

Types and categories of visa

Visa may be issued for visits, business, work and study purposes. A work visa may be issued by the Pakistan Mission abroad on consultation with the Ministry of Interior and Board of Investment (BOI) in Pakistan. A study visa may be issued by Pakistan Mission abroad to foreign students seeking admission in institutions in Pakistan after clearance by Ministry of Education/Interior Division. Those foreign students who intend to get admission in professional colleges/universities in Pakistan will be granted a visa after clearance from Economic Affairs Division/Ministry of Interior.

There are three categories of visas, namely; single journey visa, transit visa and multiple journey visa. A transit visa may be a single journey or a multiple journey visa. A single journey transit visa may be granted without obtaining clearance from the Directorate General of Immigration and Passport provided that:

- the onward journey of the applicant is reasonably assured or if it is not reasonably possible to arrange for such a journey in advance, the applicant genuinely intends to proceed to another destination;
- the applicant's documents for the country of destination and countries on route are in order.

A transit visa for multiple journeys is granted with a prior reference to the Directorate General of Immigration & Passport.

A multiple journey visa may be granted to the following categories:

- to the bona fide businessmen belonging to 43 countries listed below for a maximum of six journeys in a year with the approval of Director General Immigration & Passport or Ministry of Interior, Islamabad.
- to all deserving cases of British Nationals for two years with unlimited entries with prior approval of Ministry of Interior.
- All foreign nationals of Pakistan-origin for five years with authorized duration of stay until the validity of visa, i.e. five years.

With a view to encourage investment and promote trade, it has been decided to liberalize Pakistan's visa policy with the 43 countries listed below. Salient features of the new policy are as set out below:

- Businessmen and investors from the listed countries with substantial investment in Pakistan would be granted 3 years multiple entry visa.
- Businessmen from the listed countries who want to establish business offices in Pakistan would be issued a multiple entry visa for one year on the basis of recommendation of their Embassies/Missions in Pakistan.

- Businessmen/investors from any of the listed countries, where there is no Pakistan Embassy will also be allowed thirty days landing permission on arrival at Pakistan Airport.
- Multiple entry resident visas for a period of three years will be issued to the nationals of all countries, except those not recognized by Pakistan, who bring in an amount of US\$200,000.
- Pakistani industrialists/businessmen interested to invite foreign entrepreneurs from countries other than listed, for the promotion of trade and industrial co-operation would be allowed to issue visa facilities through Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Islamabad and the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry for which they will inform the Ministry of Interior on their guarantee for a period of one month.
- Businessmen and investors of the following countries would be granted a multiple journey visa:

Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, UAE, UK, USA.

Validity of visa and period of stay

All visas are valid for entry into Pakistan for six months from the date of issue and if a visa has not been utilized within this period it would become invalid.

The period of stay indicated in a visa should not exceed three months in any case unless specified otherwise. A foreigner can enter Pakistan at any time within the period of validity of his visa. The period of his stay will count from the date of his arrival and will be governed by a residential permit issued by the Immigration Police at the time of his registration and not by his visa.

The visit/tourist/business visas will not be converted into any other type of visa after entering into Pakistan. For study/work visas the case of the foreigner may be processed with all concerned Agencies/Ministries Divisions.

Visa applications

Application for visas for Pakistan must be made on a prescribed form, completed in all respects. For transit visas a separate form is prescribed.

The following documents should be submitted to obtain visas:

- a valid passport;
- certificate of immunization;
- health declaration;
- proof of financial sources;
- proof that the foreigner has no past criminal record.

Depending on the type of the visa additional documents are required:

- valid return ticket - tourist visa;
- proof of the foreigner's business contract, such as a letter from the sponsor - business visa;
- valid work permit - work/employment visas;
- proof that the foreigner is employed based on a work contract which has been already approved by the regulatory authorities - employment/work visas;
- copies of the academic or professional status of the foreigner - work/employment visas.

