90 days up to three years (including Relative’s Visas);
  - Study Visas;
  - Treaty Visas;
  - Business Visas;
  - Medical Treatment Visas;
  - General Work Visas;
  - Critical Skills Work Visas;
  - Retired Persons Visas; and
  - Exchange Visas.
- Note this does not apply to Intra-Company Transfer (ICT) Work Visas (see below).
- Holders of Intra-Company Transfer (ICT) Work Visas which have already been issued for the maximum four years and which have expired or will expire between 26 March 2020 and 31 June 2021 can reapply for a further period of two years from within South Africa (rather than having to exit the country to reapply as normal). The following criteria must be fulfilled:
  - Proof that the sponsoring South African branch, subsidiary or affiliate still requires the services of the foreign national must be submitted.
  - Verifiable documents must be submitted to prove that a skills transfer to a South African citizen or Permanent Residence Permit holder was completed during the four-year transfer period to date.
  - The application will be considered as a new application as opposed to an extension/renewal of the existing ICT Work Visa with no accumulation or continuation of the validity period of the current work visa.
  - The validity period of the new work visa cannot accrue towards the 5-year period of holding a work visa to enable a foreign national to apply for a Permanent Residence Permit in terms of section 26(a) of the Immigration Act.
  - The holder must remain employed with the same employer abroad, and they must continue working for the same sponsoring branch, subsidiary, or affiliate company within South Africa. No changes of employer, or other conditions, as per the current ICT Work Visa, will be allowed.
  - No application to change status from the existing ICT Work Visa to any other category of visa will be allowed from within the country.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SOUTH KOREA**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- **Immigration Authority Status:** Fully open
- **Immigration Application Processing:** Notable delays
- **Permit/Visa Specific Entry:** Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter South Korea. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.



## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- South Korea has extended COVID-19 related restrictions through at least 5 September 2021. Provincial and local city governments are able to adjust their working hours/arrangements and staff availabilities as they deem appropriate.
- Effective 1 April 2021, [online appointment](#) booking is available for all immigration offices (this was previously offered by fewer than half of immigration offices nationwide).

### Permit and Visa Details

- The South Korean Ministry of Justice confirms it will automatically extend the period of stay for foreign residents and Overseas Korean (F-4) residents for an additional three (3) months if their residence authorization will expire between 19 July and 30 September 2021.
- VIN applications at the immigration office and visa applications at South Korean consulates abroad are being accepted again on a temporary basis for “exceptionally permitted visa applicants.” Processing times are expected to be delayed beyond the standard 1-2 weeks. The following visa categories are eligible for this designation:
  - Diplomacy (A1), Public Affairs (A2), Agreement (A3)
  - Study Abroad (D2 but only for the government-invited)
  - Expat for Korean Branch (D7), Expat for Foreign Direct Investment Enterprise (D8), Trade management (D9)
  - Expert (E1, E5, E6(excluding E-6-2), E7)
  - Accompanying Dependent (F3)
  - Marriage immigrant (F6)
  - Long-term visa applicant who is acknowledged for the necessity of urgent entry because of humanitarian reason.
- South Korea will not impose any penalty fee on foreign national visitors and residents who are COVID-19 patients for exceeding the period of stay until they are recovered and officially confirmed by the medical institutions.
- The waiver of re-entry permits for Alien Registration Certificate (ARC) holders is currently suspended until further notice.
  - All ARC holders with visas other than A1, A2, A3 or F4 visas must apply online for a re-entry permit before leaving Korea if they wish to maintain their status and period of stay.
  - Leaving Korea without a re-entry permit will result in cancellation of their alien registration, and they will have to obtain a new long-term visa to re-enter Korea.
  - Re-entry permit applications for new-born babies who have never used their passport can be submitted directly to the immigration office (rather than online).
  - Re-entry permits are granted for approximately 3 months beyond the planned date of re-entry.
  - Extension of a re-entry permit is rarely possible.
  - ARC holders who return to South Korea from overseas are subject to two weeks of self-isolation.
- Holders of short-term visas (B-1, B-2, C-1, C-3, C-4) who cannot exit South Korea before their visa expires, due to cancelled flights, must apply for a maximum 30-day extension at the immigration office.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SPAIN**

