

Mobility: Immigration alert

February 2024

South Africa

Extension of blanket concession for individuals with pending visa, waiver and appeal applications until 30 June 2024

Executive summary

South Africa's Department of Home Affairs (DHA) recently extended certain relaxations for eligible individuals whose Long-Term Visa, waiver or appeal applications were pending adjudication as of 30 November 2023 until 30 June 2024.

Background

The DHA has been experiencing significant delays in the processing of visa applications. It has attributed the backlog to several factors, including a shortage of personnel, an exercise to curb corruption, a complex visa application process, and travel restrictions imposed following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of these delays, the DHA announced a concession in March 2023, enabling holders of Long-Term Visas who submitted waiver or renewal applications and did not receive a decision regarding their application by 31 March 2023 to receive [automatic extensions](#) of their visas until 31 December 2023.

Key developments

The DHA has now further extended the aforementioned deadline until 30 June 2024 for individuals who filed a Long-Term Visa, waiver or appeal application on or before 30 November 2023 and did not receive a decision as of that date.

Impacted individuals who do not require a visa to enter South Africa may exit and re-enter the country on or before 30 June 2024 without facing penalties. Those who require a visa must apply for a Visitor Visa before re-entering South Africa. Individuals who seek to withdraw their application and exit the country

may do so at a port of entry on or before 30 June 2024. Individuals who have filed a visa appeal application must present a copy of their visa application rejection letter and a submission receipt of the appeal application when exiting or re-entering. Until they receive a decision, applicants cannot undertake activities that are prohibited under the terms of their current visas.

The concession further states that individuals who applied to renew their 90-day visitor visas on or before 30 November 2023 and do not receive an outcome by 23 February 2024 must exit South Africa on or before 29 February 2024.

Impact on employers

The extension is expected to benefit employers by minimizing work disruptions stemming from foreign nationals losing their immigration status in South Africa due to the current delays in application processing. The latest extension also applies to appeal applications, which were not previously covered in the concession.

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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