Exemption from visa

In the case of a foreign national of Pakistan origin, holding dual nationality who desires to travel to Pakistan on the passport of the foreign country which has a "Dual Nationality Agreement" with Pakistan, a stamp would be affixed on his foreign passport that he holds a Pakistani passport and is allowed to remain in Pakistan during the validity of this passport. This stamp would enable the holder to enter and stay in Pakistan for the duration of the period of validity of that passport. Pakistan has Agreements with the following countries for grant of dual nationality: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, France, Iceland, Italy, Jordan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, Syria, UK

In order to extend the facilities of travel to the children of British nationals of Pakistan-origin, a stamp would be affixed on the passport of British nationals of Pakistan-origin born in the United Kingdom and British colonies that the father of the holder of this passport has been registered in the British Home office as a citizen of the United Kingdom and he holds a British passport.

Visa exemption may be allowed to all nationals of the following countries on a bilateral basis:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Period of Exemption</u>
Hong Kong	1 month
Iceland	3 months
Maldives	3 months
Nepal	1 month
Singapore	3 months
Tonga	unspecified period
Trinidad & Tobago	unspecified period
South Korea	3 months
Western Samoa	1 month
Zambia	3 months

The Commonwealth Naval, Military and Air Force personnel (excluding those of India) holding documents of identity and movement orders are exempted from a visa.

Foreign seamen travelling by sea in ships in which they work and hold seamen's identify papers, including those who travel by air to join their ships at a Pakistan port, provided the shipping companies concerned guarantee to transport them at their own cost should they, for any reason fail to leave by the ship they intended to join. They must, however, obtain landing permits from the Immigration Police at the sea/air ports

Visa on arrival

Landing permits/transit visas for 30 days shall be granted by the Immigration staff free of charge to the genuine tourists after satisfying their bona fides except nationals of certain countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iraq, Israel, Libya, Nigeria, PLO, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Serbia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda)

Provided they possess return air tickets and sufficient foreign exchange at entry points/air ports. The tourists will obtain visas within the validity of landing permit from the nearest Regional Passport office.

Foreigners other than bona fide tourists requiring visa, but arriving without visa due to inadvertence, may be granted permission to land by the Immigration Police after necessary verification. This concession is not applicable to the stateless persons. Visas must be obtained by such foreigners if duration of stay exceeds 72 hours and they should also obtain a Registration Certificate under the Registration of Foreigners Rules as well as a Residential Permit for the required period of stay.

Landing permit/visas on arrival to the tourists group from all Independent States of former USSR. will be authorized for a maximum period of 10 days by the Ministry of Interior and will be granted if their requests, sponsored by the designated Pakistani tourist companies/tour operators are received with the prescribed documents/information through the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism at least seven days in advance.

Immigration Authorities at International Airports in Pakistan may issue visas on the prescribed affidavit to Taiwanese businessmen on their arrival in Pakistan.

Work permit

Expatriate technical and managerial personnel working in manufacturing/industrial sector and infra structure projects are exempt from obtaining work permits.

In other cases work permits will be issued by the Board of Investment (BOI) within a period of 4 to 6 weeks.

Work permits will be issued for a period of 3 to 5 years or validity of passports.

Work visas

Work visas will be issued within a maximum time of one month after the receipt of a request along with the requirement documentation.

Multiple entry visa for 3 years will be issued to foreign investors and expatriate employees subject to submission of complete documentation by their employer company and they hold work permit/passports valid for 3 years. In case multiple entry visa is granted, the number of entries will not be restricted to any specified limit.

Business visas will be issued on the same day basis.

The concerned Pakistani Mission abroad will grant a work visa till the validity of the work permit or passport, whichever is earlier, within a week after the receipt of request, provided BOI issues work permits on the basis of NOC of Ministry of Interior. In urgent cases, Ministry of Interior will issue work visas valid up to 3 months to foreigners on the recommendation of BOI or on the request of the employer (as the case may be) without clearance.

In case of the projects in power, petroleum exploration, communications, etc., concerned Agency or the management of such projects will identify the requirement of expatriate personnel. Accordingly, Ministry of Industry would issue visas subject to condition that particulars along with supporting documents of the expatriate personnel are furnished to the Ministry.

For the purpose of changing the category of visa of foreign national employees/investors, from business visa, the condition to go out of Pakistan to any third country has been withdrawn. Ministry of Interior will now process such requests on getting verification from BOI.