



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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People's Republic of China - Targeted Changes to Facilitate Entry/Exit for Foreign Talent

The *Shanghai Municipal Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs* (SHAFEA), the National Immigration Administration, and the Exit-Entry Administration Bureau of Shanghai Public Security Bureau have progressively promulgated new policies since September 2019, aiming to attract more foreign talent and simplify entry and exit procedures for foreigners.

WHY THIS MATTERS

In light of the changes described in this newsletter, employers should find it simpler and more convenient to hire or assign in/to the People's Republic of China ("China" or "PRC") individuals with highly-desired talent and skills, valuable experience, and important contributions in their respective fields.

Transiting through China will also be made easier in certain circumstances.

However, employers should consult with their professional tax or global mobility advisers regarding the tax and social security implications of bringing these specialized employees into China by the various means and opportunities outlined below.

Key Points

Introducing Foreign Talent Pilot Program in Lin-Gang Special Area of China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone

The Lin-gang Special Area (LGSA) of the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone (Shanghai Pilot FTZ) will be upgraded to a foreign talent pilot zone. Specific measures to attract foreign talent specialising in innovative activities include:

- Foreign talent employed by scientific institutions and high-tech enterprises in the LGSA, foreign talent urgently needed for industrial development, and those who invest in the LGSA or engage in new innovative businesses will be subject to relaxed rules pertaining to age, education background, and work experience requirements for their preliminary PRC work permit applications;
- Talent and foreign team members who are pioneering in the high-tech industry will be entitled to simplified PRC work permits application procedures via the "Green Channel";
- Foreigners holding senior managerial or highly-technical positions in companies which are covered by the "Shanghai Science and Technology Innovation Occupations" list are entitled to simplified PRC work permit applications;
- Employers in the LGSA will have access to platforms established by the Shanghai Municipal Science and Technology Commission and SHAFEA to identify and source foreign talent. At the same time, LGSA will also provide support relating to on-boarding training, legal consultation, cultural exchange, and the settling in to the new location for foreign talent.

China 144-hour Visa-Free Transit Program Expanded to Cover 27 Ports

Effective 1 December 2019, eligible foreigners entering from airports in Chongqing and Xi'an can transit and stay in China for up to 144-hour without a visa. Those who enter from airports in Ningbo can also visit Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang Province during the 144-hour visa-free transit. Furthermore, airports in Chengdu have been expanded to Chengdu, Leshan, Deyang, Suining, Meishan, Ya'an, Ziyang, Neijiang, Zigong, Luzhou, and Yibin.

Following the expansion of the program, 30 border ports in 23 cities across 18 provinces in China will implement the 144-hour and 72-hour visa-exemption program for foreigners from 53 countries.

Maximum length of stay	Pre-December 1, 2019	Post-December 1, 2019 (*Newly-added border ports)
144 hours	Beijing, Tianjin, Shijiazhuang, Qinhuangdao, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Shenyang, Dalian, Qingdao, Chengdu, Xiamen, Kunming, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Jieyang	Chongqing*, Xi'an*, Ningbo*
72 hours	Chongqing, Xi'an, Changsha, Guilin, Ha'erbin	Changsha, Guilin, Ha'erbin

Self-Assisted (Online) Registration for Temporary Residence

The Exit-Entry Administration Bureau of the Shanghai Public Security Bureau has officially launched an online platform that enables foreigners to complete registration for temporary residence online.

- Applicant can scan a QR code and subscribe to the “we-chat” public account or log-in to the system on a personal computer;
- Minimal details regarding the applicant are required for completing the registration (e.g., applicant’s residential address and arrival/departure dates);
- Platform automatically verifies and confirms completion of registration on a timely basis;
- Completed “Temporary Residence Registration Form” can be downloaded and printed for record-keeping.

Launch of “Single Window” in Shanghai for Foreigners’ Work and Residence Permits Applications

The Shanghai Public Security Bureau (PSB) and SHAFEA launched a “Single Window” for processing Foreigners’ Work and Residence Permits applications. Foreign talent that qualifies for the Category A work permit can now submit his or her work permit and residence permit applications simultaneously to the “single window” and can obtain both permits at the same time upon approval; and the entire process should be completed within seven business days.

KPMG NOTE

Companies should proactively evaluate the feasibility of applying new immigration policy and practice to their foreign employees and consider aligning their deployment strategy and corresponding policies accordingly.

The KPMG team in the People’s Republic of China is closely monitoring updates from the various authorities, and will endeavour to keep readers of *GMS Flash Alert* informed by way of future developments.

RELATED ARTICLE

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