

Mobility: Immigration alert

December 2021



Philippines

New Philippines Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) visa

Executive summary

The Government of the Philippines recently introduced a new work visa for non-Filipino nationals who are sponsored to work in the Philippines by companies registered with the [Philippine Economic Zone Authority](#) (PEZA). Non-Filipino nationals who work for PEZA-registered companies must now obtain PEZA visas in lieu of 47(a)(2) visas.

Key issues

The PEZA and the Bureau of Immigration of the Philippines began issuing the new PEZA visa on 27 November 2021. PEZA visa applications are processed in 10 business days, unlike 47(a)(2) visas which can take up to two months to be issued. PEZA visas are valid for up to two years initially, and can be renewed once for two years, for a maximum validity period of four years. Individuals who obtain PEZA visas will be issued a special identification card, known as the PEZA Visa Card. PEZA Visa Cards are valid for up to one year initially, and must be renewed yearly for the duration of the corresponding PEZA visa. Unlike 47(a)(2) visa holders, PEZA visa holders are not required to obtain ACR-I Cards. PEZA visa holders may be joined in the Philippines by married opposite-sex spouses and children under the age of 22 for the duration of their PEZA visa. Dependent family members of PEZA visa holders are not authorized to work while in the Philippines. However, dependent children may study in the Philippines.

Holders of valid 47(a)(2) visas who are sponsored by PEZA-registered companies may continue to use their 47(a)(2) visas until they expire. Upon the expiration of their 47(a)(2) visas,

they must obtain a PEZA visa, provided they are still eligible to work for the PEZA-registered company. Applications for 47(a)(2) visas that were sponsored by PEZA-registered companies but not adjudicated as of 27 November 2021 are being treated as new PEZA visa applications, with successful applicants receiving PEZA visas instead of 47(a)(2) visas.

Application document requirements

The document requirements for obtaining PEZA visas are similar to those for 47(a)(2) visas. However, unlike 47(a)(2) visa applications, applications for PEZA visas must include:

- ▶ A notarized certificate signed by the sponsoring company's president, CEO or another authorized representative, listing the number and percentage of foreign workers and Filipino employees in the company
- ▶ A document signed by an authorized company representative committing the foreign worker to train Filipino employees of the company, known as an "Undertaking for an Understudy Program in training Filipino workers"
- ▶ An organizational chart of the sponsoring company
- ▶ An endorsement letter from the PEZA Zone Manager or Administrator to the Director General of the PEZA
- ▶ Apostilled or otherwise authenticated marriage or birth certificates (when applying together with dependent spouses or children)
- ▶ A notarized Affidavit of Support/Guarantee, signed by the sponsoring company's president or vice-president, committing to cover costs relating to dependents while in the Philippines (for applications including dependents)

Downgrading and cancelation of PEZA visas

Upon the conclusion of PEZA visa holders' employment in the Philippines, they must downgrade their PEZA visas to 9(a) tourist visas, which are valid for 59 days. They must then cancel their PEZA visas and Visa Cards, obtain an "Order of Cancellation" from the PEZA, and depart the country prior to the expiration of their tourist visa. Companies that sponsor PEZA visa holders must notify the PEZA no more than five days following the end of the foreign national's employment with the company.

Key steps

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

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EYG no. 010723-21Gbl

2101-3682263
ED None

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