**For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).**

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Spain does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The state of emergency has been lifted. Government services and offices have reopened, and some immigration services can be accessed online.
- The authorities will continue working behind doors on any new or renewal applications but the legal processing time of 20 working days will not apply and may be exceeded.
- Services for foreign nationals at police stations are suspended, except for emergency or urgent cases.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Absences from Spanish territory as a result of COVID-19 restrictions will not be counted when considering continuity of residence to be accredited.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SRI LANKA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with significantly reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Sri Lanka does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Effective 15 September 2021 until at least 25 September 2021, the Department of Immigration and Emigration in the Matara, Kandy, Kurunegala, and Veiyaawa Regions will be open for essential and urgent services only. Other Line Ministries throughout the country are accepting applications, but are working with a small in-person staff and other officers working from home. Applications or other in-person activities must be done via an appointment with the relevant office.
- The Battaramulla Head Office is reportedly operating as a one-stop service shop and issuing certain permits. Additional details are yet to be clarified, however.
- Sri Lanka has some inter-provincial movement restrictions in place; as such, delays in application processing and procedures are expected.
- Immigration applications are being accepted by the Department of Immigration and Emigration (DOIE) and the Board of Investment (BOI), but the officials are working on a limited capacity. Appointments may be required.

## Permit and Visa Details

- The validity period of all types of visas currently obtained by foreign nationals residing in Sri Lanka has been extended by 30 days until 7 October 2021. Visa fees will be charged if the visa expires between 8 September 2021 and 7 October 2021, but the holder will be exempt from monetary overstay fines. This applies both to Tourist and Resident Visa holders.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **SWEDEN**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Sweden does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The Swedish Migration Agency is fully open.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- Work permit holders who require entry visas are required, and those whose nationality is visa-exempt are recommended, to submit biometrics in the home country so they can show the residence card at the border. It is currently very difficult to have biometrics done at Swedish missions abroad, as many of them are closed due to national lockdowns. For visa-exempt nationals, it is very difficult to get appointments to provide biometrics in Sweden. This can delay the possibility of registering residency locally and hence be part of the Swedish Public Welfare Insurance scheme, Försäkringskassan, which allows medical care.
- Individuals (other than medical professionals and other essential workers) who recently received their work permit approval but have not yet moved to and registered as a resident in Sweden are not permitted to enter until the travel restrictions are lifted.

### **Additional Notes**

- Foreign nationals in Sweden who are unable to return home due to borders being closed or flight cancellations can apply to extend their entry visa, if their combined stay in the Schengen countries does not last longer than 90 days during a 180-day period. However, it is advised to instead apply for a visitor's residence permit, valid for 90 days, as the applicant has the right to stay in Sweden until the Swedish Migration Agency has made a decision. Visa exempt nationals can also apply for a visitor's residence permit.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## SWITZERLAND

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Switzerland. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Swiss authorities have resumed processing most immigration applications.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## TAIWAN

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays or temporarily paused
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Taiwan. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- The office hours at the various Taipei Economic & Cultural Offices (TECO) have been affected due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Some TECO offices have been closed temporarily. Travellers must check with TECO in their respective countries first if requiring services.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- New visa application acceptance is temporarily suspended.
- Foreign nationals who have been issued a work permit but have not yet entered Taiwan and have not been issued an Alien Resident Card (ARC) can apply for a visa at the relevant Taipei Economic & Cultural Office (TECO) but must also obtain a "Special Entry Permit" stamp in their passport, also from the TECO. Without both a valid entry visa and a Special Entry Permit stamp, entry will not be allowed.
- Applications for temporary entry stays (landing visas and online visas) and the online application system for foreign nationals for Hong Kong and Macau residents have been suspended.

### Additional Notes

- Effective 20 July 2021, employers will once again be allowed to assign foreign employees to different work sites belonging to the same employer for assignments of over 60 days. To utilize this new option, employers must:

- Arrange for the applicable foreign employees to undergo COVID-19 PCR testing within 72 hours (inclusive) prior to the beginning of the assignment. The test must be negative for the employee to begin their assignment.
- File an application for permission or a notification to the Ministry of Labor.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **TANZANIA**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Normal processing
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Tanzania does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration authorities are fully open and operational.

