

Global Immigration alert

May 2024

Ireland

Eligible spouses and partners of certain employment permit holders can now work without obtaining a work permit

Executive summary

Effective 15 May 2024, eligible spouses and partners of certain Irish employment permit holders who are currently residing in Ireland on a Stamp 3 permission are being issued Stamp 1G permission, which enables them to work or study in Ireland without obtaining a separate permit.

Background

Previously, qualifying spouses and partners from countries outside the EU, EEA, Switzerland and the UK, who were residing with employment permit holders in Ireland and granted family reunification in accordance with the Non-EEA Family Reunification Policy, were issued a Stamp 3 residence permission. This included spouses and partners of holders of General Employment Permits or Intra-Corporate Transferee Permits and Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors on a Multi-Site General Employment Permit. Stamp 3 authorizes holders to reside in Ireland for a specified period but does not confer the right to work or engage in any business or trade.

Key developments

The new development impacts spouses and partners who obtained valid Stamp 3 permission on or before 15 May 2024 and provides them a way to access the labor market in Ireland through Stamp 1G.

Stamp 1G does not allow holders to establish or operate a business (i.e., they cannot be self-employed). Individuals must apply to renew their Stamp 1G registration annually. After five years of residing in Ireland on a Stamp 1G, individuals may

be eligible to apply for Stamp 4, which authorizes them to study, work or set up a business in Ireland without holding a separate permit.

A transition period will be in place until 15 May 2025. During this period, eligible spouses and partners who currently have a Stamp 3 endorsed on their Irish Residence Permit (IRP) Card will automatically receive all rights associated with Stamp 1G without the need to update their current IRP Card (i.e., they do not need to visit their local immigration office or apply online). Consequently, these individuals will be able to work in Ireland by presenting their Stamp 3 permission and a [letter](#) issued by the Irish authorities that explains this temporary arrangement. Individuals whose Stamp 3 permission expires during this transition period and who apply to renew their permission will be issued a new IRP Card with a Stamp 1G. It is expected that all impacted spouses and partners will have a Stamp 1G endorsed on their IRP Cards by 15 May 2025.

The eligibility requirements for joining qualifying employment permit holders in Ireland remain unchanged. Spouses and partners who do not currently reside in Ireland can apply for family reunification only after their family member has held a qualifying permit for at least 12 months. Once these individuals apply for and are granted family reunification, they will be able to work in Ireland without obtaining a separate work permit.

This development does not impact other family members (i.e., non-spouses/partners) of holders of qualifying permits, those

who are in Ireland based on another permission (e.g., Stamp 2), and Stamp 3 holders who are in Ireland based on other reasons (e.g., volunteering activity).

Impact on employers

This development is expected to provide employers greater access to international talent by authorizing eligible spouses and partners to join the Irish workforce and enable companies to further attract highly skilled third-country nationals by providing them enhanced benefits.

Key steps

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

Michael Rooney

Partner - People Advisory Services
Tel: +353 1 221 2857
Email: michael.rooney@ie.ey.com

Jim Ryan

Partner - People Advisory Services
Tel: +353 1 221 2434
Email: jim.ryan@ie.ey.com

Rachel Dillon

Partner - People Advisory Services
Tel: +353 1 221 2554
Email: rachel.dillon@ie.ey.com

Sinead Langan

Director - Head of Immigration
Tel: +353 1 221 2443
Email: sinead.langan@ie.ey.com

Aislinn Stanton

Senior Manager - Immigration
Tel: +353 1 221 1602
Email: aislinn.stanton@ie.ey.com

Ben Willis

Partner - People Advisory Services, EMEA Immigration Leader
Tel: +44 20 7951 9589
Email: ben.willis@uk.ey.com

Seema Farazi

Partner - People Advisory Services, EMEA Immigration Leader
Tel: +44 20 7951 7122
Email: seema.farazi@uk.ey.com

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