

Mobility: Immigration alert

July 2022



China

Reduced COVID-19 isolation period for all inbound travelers, PU letters no longer required for business visitors

Executive summary

Individuals traveling to China Mainland must now isolate at a government-designated hotel (i.e., undergo centralized isolation) for seven days and then monitor their health in a private accommodation (i.e., undergo home health monitoring) for three days. In addition, certain business visitors are no longer required to obtain Official Invitation (PU) letters prior to applying for business (M or F) visas.

Background

The Chinese government first imposed isolation requirements for inbound travelers on 18 March 2020 to manage the entry of foreigners and restrict the spread of COVID-19. It updated the isolation requirements for new entrants on several occasions over the course of the pandemic.

In April 2020, the Chinese government started requesting PU letters from individuals filing immigration applications to further manage the impact of the pandemic. In June 2022, it [stopped requiring PU letters](#) from certain foreign nationals traveling to China Mainland for work as well as accompanying family members.

COVID-19 isolation and testing

On 28 June 2022, the Chinese authorities announced that effective immediately, most inbound travelers must undergo centralized isolation for seven days (down from 14 days previously) followed by home health monitoring for three days (down from seven days). As previously, travelers who do not have a permanent address in their destination city in China Mainland may be able to complete their home health monitoring period in a government-designated hotel.

In addition, inbound travelers are now required to take throat swab nucleic acid COVID-19 tests on their first, second, third, fifth and seventh days of centralized isolation and their third day of home health monitoring. Previously, they were required to take nasal swab nucleic acid COVID-19 tests on their first, fourth and seventh days of centralized isolation and both nasal swab and throat swab COVID-19 tests on the 14th day of centralized isolation.

PU letter exemption

The Chinese authorities also announced recently that certain individuals who apply to obtain M or F (business) visas are no longer required to submit PU letters as part of their applications, irrespective of the locations in China Mainland to which they are traveling. At the time of writing, individuals filing business visa applications with the Chinese embassies and consulates in Australia, Bahamas, Brazil, France, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Uganda, UK and Uruguay are exempt from the PU letter requirement. It is expected that this exemption will extend to individuals applying from other Chinese embassies or consulates in the near future. This relaxation of the PU letter requirement is expected to reduce the overall application processing time for impacted applicants by up to two months.

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. 005931-22Gbl

2101-3682263
ED None

ey.com

Ben Fan

Partner - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: + 8621 2228 2257
Email: ben.fan@cn.ey.com

Dienn Hu

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: + 8621 2228 3749
Email: dienn.hu@cn.ey.com

Carrie Yu

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: + 8621 2228 2354
Email: carrie.yu@cn.ey.com

Carey Yan

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: 15021033177
Email: carey.yan@cn.ey.com

Scott Li

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +86755 2591 4760
Email: scott.xf.li@cn.ey.com

Grace Song

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: + 8610 5913 5189
Email: grace.song@cn.ey.com