#### Permit and Visa Details

- The Tanzanian authorities have confirmed the extension of visas under certain circumstances:
  - Automatic three month extension will be granted to foreign nationals holding a Tanzanian visa, but who are unable to enter the country due to COVID-19 restrictions (including flight suspensions).
  - One month extension will be available to foreign nationals who are in Tanzania, but who are unable to exit the country due to COVID-19 restrictions (including flight suspensions). Extension applications can be submitted to the nearest immigration office.
  - Automatic one month extension will be granted after expiration of the following permit types: dependent passes, exemption certificates, residence permits, and visitors' passes.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **THAILAND**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Thailand. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Thai consulates may be closed, depending on local country restrictions.
- Although Thai authorities will begin easing domestic restrictions in Bangkok and other high-risk provinces from 1-14 September 2021, it remains unknown how these new measures will impact the following temporary restrictions.
  - The Immigration Bureau, Employment Department, and the Board of Investment (BOI) continue to work regularly; however, **the Immigration Department** has confirmed that visa renewal/extension applications (under both BOI and non-BOI application routes) must be submitted not more than three (3) days in advance of their expiration date. Previously-booked appointments during this period that are not within this three (3) day window for applications must be rebooked.
  - Many government offices – including Consular Section at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Police Clearance Certificate Division at the National Police Bureau – are closed or partially open with reduce staff/hours.
  - The Revenue Department is open, but with significantly reduced staff and staff working from home. A delay in obtaining official tax certifications is expected. Companies are encouraged to obtain their certified tax documents online if they filed their taxes online.
  - Travel to and from high-risk provinces during the day will be possible, but travellers must have evidence to demonstrate sufficient need to travel if requested by the authorities (e.g. company support letter).
- The Immigration office is open for visa renewals and applications as normal.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Effective until at least 26 November 2021, foreign nationals holding any visa type who are currently in Thailand but unable to leave due to COVID-19 restrictions are able to apply for a 60-day visa extension to maintain their status in Thailand.
- Foreign nationals with **Board of Investment (BOI)** work authorization must wait 14 days from the date of their arrival in Thailand before their on-line application can be made on the BOI website to apply for ALL types of applications including new and renewal/extension applications. As a result of this policy, Foreign nationals will have to wait at least 3-4 weeks after entering Thailand before they will obtain their Digital Work Permit and long-term visa. The application can only be made on day 15 after arrival and will take 5 to 10 days or more for processing.
- Until further notice, issuance of approval of pre-work permit approval (PWPA) is suspended at all Employment Department offices. In cases where the PWPA approval letter has been issued, the Employment Department must contact and coordinate with the employer concerning the State of Emergency. In such cases, the foreign national employee will need to postpone entry to Thailand until the government officially revokes the entry ban.
- The Employment Department will accept new work permit applications from the restricted countries if the applications are made by an authorized representative of the foreign national, holding a Power of Attorney. Upon receipt of the work permit booklet the authorized representative can bring it to the foreign national for signature at home while they are in self-quarantine.
- Effective immediately, the requirement for work permit applicants (for non-Board of Investment companies) to appear in person to collect their work permit booklets from the One Stop Service Centre is reinstated.
  - A representative of the company will no longer be permitted to collect the work permit booklet on the employee's behalf.

