



REGULATORY UPDATES

Changes in Entry and Residency Scheme in UAE

UAE ANNOUNCES SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES ON ENTRY AND RESIDENCE SCHEMES FOR FOREIGNERS

The UAE Cabinet has approved the executive regulations of the Federal Decree-Law on entry and residence of foreigners which provides comprehensive information on the types and conditions of entry visas and residence permits.

The new system of entry and residence aims at attracting and retaining global talents and skilled workers from all over the world, boosting the competitiveness and flexibility of the job market and fostering a high sense of stability among UAE residents and families.

The Key Highlights of the changes proposed on entry and residence schemes by UAE Cabinet are as follows:

1. Simplification in eligibility criteria and expansion of categories of beneficiaries for Golden Residence Scheme

Golden residence is long-term 10-year residence is granted to investors, entrepreneurs, exceptional talents, scientists and professionals, outstanding students and graduates, humanitarian pioneers and frontline heroes.

Substantial amendments to Golden Residence Scheme are introduced such as:

- a) The Scheme to allow the Golden Residence holder to sponsor his/ her family members, including spouse and children regardless of their age, and to sponsor support services (domestic) labourers without limiting their number.
- b) There will be no restriction related to the maximum duration of stay outside UAE in order to keep the golden residence valid.
- c) **Expansion in criteria for beneficiaries in Golden Residence for Professionals**

A major expansion is introduced in this category to attract highly skilled workers with educational qualifications and professional experience in all disciplines, including medicine, sciences and engineering, information technology, business and administration, education, law, culture and social sciences.

d) Relaxation in eligibilities for Golden Residence for Real Estate Investors

Real estate investors can obtain golden residence when purchasing a property worth no less than AED2 million. Now, the investors are also entitled to obtain the Golden Residence when purchasing a property with a loan from specific local banks.

Investors can also obtain Golden Residence when buying one or more off-plan properties of no less than AED2 million from approved local real estate companies.

e) Flexibility for Golden Residence for Entrepreneurs

The executive regulations set flexible requirements for entrepreneurs eligible to obtain the Golden Residence; an entrepreneur could be an owner or partner in a registered start up in the country.

In addition, obtaining approval for a startup idea from an official business incubator or from the Ministry of Economy or the competent local authorities is sufficient to obtain the Golden Residence in this category.

If the person is a founder of a previous entrepreneurial project(s) that was sold for a total of not less than AED7 million, he/she will be entitled to the Golden Residence, subject to approval of the competent local authorities for projects or ideas.

2. Green residence for freelancers, and self-employed individuals without sponsor

The amendment provides a five-year residency for freelancers and self-employed individuals without requiring a sponsor or employer in the UAE.

3. Introduction of Green residence for investors or partners

This residence provides 5-year residency for investors establishing or participating in commercial activities. It replaces the previous residence which was valid for 2 years only. Requirements include approval of the investment and proof of investment.

4. Introduction of Green Residence for Skilled Employee

This new track provides a 5-year residency for skilled employees, without a sponsor or employer. The applicants should have a valid employment contract, and should be classified in the first, second or third occupational level as per the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation. The minimum educational level must be a bachelor's degree or equivalent, and the salary should not be less than AED15,000.

5. New Benefits for Family Members

The new system provides more benefits to family members, allowing residents to easily issue residence permits for their family members, including spouse and children.

The age of children who may be sponsored has been raised to 25 years (previously 18 years), with no age limit for unmarried daughters.

Green Residences holders are allowed to issue residence permits for their first-degree relatives, and in all cases the residency of family members shall be the validity duration as the original residence holder.

6. Introduction of various types of Visas for different visit purposes

New types of visas are introduced without requiring a host or sponsor for the first time. Major improvements include facilitating the entry requirements for all visa types, offering flexible visa durations that meet the needs of the visitors and the purpose of the visit.

All entry visas are available for single or multiple entry and can be renewed for similar period(s) and are valid for 60 days from their issuance date. Certain newly introduced category of Permits includes:

a) Job Exploration Entry Visa

This Visa is introduced for talented and skilled professionals for exploring job opportunities without the requirement of sponsor or a host.

b) Five-year multi-entry Tourist Visa

In addition to the regular tourist visa sponsored by tourism establishment in the UAE, a five-years multi-entry tourist visa was introduced without a sponsor. It allows the person to stay in the country up to 90 continuous days, and it may be extended for a similar period, provided that the entire period of stay does not exceed 180 days in one year.

c) Entry Permit to Visit Relatives or Friends

As per the current amendment, a visitor can apply for this entry permit if he/she is a relative or friend of a UAE citizen or resident. It also does not require a sponsor or a host.

d) Entry Permit for a Temporary Work Mission

This type is intended for those who have a temporary work assignment like probation testing or project-based mission and is sponsored by the employer. It requires a temporary work contract or a letter from the employer clarifying the visit purpose and proof of health fitness to work.

e) Business Entry Visa

This allows easy entry for investors and entrepreneurs to explore business and investment opportunities in UAE.

For further details or clarifications, please refer the publication at:

<https://mediaoffice.ae/en/news/2022/April/18-04/UAE-Cabinet-chaired-by-Mohammed-bin-Rashid-approves-law>

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