

Mobility: Immigration alert

February 2023



United Arab Emirates

UAE announces the launch of new re-entry permit service for residence visa holders who stay outside the UAE for six months or more

Executive summary

On 31 January 2023, the Emirates News Agency (WAM) [announced](#) that the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security (ICP) launched a new re-entry permit service for certain residence visa holders who stay outside the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for six months or more.

Background

Previously, residence visas were automatically canceled if their holders stayed outside the UAE for six months or more. These individuals were subject to fines at the discretion of the authorities and were required to obtain a new residence visa prior to their return to the UAE. Golden Visa holders were exempt from this rule and continue to remain exempt, as they can stay outside the UAE indefinitely without losing their status as residents, provided their visas remained valid.

Key developments

According to the ICP's Smart Services [website](#), eligible individuals can apply for the re-entry permit service via the ICP's online portal if they stay outside the UAE for six months or more for a valid reason. Individuals may also submit re-entry permit applications using the [UAEICP mobile app](#). Alternatively, their representatives in the UAE may do so on their behalf at Customer Happiness Centers and authorized typing centers.

To obtain a re-entry permit, applicants must have a valid reason for having remained outside the UAE for six months or more (e.g., study, work or medical treatment purposes) and present proof of the same. According to the ICP's website, these applicants must also pay a fine of AED 100 for every 30-day period that they spend outside the UAE, after the initial six

months of their departure from the jurisdiction. Individuals who are granted a re-entry permit must re-enter the UAE within 30 days of its issuance.

In general, the ICP processes re-entry permit applications within five days of their submission. Applications are automatically rejected in the following instances:

- ▶ After 30 days from the submission date if the application was returned to the applicant due to missing or inaccurate information/documents and was not resubmitted along with the necessary information/documents within 30 days of the submission date
- ▶ If the application was returned to the applicant three times due to missing or inaccurate information/documents

Impact on employers

The development is expected to benefit impacted residents, their dependents and employers by reducing the time and costs associated with long-term stays outside the UAE.

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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