- Permanent Residence (PR) holders who are holding Departure Endorsements and re-entry permits that will expire from 26 March onwards and who intend to return to Thailand can continue to use their existing Departure Endorsement and re-entry permits to maintain their right to hold PR status. However, when the outbreak situation improves, these PR holders should return to Thailand before this permission period expires (date to be announced later. Failure to do so, could prejudice their Permanent Residence.
- Visitors from neighbouring countries who hold a temporary border pass will be allowed to stay in Thailand until the borders are re-opened. They will be required to leave Thailand within seven days after the borders reopen.
- It is recommended to apply for extension of long-term visas and to submit 90-day reports during this period while government offices remain open. However, it is recommended to exercise the right to the automatic visa extension if the holder resides in a lockdown area and needs to retain their passport, and for tourist visa, visa-on-arrival and visa exemption.
- If a current BOI work permit and visa are soon expiring and the 14-day wait is too long, the applicant can raise the issue of expiration date to the BOI online and request special permission NOT to wait for 14-days.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Trinidad and Tobago. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration offices remain mostly closed and services unavailable or for emergency situations only. Pending processes are suspended. Extension of stay can be managed via email.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **TURKEY**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Turkey does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Immigration authorities have begun to reopen offices, sometimes with limited staffing and/or hours. Most applications must be submitted via appointment.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Turkey will not impose overstay penalties for foreign nationals unable to depart due to COVID-19, if they depart within one month of the reopening of transportation to their home country.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **UKRAINE**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – Ukraine does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Permit and Visa Details

- Foreign nationals will not be penalised for violation of the terms of their immigration status during the quarantine period and within 30 days of the end of the quarantine period.
- Applications for issuance or extension of residence permits or for change of status from visitor to resident, which should have been submitted during the quarantine period can be submitted within 30 days of the end of the quarantine period.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Fully open
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – the United Arab Emirates does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.



## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Government offices are fully open.
- UAE authorities have resumed the endorsement of visas in original passports. An applicant who has previously secured a soft copy of a renewed residence permit must submit their original passport to the immigration or free zone authorities to have the visa endorsed on the passport.

### Permit and Visa Details

- Effective 30 August 2021, the Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship (ICA) has announced that the UAE will begin processing tourist visas for fully vaccinated individuals from all countries. Applicants must be vaccinated with one of the WHO-approved vaccines to qualify.
- New Residency Permit holders have a grace period of 60 days to get vaccinated and receive a green pass on the country's Alhosn app.
- Processing of new work permit applications for individuals outside of the UAE is temporarily paused in most jurisdictions. Possible exemptions to this pause may be granted based on urgency and case-specific details.
- Residence visa applicants who require an in-country medical check and biometrics submission must first obtain the medical results (4 hours to 5 days depending on the fee paid at the medical centre) and then submit their biometric details (appointment required). Previously, it was possible to submit biometrics on the same day as undergoing the medical check.
- Transfer of visa sponsorship between certain free zones has been reinstated, depending on the operational procedures of the releasing free zone. If the applicant and employer are in the same free zone then intra company transfer within the same free zone is being processed as per standard process and procedures.
- Employers who have obtained a new entry permit for an employee already in UAE should proceed with the change of status step within the grace period to avoid fines.
- Individuals with expired visas who are eligible for renewal (within 6 months of the current visa's expiry) and need to exit and re-enter the UAE are strongly advised to renew the visa before exiting the country.
- The sponsor's original Emirates ID is required for all dependent visa applications.

### **Additional Notes**

- Effective 1 August 2021, entry into all Federal Government Departments and Ministries will require proof of full vaccination status or a negative COVID-19 PCR test certificate taken within the previous 48 hours.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **UNITED KINGDOM**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Not applicable – the United Kingdom does not have any permit- or visa-specific entry regulations. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Most Visa Application Centres (VACs) have resumed services where local restrictions allow.
- Priority and Super Priority services are only available in some locations. If available, applicants can purchase these services when booking an appointment.
- Most UK Visa and Citizenship Application Centres (UKVCAS) have reopened for existing customers (check [here](#)). Applicants will receive an invitation email after submitting their application.
- Service and Support Centres (SSCs) are offering a reduced number of appointments because of coronavirus. As more appointments are made available UKVI will invite applicants to arrange an appointment by email or post.
- UK NARIC (National Recognition Information Centre) is still operating services by email or internet. Temporary PDF statements will be issued by email, instead of printed paper statements.

