

GMS Flash Alert

2016-088 | August 5, 2016



Uganda - Introduction of Electronic Immigration Application Procedures

The Department of Citizenship & Immigration Control (DCIC) Uganda has introduced an electronic application and processing system for visas, entry work permits, and passes.¹

Under the new application process, applicants for all immigration services such as visas, work permits, and passes are required to apply online.² Following that online application, an electronic notification/authorization will be sent electronically to the applicant before proceeding to the preferred Entry Point or nearest Ugandan embassy/mission abroad for the visa to be issued or before entering the country to have the permit endorsed in the passport.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Globally mobile employees coming to work in Uganda (and any trailing family members), their international assignment program managers, and their in-house or external immigration advisers need to be aware of the move to online applications for visas, passes, and work permits. The DCIC is no longer receiving manual applications; this is also applicable to Ugandan embassies/missions abroad. This should lead to swifter and more timely processing of applications.

It's important to note that no airline/carrier will be allowed to carry passengers without Travel Authorization (e-visa approval).

Furthermore, organizations/companies that intend to send their staff to work in Uganda will have to undergo the process of profiling (more on this below) in order to obtain a code which will facilitate their application process.

Background and New System

The system started full operation on 1 July 2016. Manual applications of visas on arrival were being processed alongside the electronic visas until 31 July 2016.

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Prior to introduction of the electronic system, applications for work permits and passes could be submitted while the applicant was in the country until approval and issuance. The new procedure helps ensure that the applicant can only travel to Uganda if and when he or she has received Travel Authorization. This effectively removes the option for travelers to obtain visas at the point of entry into the country.

Organization Profiling

For applicants seeking work permits, the organizations/companies will now be required to submit specific company information to the DCIC for “profiling”³ in the system and a code that is unique to the organization/company will be generated. Work permit applications for the specific organization/company can only be submitted electronically using the code.

Entry permit applications can only be made against “profiled” organizations/companies.

What You Can Apply for on E-immigration Portal

The following facilities can be applied for online:

- All types of visas;
- Entry permits/Work permits;
- Students Pass;
- Special Pass;
- Dependent’s Pass (If the principal’s work permit was obtained electronically);
- Certificate of Residence.

Timelines

The new system is expected to reduce the processing period considerably except in special circumstances where more documentation and/or verification may be required.

KPMG NOTE

The new procedure:

- brings the application process ‘closer’ to applicants abroad;
 - helps ensure that only applicants with approved work permits may travel to Uganda;
 - provides the applicant an opportunity to personally submit an application and follow up on the progress from wherever he or she is.
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FOOTNOTES:

- 1 For further information, see <https://visas.immigration.go.ug/> and https://visas.immigration.go.ug/#/help/entry_permit .
- 2 Introduction of the e-immigration system does not affect the fees and legal requirements per category for obtaining a visa, pass, or work permit under the laws of Uganda.
- 3 It is our understanding that the process of “profiling” in this regard involves the entity providing documents relating to its registration, ownership, management, tax compliance status, financial status, and business license to the DCIC. This information is submitted in electronic format. Thereafter a Unicode code is assigned to the entity for use when applying for work permits. It is not clear at this stage how this information is treated or evaluated.

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Contact us

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