

Mobility: Immigration alert

March 2023



South Africa

Automatic extensions for eligible visa holders until 31 December 2023

Executive summary

On 29 March 2023, the South African Department of Home Affairs (DHA) announced that holders of Long-Term Visas who submitted waiver or renewal applications and did not receive a decision regarding their application by 31 March 2023 received automatic extensions until 31 December 2023. This extension was enacted to mitigate the impact of [current backlogs](#) in visa application processing and issuance.

Key developments

Individuals who benefit from the automatic extension include holders of Long-Term Visas issued for the purpose of work, business, study or family reunification or to dependent spouses of primary applicants. These individuals may continue to conduct activities authorized under the terms of their current visa. They may depart from and re-enter South Africa prior to 31 December 2023 without facing penalties (e.g., being declared undesirable) even if their renewal application has not been adjudicated. In these cases, non-visa-exempt nationals (i.e., individuals who require a visa to enter South Africa on the basis of their nationality) must obtain a Visitor Visa to re-enter the country.

Holders of Short-Term Visas (i.e., with a validity of less than 90 days) who submitted renewal applications and did not receive a decision regarding their application by 31 March 2023 are not eligible for the automatic extension and must depart the country prior to the expiry of their existing visa.

Impact on employers

Employers may inform impacted employees of the temporary extensions to ensure compliance with immigration rules. In light of the backlog, employees may plan to submit renewal applications well in advance of their current Long-Term Visa's expiry to ensure they receive an extension on time and avoid non-compliance risks.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

EY | Building a better working world

EY exists to build a better working world, helping create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets.

Enabled by data and technology, diverse EY teams in over 150 countries provide trust through assurance and help clients grow, transform and operate.

Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.

EY refers to the global organization, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity. Ernst & Young Global Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, does not provide services to clients. Information about how EY collects and uses personal data and a description of the rights individuals have under data protection legislation are available via ey.com/privacy. EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organization, please visit ey.com.

Ernst & Young LLP is a client-serving member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited operating in the US.

© 2023 Ernst & Young LLP.
All Rights Reserved.

EYG no. 003257-23Gbl

2101-3682263
ED None

ey.com

Michelle Kotze
Partner/Principal - People Advisory Services
Tel: +27 11 82 870 4870
Email: michelle.kotze1@ey.com

Chantelle Mulligan
Senior Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +27 71 200 9022
Email: chantelle.mulligan@ey.com

Nana Duma
Senior Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +27 82 614 2420
Email: nana.duma@ey.com

Valerie Chigodora
Senior Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +27 11 66 486 1220
Email: valerie.c.chigodora@ey.com