



home affairs

Department:
Home Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**TO: ALL OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & COOPERATION
BORDER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
VFS GLOBAL**

IMMIGRATION DIRECTIVE NO 16 OF 2024

EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY CONCESSION IN RESPECT OF FOREIGN NATIONALS IN LIGHT OF A CONTINUED BACKLOG IN PROCESSING OUTCOMES ON WAIVER APPLICATIONS, VISA APPLICATIONS AND APPEAL APPLICATIONS

This document substitutes and replaces the previous document dated 13/12/2024.

The Department of Home Affairs (the "Department") has, since issuing its previous communication in the above regard, made a significant impact in addressing the backlog in its visa and permitting regime. However, whilst the backlog in the visa area has been significantly reduced, the outcomes of applications will not be ready for collection prior to the commencement of the festive season. Furthermore, a backlog in the appeals area and permanent residence permit applications still persists.

The following temporary measures will therefore apply with immediate effect:

1) APPLICANTS WHOSE WAIVER APPLICATION OUTCOMES ARE STILL PENDING

Visa holders, who have applied for a waiver and whose waiver application is still pending as at the date of signature of this Directive, are granted a further temporary extension until 31 March 2025 to enable the Department to process the applications, as well as to allow for applicants to collect their outcomes and submit applications for the appropriate visas.

Those applicants who wish to abandon their waiver applications and depart from the Republic of South Africa ("the "Republic") should be allowed to depart from the Republic before or on 31 March 2025 without

being declared undesirable as contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, 2002 (Act No. 13 of 2002) (the “Immigration Act”), read with regulation 27(3) of the Immigration Regulations, 2014 (the “Regulations”). A visa holder who needs to travel but is awaiting the outcome of a waiver application should be allowed to depart and re-enter the Republic at a port of entry up to and including 31 March 2025 without being declared undesirable as contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, read with regulation 27(3) of the Regulations.

However, non-visa exempt applicants who travel out of the country with a waiver application receipt are required to apply for a port of entry visa, which would allow them re-entry into the Republic.

2) APPLICANTS WHOSE VISA APPLICATIONS ARE STILL PENDING

Visa holders who have applied for long-term visas as contemplated in terms of section 11(1)(b) up to and including sections 20 and 22 of the Immigration Act, and their visa application is still pending as at the date of signature of this Directive, are granted a further temporary extension of their current visa status until 31 March 2025. Applicants are not allowed to engage in any activity other than what the visa conditions provide for.

Those who wish to abandon their visa applications should be allowed to depart from the Republic before or on 31 March 2025 without being declared undesirable as contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, read with regulation 27(3) of the Regulations. Visa holders who need to travel but are awaiting the outcome of a long-term visa application should be allowed to depart from and re-enter the Republic up to and including 31 March 2025 without being declared undesirable as contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, read with regulation 27(3) of the Regulations.

However, non-visa exempt applicants who travel out of the country with a long-term visa application receipt are required to apply for a port of entry visa, which would allow them re-entry into the Republic.

3) APPLICANTS WHOSE VISA APPEAL APPLICATIONS ARE STILL PENDING

Visa holders who have appealed a negative decision on an application for a long-term visa as contemplated in terms of section 11(1)(b) up to and including sections 20 and 22 of the Immigration Act, are granted a temporary extension of their current visa status until 31 March 2025. Applicants are not allowed to engage in any activity other than what the visa conditions provide for.

Those who wish to abandon their visa appeal applications and depart from the Republic should be allowed to depart from the Republic before or on 31 March 2025 without being declared undesirable as

contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, read with regulation 27(3) of the Regulations. Visa appeal applicants who need to travel but are awaiting the outcome of an appeal application for a long-term visa should be allowed to depart from the Republic and re-enter up to and including 31 March 2025 without being declared undesirable as contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, read with regulation 27(3) of the Regulations.

All appeal applicants are required to produce a copy of the rejection letter, together with a receipt and/or confirmation indicating that such a person has submitted an appeal application, on departure from and re-entry into the Republic. Non-visa exempt appeal applicants who travel out of the country with an appeal application receipt and/or confirmation are required to apply for a port of entry visa, which would allow them re-entry into the Republic.

The above temporary measures will apply only to those foreigners who have been legally admitted into the Republic. This concession is also only applicable to applicants who have submitted an application via VFS Global and who can produce a verifiable receipt for such application against the VFS Global tracking system.

Holders of short-term visas issued in terms of section 11(1)(a) of the Immigration Act for a period of 90 days or less, since 01 October 2024, are granted a blanket extension of 90 days up to and including 31 March 2025, provided that the cumulative period of stay from the date of initial entry until date of final departure does not exceed a total of 180 days. These visa holders should be allowed to depart from the Republic and re-enter up to and including 31 March 2025, without being declared undesirable as contemplated in section 30(1)(h) of the Immigration Act, read with regulation 27(3) of the Regulations.



DR. L. A. SCHREIBER, MP
MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS
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