### Permit and Visa Details

- If an individual has been unable to travel back to the UK due to coronavirus travel restrictions and their leave expired between 1 March 2020 and 19 July 2021, a short break of up to six (6) months in continuous residence will be overlooked and the traveller will face no future adverse immigration consequences as a result. However, the individual is expected to make their next application as soon as possible on return. Those who have returned to the UK and did not make a valid application to stay upon re-entry, are expected to make arrangements to leave.
- If an individual is here with six (6) months' leave as a fiancé, fiancée or proposed civil partner the current family Immigration Rules allow them apply for an extension of leave if there is good reason for their wedding or civil partnership not taking place during the initial 6 month period of leave to enter. Cancellation of a wedding or civil partnership ceremony due to COVID-19 will be considered a good reason under this policy.
- The UK authorities have updated the guidance on students whose 90 day visa vignette has expired. In all scenarios, the student will not be penalised for being unable to collect their Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) while COVID-19 measures are in place.
  - Certain students whose 90 day visa vignette has expired will need to make a paid application for a vignette transfer by completing an [online form](#). Resubmission of biometric data will be required. This is applicable to individuals in either of the following scenarios:
    - Have been unable to travel due to coronavirus, but have been undertaking their studies remotely from overseas and intend to travel to study the same course in the UK; or
    - Have completed an eligible course by distance learning under coronavirus concessions and are coming to the UK by the relevant date to apply under the Graduate route. Read the [guidance](#) for further information.
  - Certain students whose 90 day visa vignette has expired will need to submit a new paid student visa application with a new Certificate of Acceptance of Study (CAS) to cover the revised dates of the course. Resubmission of biometric data will be required. This is applicable to individuals in either of the following scenarios:
    - Have deferred their course start date due to coronavirus but have been unable to undertake their studies remotely, meaning that the course cannot be completed during the individual's existing visa period, and they now intend to travel to the UK; or
    - Can still complete the course within the dates covered by the individual's existing visa period, but the course end date has changed, and the individual would like a new visa with a revised end date.
- English language tests are available in most countries but may be temporarily suspended in some countries due to coronavirus restrictions. Click here for [a list of all approved test centres outside the UK](#).

- For applications for a visitor visa, visit in transit or direct airside transit (DAT) visa from a country where travel to the UK is suspended decisions may be delayed. If your visa application is successful, you will receive your visa when suspension of travel is lifted.
- Those who applied for a visitor visa, visit in transit or direct airside transit (DAT) visa from a location where travel to the UK is suspended, but need to travel urgently for compassionate reasons, can contact the Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre (CIH) for guidance: CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk, using the heading 'Visitor Visa – Urgent Travel Request' in your email. Your email must be in English and you should provide your name, date of birth and full details of your circumstances.
- Applications for visas for work, study or residence in the UK continue to be accepted from all locations but applicants must comply with UK border measures.
- Applications for a visit visa can be submitted from any UK VAC. Applications for all other UK visas must be submitted from the applicant's country of residence.
- Applicants who have paid for courier return will receive their passport if courier routes remain open. TLScontact or VFS Global can be contacted directly to request courier return of passports.
- British nationals abroad who cannot apply for a passport can apply for an emergency travel document.
- Until further notice, Biometric Residence Permits (BRP) for Tier 2 migrants and their dependents are being produced but the National Insurance Number (NINO) field is blank. There will be no future requirement to amend this, and BRPs will continue to be valid for use until their individual expiry dates.
- It is taking longer than usual to process citizenship applications because of coronavirus. This will not affect the decision. Extra time will be allowed to enrol biometrics and provide additional information. Applicants have 6 months (rather than the usual 3 months) to book their citizenship ceremony after receiving an invitation from the Home Office. Applicants should not apply by post if they'll need their documents back by a specific date.
- Life in the UK test centres are currently closed so any Indefinite Leave applications submitted without evidence of a completed test will be held until this can be taken and the results published.

