

GMS Flash Alert



Immigration Edition

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India - e-Visa Regime Liberalised

On 15 February 2019, the government of India's Ministry of Tourism issued a press release¹ summarising the amendments made to further liberalise the e-Visa regime to make India more business- and tourist-friendly.

WHY THIS MATTERS

With the updated guidelines, India has further liberalised the rules and has taken important steps to make visa applications and compliance easier. Immigration counsel and global mobility managers should consider the movements of foreign nationals and employees on business travel to India for whom they are responsible, and establish policies and procedures that will support compliance with India's immigration rules. Tourists and other foreign nationals traveling to India for non-work purposes should stay informed of developments to foster their compliance as well.

Background

The e-Visa regime was introduced in 2014 and the facility is currently available to the nationals of 166 countries.² There are five sub-categories of e-Visa currently. Over the past year, India has made a series of amendments to the e-Visa guidelines to make India a more tourism- and business-friendly destination. (For related coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2018-164](#) (14 December 2018).)

The recent press release summarises the further liberalised e-Visa guidelines.

Changes to Grant, Duration, and Number of Entries

- **e-Business visa** and **e-Tourist visa** may be granted multiple times in a year for a maximum period of one year with multiple entry facility (up from three times in a calendar year for a maximum of 60 days with triple entry facility).

Changes to Continuous Stay

- For an **e-Business visa**, the continuous stay in India now cannot exceed 180 days (up from 60 days) during each visit.
- For an **e-Tourist visa**, the continuous stay now cannot exceed 90 days (up from 60 days) during each visit. However, nationals of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Japan can continuously stay in India for 180 days.

Other Changes

- The “visa on arrival” facility has been extended to nationals of the Republic of Korea (earlier only available to nationals of Japan).
- Two more airports (Port Blair and Bhubaneshwar) have been added to the list of e-Visa entry airports, raising the total to 28.

KPMG NOTE

The changes made by the government are a welcome step. Bringing e-Visa guidelines more or less at par with regular visas should make matters administratively convenient for foreign nationals and help to build India’s reputation as an attractive tourist and business destination.

FOOTNOTES:

1 For details, please [click here](#).

2 For more information, please [click here](#).

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or the following professional with the KPMG International member firm in India:



Parizad Sirwalla

Partner and National Head – GMS, Tax India

+91 (22) 3090 2010

psirwalla@kpmg.com

* Please note that KPMG LLP (U.S.) does not provide any immigration services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.

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