

# Mobility: Immigration alert

June 2021



## Colombia

Venezuelans granted further permission to enter and depart Colombia with expired passports; several administrative deadlines extended

### Executive summary

The Colombian Government announced earlier this month that Venezuelan citizens may now enter, transit through, and depart Colombia with passports that expired up to 10 years prior to their desired entry/departure. They may also use expired passports to apply for all administrative procedures in Colombia, including obtaining work visas and temporary protected status (Estatuto Temporal de Protección al Migrante Venezolano). The Government also extended the deadline for foreigners to apply for foreign identification cards (Cédulas de Extranjería), register their visas with the Colombian immigration authorities, and request a Safe Conduct certificate to 16 September 2021.

### Background

In March 2019, the Colombian Government granted Venezuelan citizens the right to enter, transit through, and depart Colombia with passports that had expired up to two years prior to their entry to, or departure from, Colombia. This measure was enacted in response to the current humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, to support Venezuelans' ability to obtain valid immigration status in Colombia and facilitate the movement of Venezuelan citizens to, and through, Colombia. Separately, as a result of Government office closures due COVID-19, the Colombian immigration authorities (Migración Colombia) stopped processing certain immigration applications that require applicants to appear in person at the offices of the Colombian authorities, between March and September 2020. The authorities resumed processing of these applications on 21 September 2020. However, as of late September 2021, applicants must make an appointment to appear in person and submit

their applications. Previous, an appointment for in-person application submissions was not needed.

### Venezuelans' ability to use expired passports extended

While Venezuelan citizens may enter/depart Colombia using passports that expired up to 10 years prior to their desired entry/departure, they must still obtain an entry stamp in their passports from the Colombian border authorities in order to obtain/maintain valid immigration status in Colombia. Additionally, Venezuelans with stamped, expired passports may obtain Colombian business and work visas. This is noteworthy for Colombian organizations that hire highly skilled Venezuelan nationals and manual laborers. The extension also applies to Venezuelans who obtained an extension to their passport (prorroga) and who have a sticker in their passports confirming the new expiry date.

### Deadline for completing in person-appearances for certain applications extended to 16 September 2021

Foreigners in Colombia who have not yet finalized their applications to obtain foreign identification cards (Cédulas de Extranjería) or Safe Conduct (SC-1 and SC-2) certificates, or register their visas with the immigration authorities, may now do so before 16 September 2021 without incurring penalties. Impacted individuals must schedule [an in-person appointment](#) with Migración Colombia to complete these applications. Organizations in Colombia that sponsor foreign workers should take appropriate actions to ensure that foreign workers complete these steps before 16 September 2021 to ensure compliance with Colombian immigration laws.

## Next 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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