

Singapore

Immigration country brief



immigration requirements related to business visitors and employment authorization in Singapore. The information contained in this document is provided as a resource only and should not be construed as legal advice. If you have any further enquiries regarding the applicability of this information, please contact Crown's Immigration Manager, Asia.

Overview: Business visas

Business visitors who are nationals of non-visa-exempt countries are required to apply for an Entry Visa from a Singapore Consulate in his/her home country prior to entry to Singapore. At the time of application, the business traveller must declare the intent for the visit to Singapore is for business purposes. In addition to other standard visa application documents, an Invitation Letter issued by the host office in Singapore is required for the business visa application. Once approved, an Entry Visa will be issued with single, double, or multiple entries.

This Immigration Checkpoints Authority maintains a list of citizens of passport nationals that are required to apply for a visa to prior to entry to Singapore as a business visitor. Nationals not on the list can enjoy visa-free entry to Singapore. They include citizens of the U.S., Canada, Australia, South Korea, Japan and most EU countries nationals.

Visa types

Entry Visa

Summary: An Entry Visa for purposes of business is available for nationals of non-visa-exempt countries.

Maximum stay: An entry visa can be issued for up to three months of stay in Singapore.

Typical processing time: Varies by applicant citizenship and Consulate. Typically one to two weeks.

Overview: All foreign nationals who wish to work or undertake gainful employment in Singapore are required to obtain work authorization.

Work permit types

Employment Pass (EP)

Summary: Foreign professionals, company executives or individuals with specialized skills who wish to work in Singapore are required to apply for an Employment Pass (EP). Since August 2014, the Ministry of Manpower in Singapore has mandated firms in Singapore that wish to hire Employment Pass (EP) holders must first advertise that position in the government Jobs Bank for at least 14 days as an effort to recruit locals. Jobs meeting certain requirements can be exempt from new mandate.

An EP application is assessed based on the salary offered to the position, applicant's education qualification, professional qualifications, skill sets and overall experience.

Maximum stay: EP may grant the holder the right to work in Singapore for up to two years.

Processing time: Applications are lodged electronically with the Ministry of Manpower. Once submitted, the processing time is approximately one to two weeks from the date of submission.

Dependents: A Dependent Pass (DP) is issued to the spouse of an EP holder. A DP holder may apply for a Letter of Consent (LOC) to enable them to work. However, this can only be obtained once the spouse

has secured an employment offer. The spouse's employer must assist with the application. The success of the application will depend on the skills required for the position he/she has been appointed to.

Singapore does not recognize same sex relationships. Common law spouse of opposite sex may be recognized, and the relationship must be supported by embassy-certified documents confirming relationship of cohabitation. The partner can apply for A Long Term Visit Pass in order to stay with the principal in Singapore, however they will not be allowed to seek employment.

Limitation or special requirements:

There is a minimum salary requirement to be eligible for an EP. The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) maintains an updated list of occupations with "Strategic and Skills-in-Demand". Occupations listed in this list is expected to be in high demand in Singapore in the next few years. The MOM has an on-line self-assessment tool for EP applicant to assess their likelihood of getting an EP.

Other employment related passes

Singapore has different passes for different job skills levels of foreigners who wish to work and live in Singapore.

Personalised Employment Pass (PEP):

for foreign professionals who meet a certain criteria. Holder of this pass can work in any business sectors. However, they must earn a minimum annual salary and there is an maximum unemployment period for a given year. The PEP is not tied to any employer and is granted based on the applicant's merit.

EntrePass: for entrepreneurs who would like to establish a business in Singapore

S Pass: for mid-level skilled workers. Technician may fall into this category. Work Permit - for semi-skilled or unskilled workers.

continue next page →



Training Employment Pass - for Undergraduates or Intra Company Transferees (ICTs)

Summary: There is a provision for trainees or interns (either undergraduates or employees from overseas branch office) to work in Singapore. They can apply to work in Singapore under Training Employment Pass. For undergraduates, training attachment must be part of the degree program. For employees from an overseas branch office, it must be part of project or work familiarization, however a minimum monthly salary applies.

Maximum stay: A Training Employment Pass will only be issued for a maximum duration of three months. Intra Company Transferees whose assignment duration in Singapore is expected to last longer can alternatively apply for an Employment Pass (EP).

Processing time: Assuming applications are lodged electronically with the Ministry of Manpower, processing time is approximately two weeks from the date of submission.

Dependents: The spouse of an individual authorized to work in Singapore and issued with a Dependent Pass, may apply for a Letter of Consent (LOC) to enable them to work. However, this can only be obtained once the spouse has found an employer. The spouse's employer must assist with the application. The success of the application will depend on the skills required for the position he/she has been appointed to. The Ministry of Manpower does not recognize same sex relationships. Common law spouse (of opposite sex) is recognized, provided Embassy-certified documents confirm relationship of cohabitation. A Long Term Visit Pass can be obtained for the partner, however they will not be allowed to seek employment.

This list is not all-inclusive; other visa classifications may exist. The above are the most common employment-related work permits.

Additional information and resources

- Singapore Ministry of Manpower (MOM): www.mom.gov.sg
- Embassies Worldwide: www.embassyworld.org