#### *Extension/Conversion Procedures*

- Those who entered the United Kingdom outside the 30 and 90 day window allowed by their Entry Clearance vignette due to COVID-19 impacts, and their Entry Clearance was not activated as a result, can apply to remain in the United Kingdom without having to return overseas or reapply.
- The concession has been extended until 31 December 2021 which permits applicants for a UK visa whose VAC is closed due to COVID-19 restrictions to apply online and select a VAC in another country worldwide to submit their application and biometrics.
- Those who have remained outside the UK for over 2 years and whose indefinite leave to remain has lapsed since 24 January 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions may apply under the Returning Resident visa route. They will need to pay the fee and will receive a refund of the fee.
- Those who have already obtained a Returning Resident visa because their ILR/ILE lapsed on or after 24 January 2020 and they were unable to return to the UK due to COVID-19 travel restrictions may be eligible for a refund of their visa fee.
- For those applying to enter the UK or remain on the basis of family or private life and who are unable to travel back to the UK due to coronavirus travel restrictions and whose leave has expires before 30 June 2021, a short break in continuous residence will be overlooked.
- Applicants for a Start-up visa or Innovator visa whose endorsement from an endorsing body has expired due to coronavirus, may still be eligible for a visa. All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Foreign nationals who have a visa which expires by 30 September 2021 (previously 30 June 2021) and intend to leave the UK but have not been able to do so may request additional time to stay (known as "exceptional assurance").

- The online form is currently experiencing technical difficulties, therefore requests for an exceptional assurance should be submitted by email.
- If they are granted 'exceptional assurance' it will act as a short-term protection against any adverse action or consequences after their leave has expired. If conditions allowed them to work, study or rent accommodation they may continue to do so during the period of their exceptional assurance. Exceptional assurance does not grant them leave.
- If they intend to stay in the UK, they should apply for the necessary leave to remain in the UK and will be able to submit an application form from within the UK rather than having to apply from their home country. They will have to meet all the requirements of the route they are applying for and pay the UK application fee. The terms of their leave will remain the same until their application is decided. They may be able to commence work or study if they are switching into these routes.
- If their visa or leave expires after 31 October they can submit an application form from within the UK rather than having to apply from their home country.
- Individuals will not be penalised for being unable to collect their biometric residence permits (BRPs) while COVID-19 measures are in place.
- Healthcare workers with visas due to expire between 1 April 2020 and 30 September 2021 may be eligible for a free one-year visa extension.
  - The extension will apply from the date the visa is due to expire.
  - The extension is not automatic – a visa extension application will have to be submitted in the usual way.
  - If eligible, their dependents (partner and children under 18) could also get their visas extended for a year.
  - Eligible healthcare workers and their dependents will not have to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge.
  - If their visa expires after 30 September 2021, they are not eligible for a free visa extension.
- Holders of 30-day visas to travel to the UK for work, study or to join family which have expired, or are about to expire, can request a replacement visa with revised validity dates free of charge until the end of this year. This process will be in place until the end of 2020 but does not apply to other types of visa. Please contact a Newland Chase advisor for case-specific advice.
- Those who were not intending to apply to extend their leave and cannot leave the UK because of travel restrictions related to COVID-19 must submit a new online form. If eligible for an extension of leave, the Home Office will update their immigration records to reflect their circumstances.
- Those who already have leave in the UK and planned to extend their leave when it expires can continue to apply using the appropriate online application form.

### *Right to Work Checks*

- The following temporary adjustments are extended until 1 September 2021:
  - Right to work checks can be carried out over video calls; job applicants and existing workers can send scanned documents or a photo of documents for checks using email or a mobile app, rather than sending originals; and employers should use the Employer Checking Service if a prospective or existing employee cannot provide any of the accepted documents.
  - The check should be marked as “adjusted check undertaken on [insert date] due to COVID-19”. It remains an offence to knowingly employ anyone who does not have the right to work in the UK.
  - Employers do not need to carry out retrospective checks on those who had a COVID-19 adjusted check between 30 March 2020 and 31 August 2021 (inclusive).

- Employers will maintain a defence against a civil penalty if the check they have undertaken during this period was done in the prescribed manner or as set out in the COVID-19 adjusted checks guidance.

