

Mobility: Immigration alert

February 2023



Israel

New online processes and electronic issuance of B-1 Work Visas

Executive summary

Effective 31 January 2023, applications for B-1 Work Visas must be submitted online, and successful applicants are being issued electronic visas.

Background

B-1 Work Visas are available to eligible foreign nationals who seek to work and reside in Israel temporarily. In general, these visas are initially issued for one year, can be extended for a total cumulative validity of up to five years, and allow holders to bring in dependent family members. In some instances, B-1 Visas are only issued for 90 days, without the ability to bring in dependents.

Key developments

As previously, employers that sponsor individuals for B-1 Work Visas must first submit an online work permit application to the Israeli immigration authorities. Effective 31 January 2023, employers (or service providers on their behalf) must follow the process below:

- ▶ Once the work permit application is approved, in general, the employer must submit an online visa application to the Israeli immigration authorities. Previously, they were required to submit visa applications in person to the Ministry of Interior (MOI).
- ▶ As previously, the immigration authorities issue an invitation letter to the Israeli embassy or consulate in the applicant's country of residence. The applicant visits the embassy or consulate to attend an interview and get a B-1 Work Visa stamp endorsed in their passport. Those who apply for Expedited B-1 Visas are exempt from the consular procedure.

- ▶ Once the applicant arrives in Israel using their B-1 Visa, the employer must submit an online Multiple-Entry Visa application to the immigration authorities. Previously, employers were required to file the application in person with the MOI.
- ▶ The authorities issue the B-1 Visa and Multiple-Entry Visa electronically via email. Previously, applicants were required to submit their passport to the immigration authorities, which stamped the visas in their passports.

These changes apply to all types of B-1 Work Visas for primary applicants (e.g., Expert B-1 Visas issued for one year, Expedited B-1 Visas issued for 90 days and Hi-Tech Visas). The application process for dependents, who are eligible to obtain B-2 Visas, remains unchanged. The MOI continues to issue B-2 Visas to dependents physically.

Impact on employers

The recent changes are expected to benefit employers by streamlining and expediting the application process for B-1 Work Visas. Employers may encourage their employees to retain physical copies of their B-1 Work Visas to avoid potential travel delays.

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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