

Mobility: Immigration alert

June 2022



China

PU letters no longer required for foreign assignees and their family members traveling to Shanghai

Executive summary

Foreign nationals who receive preliminary approval to work in Shanghai as well as their accompanying family members are no longer required to obtain Official Invitation (PU) letters prior to applying for work (Z) or family visit (S) visas. Individuals traveling for business to any region in China Mainland, including Shanghai, must still obtain a PU letter before applying for a business (M) visa.

Background

The Chinese government started requesting PU letters from individuals filing immigration applications (both primary applicants and dependent family members) in April 2020, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, to manage the entry of foreigners.

Key issues

On 6 June 2022, the authorities in Shanghai declared that the following categories of applicants are no longer required to obtain PU letters:

- ▶ Foreign nationals who receive approval to work in Shanghai (i.e., a work permit notification letter or valid work permit issued by the Shanghai Expert Bureau)
- ▶ Accompanying family members of foreign nationals who receive approval to work in Shanghai, including those who are already working in Shanghai

This measure has gone into effect in certain locations (e.g., Singapore, Italy, Canada, Korea, Australia, Japan, Germany) but has not yet been implemented by all Chinese embassies worldwide at the time of writing. Travelers can confirm their

specific requirements with the embassy in the location where they file their application.

The elimination of the requirement to submit PU letters in support of work (Z) and family visit (S) visa applications sponsored by entities in Shanghai is expected to reduce overall application processing times for impacted applicants (both primary and dependent) by up to two months.

Changshu City in Jiangsu Province has also stopped requiring PU letters from the aforementioned categories of applicants who are sponsored by entities in Changshu City. Additional locations in China Mainland are expected to announce similar measures in the near future.

While business visitors are still required to obtain PU letters prior to applying for a business (M) visa, irrespective of the location in China Mainland to which they are traveling, they are no longer required to submit their recent travel history when applying to obtain PU letters as of 6 June 2022.

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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