### *Right to Rent Checks*

- The following temporary adjustments are extended until 1 September 2021:
  - Right to rent checks can be carried out over video calls; tenants can send scanned documents or a photo of documents for checks using email or a mobile app, rather than sending originals; and landlords should use the Landlord’s Checking Service if a prospective or existing tenant cannot provide any of the accepted documents.
  - The check should be marked as “adjusted check undertaken on [insert date] due to COVID-19”.
  - It remains an offence to knowingly lease premises to a person who is not lawfully in the UK.
  - Landlords do not need to carry out retrospective checks on those who had a COVID-19 adjusted check between 30 March 2020 and 31 August 2021 (inclusive).
  - Landlords will maintain a defence against a civil penalty if the check they have undertaken during this period was done in the prescribed manner or as set out in the COVID-19 adjusted checks guidance.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **UNITED STATES**

*For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).*

### **At a Glance**

- [Immigration Authority Status](#): Partially open with reduced staff/hours
- [Immigration Application Processing](#): Significant delays
- [Permit/Visa Specific Entry](#): Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter the United States. Please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

### **Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details**

#### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- USCIS has cancelled the scheduled furlough of more than 13,000 employees (70% of its workforce, thanks to a combination of cost-cutting measures and an unexpected increase in fee revenue. However, USCIS warned that the operational impact of its spending cuts could mean longer waiting times, continued backlogs and a possible furlough in Fiscal Year 2021.
- USCIS is reopening some domestic offices, including the local offices that process asylum claims, permanent resident and naturalization interviews, InfoPass appointments, and biometrics processing. USCIS has announced that they will send notices to individuals and their attorneys when previously cancelled appointments have been rescheduled.
- Routine visa services in most countries are suspended until further notice. All routine immigrant and nonimmigrant visa appointments in most countries worldwide are cancelled. MRV fees remain valid for a visa appointment in the country where it was paid within one year of the date of payment.
- USCIS has resumed premium processing services for I-129 and I-140 petitions.

## Permit and Visa Details

- The Department of State (DOS) has extended until 31 December 2021 its visa interview waiver for applicants for non-immigrant visa renewals in the same category, if not more than 48 months have passed since the prior visa expired (previously 24 months).
- USCIS continues to accept and process applications for extension of stay (EOS) and Change of Status (COS), and many online forms are available. Where applicable, employment authorization with the same employer, subject to the same terms and conditions of the prior approval, is automatically extended for up to 240 days after I-94 expiration when an extension of stay request is filed on time.
- If a petitioner or applicant files an extension of stay or change of status request (on Forms I-129 or I-539) after the authorized period of admission expires, USCIS, in its discretion, may excuse the failure to file on time if it was due to extraordinary circumstances beyond their control, such as those that may be caused by COVID-19. The length of delay must be commensurate with the circumstances. The petitioner or applicant must submit credible evidence to support their request, which USCIS will evaluate on a case-by-case basis.
- Visa Waiver Program (VWP) entrants are not eligible to extend their stay or change status. However, under current regulations, if an emergency (such as COVID-19) prevents the departure of a VWP entrant, USCIS in its discretion may grant a period of satisfactory departure for up to 30 days. During the COVID-19 crisis, USCIS has temporarily delegated this authority to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the various international airports. For those VWP entrants already granted satisfactory departure and unable to depart within this 30-day period because of COVID-19 related issues, CBP has the authority to temporarily provide one additional 30-day period of satisfactory departure. To request satisfactory departure from USCIS, a VWP entrant should contact the Deferred Inspection office at the airport where they entered the United States.
- Biometrics are required for some immigration benefits such as Employment Authorization, extension of status, and adjustment of status. During the COVID-19 pandemic, USCIS may reuse previously submitted biometrics in order to process these immigration benefits due to the temporary closure of Application Support Centers (ASC).
- USCIS will temporarily accept certain benefit forms (including Form I-129) with copies of original, “wet” signatures dated after 21 March. USCIS normally requires an original, handwritten signature on a number of forms, including the Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker. Allowing scans, photocopies, faxes or similar reproductions of the original document will reduce the required exchange of hard copy documents and support the telework arrangements currently being adopted by many employers. The original, signed documents must nevertheless be maintained as USCIS may request these at its discretion at any time during the adjudication of the case. Failure to produce the requested originals could “negatively impact the adjudication of the immigration benefit” which would cause a denial of the petition or application.
- The US Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) remains fully operational during the federal government's maximum telework flexibilities operating status - including the National Processing Centers (NPCs), PERM System, and Foreign Labor Application Gateway (FLAG) System. OFLC continues to process and issue prevailing wage determinations and labor certifications that meet all statutory and regulatory requirements. If employers are unable to meet all statutory and regulatory requirements, OFLC will not grant labor certification for the application.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## **VIETNAM**

***For country-specific travel and entry details, please see Newland Chase’s interactive, online [Entry Guide](#).***

## At a Glance

- Immigration Authority Status: Partially open with reduced staff/hours or temporarily closed
- Immigration Application Processing: Notable and significant delays
- Permit/Visa Specific Entry: Certain resident foreign nationals are eligible to enter Vietnam. Please see Newland Chase's interactive, online [Entry Guide](#) for up-to-date details.

