

China Tax Alert

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China entry ban eased

Abstract:

Starting from 00:00 on 24 August 2022 (Wednesday), certain foreign nationals may enter the People's Republic of China ("PRC" or "China") without additional Chinese entry visa applications as noted below:

- if they are holding valid APEC business travel cards¹ to engage in business activities in China;
- if they are foreign students holding valid study residence permits.

These and other developments are highlighted below.

Why This Matters

Due to the recent modifications, companies, individuals (especially mobile employees and students), and immigration advisers should apprise themselves of the new measures, avail themselves of the more favourable opportunities, and, importantly, take steps to stay compliant.

International business travellers who travel to China are advised to consider regularly reviewing and assessing their travel plans, keep track of the duration of stay accumulated in China, and document the nature and purposes of the activities (to be) performed in China. It is important to plan ahead in respect of the business traveller's personal immigration status and cross-border tax arrangements.

APEC Business Travel Cards, Students, and Other Immigration News

According to the recent "Notice on Allowing entry to China of APEC Business Travel Card holders and Study Residence Permit holders and on Updating International Student Visa application requirements":

- Chinese overseas diplomatic posts are also resuming acceptance and processing of student entry visa applications. Detailed requirements and processes are to be spelled out by the PRC Embassy/Consulate.
- Since June 2022, China's authorities have further eased restrictions on entry in to China and Chinese visa applications.
- As noted earlier, the entry ban for APEC business travel cards and valid Chinese student residence permits are being lifted, and student visa applications have resumed.

¹ The APEC Business Travel Card is an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) initiative designed to strengthen economic cooperation in the region and provide each other with long-term multiple entry with visa-free and expedited customs clearance for their business travels. A total number of 21 economies, including Australia, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea, are in the APEC Business Travel Card Scheme. Chinese nationals who hold valid APEC Business travel card can enjoy visa-free entry and multiple entry to 16 economies around the world, each entry can stay at least 60 days.

- Overseas PRC diplomatic posts in Singapore, Malaysia, Nepal, Indonesia, Ireland, Mexico, etc. have announced the above and more locations are expected.
- Detailed requirements in terms of documents and processes may vary according to location. Interested parties may contact the immigration team with KPMG in the People's Republic of China for more details.

KPMG's Observations

The latest shifts in travel and visa policies appear to be positive signals that the Chinese government is feeling confident about the effects of its coronavirus epidemic control and prevention measures. It is expected that with simplified Chinese visa application procedures, a relaxation of restrictions on entry bans, and more lenient cross-border travel scenarios, the country's logistics and international commerce sectors will experience a boost.

Companies and individuals should pay close attention to immigration and quarantine requirements in places of origin (pre-departure) and destination, carefully evaluate the employees' relocation and international business travel plans, and consider options for cost-effective mobility strategies.

KPMG in the People's Republic of China will closely monitor regulatory updates and will endeavour to keep you informed as developments occur.

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