



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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South Africa – Visa Process Centralised in Head Office

The Department of Home Affairs in South Africa has implemented a new centralised adjudication process for all visa applications submitted through the South African Missions and Consular offices abroad.¹ All long-term work visa and visa applications exceeding a period of three (3) months will be sent through to the Department of Home Affairs, Head Office in South Africa for adjudication and approval by the Director General of the Department of Home Affairs.

The new adjudication process aims to create consistency within the visa application processes by the Department of Home Affairs and to curb potential malfeasance practices within the visa process system.

WHY THIS MATTERS

As the new process is creating significant delays in processing, employers and international assignees should consider planning and applying for their long-term work visas and visa applications at the South African Missions well in advance in order to allow the Department of Home Affairs to process and finalise the visa applications without adversely impacting the commencement date of employment or international assignment in South Africa.

Overview

Previously, long-term work visas and visa applications submitted through the South African Missions and Consular offices abroad were adjudicated and processed by the South African Consulate/ High Commissioner in that country. The processing period by the South African Missions to finalise work visa applications was between four and eight (4-8) weeks.

With the implementation of the new centralised adjudication approach, the period for processing visa applications is currently 12-18 weeks or more for the Department of Home Affairs to finalise the visa applications. However, it is expected that the process will be more efficient, as the implementation processes progresses.

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Visa applications issued for less than three months, as well as study visa applications will continue to be adjudicated by the South African Missions.

KPMG NOTE

Although the new process is welcomed, there are now significant delays in processing the large influx of visa applications from South African Missions and a bottleneck and backlog in finalising visa applications. It has impacted the employment commencement dates of many assignees wishing to take up employment in South Africa and has adversely impacted many corporate employers and organisations.

FOOTNOTE:

1 Central Adjudication Internal Communique 03 of 2022: Implementation of the new delegations signed 12 January 2022.

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Contact us

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The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in South Africa.

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