## Immigration Application Procedures and Permit Details

### Immigration Authority and Application Processing

- Status of Immigration Offices:
  - **Hanoi**: The Immigration Department will remain opened until further notice but with limited capacity. Delays in processing applications are expected
  - **Ho Chi Minh City**: offices are temporarily closed due to tightening domestic restrictions.
- Status of Labor Offices:
  - **Hanoi**: Work permit applications are only received online and decisions continue to be delayed. Entry Demand Approval applications must also be submitted online.
  - **Ho Chi Minh City**: office continue to work under further reduced capacity due to tightening domestic restrictions that aim to control the current rise in COVID-19 throughout Vietnam. Application processing delays and possible office closures have not been announced, but may be possible in the upcoming days.

### Permit and Visa Details

- The automatic stay extension has been extended until 30 September 2021, for foreign nationals who entered Vietnam with a visa exemption certificate, e-visa, or tourist visa on or after 1 March 2020.
  - Individuals in this qualifying group may exit Vietnam during this period without having to apply for an extension of stay.
  - During "automatic stay extension" period, foreign nationals are required to complete temporary residence and health status declaration.
- Limited entry and visas approval are being granted for specific strategic sectors including investors, technician specialists, skilled workers and business managers. Note that companies must submit a request for entry.
- New and renewal work permit applications are being accepted for all applicants who are currently in Vietnam and in all provinces. Work permit applications for those who have not yet arrived is also accepted in some but not all provinces (i.e. HCMC, Binh Duong require the original passport of the applicant). Additional documents may be required.
- Work Permit applicants must conduct a medical check at an authorized hospital. If the required medical check was conducted before 11 February, the applicant needs to obtain a health declaration report from Pasteur Institute in HCMC or redo the medical check at an authorized hospital.
- Foreign nationals who entered Vietnam before 1 March 2020 may also be granted permission to stay until 31 August 2021, subject to proof that the person was stranded in Vietnam due to COVID-19, and a diplomatic note from the relevant diplomatic mission or a written document from relevant Vietnamese authorities confirming that the person was required to undergo mandatory quarantine or treatment for COVID-19, or advice of other force majeure.

## Additional Notes

- Vietnamese authorities have ordered the Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA) to ease regulations on initial and renewal work permit applications. Although it remains unknown when the

changes will be implemented and certain details are still pending from both the MOLISA and provincial labor departments (DOLISA), the most notable changes are anticipated to include the following:

- For Work Permit Applicants:
  - Previously-issued work permits will be accepted as proof of applicant experience for new work permit applications.
  - Certificates of graduation (in addition to the traditional diploma or degree) will be accepted as proof of applicant qualification.
  - Copy of applicant's passport no longer needs to be legalized.
  - Eased educational qualifications:
    - For Experts and Specialists: Having at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent and *at least 3 years of work experience relevant to the proposed job position* in Vietnam. It was previously required that the 3 years of work experience be relevant and *in the trained field*.
    - For Technicians and Skilled Workers: Having been trained in technical or other fields for *at least 1 year and having at least 3 years of work experience relevant to the proposed job position* in Vietnam. It was previously required that the 3 years of work experience be relevant and *in the trained field*.
- For Temporary Assignments from One Province to Another
  - Foreign workers who hold a valid work permit in one province will be allowed to be temporarily transferred/assignment to work in another province for up to 6 months without requirement to obtain another work permit specific to that province. The Vietnamese sponsoring company must notify the provincial labor authorities, however.
- Transport of physical documents for signature in Ho Chi Minh City remains challenging due to domestic travel restrictions within the city. Authorities have extended the current movement controls in the city through at least 30 September 2021.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)