

Date: 30.08.2020

No. 25022/62/2020-F-I
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs
Foreigners Division

GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES RELATING TO INDIAN VISA

1 Possession of travel documents

In terms of the provisions in the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, and the Rules made thereunder, every foreigner entering India must be in possession of a valid national passport or any other internationally recognised travel document establishing his/her nationality and identity and bearing - (a) his/ her photograph, and (b) a valid visa for India granted by an authorised Indian representative abroad (except to the extent mentioned in paras 2, 4 and 5 below).

2 Identity documents required for citizens of Nepal and Bhutan for travelling to India

- (A) A citizen of Nepal or Bhutan entering India by land or air over the Nepal or the Bhutan border does not require a passport or visa for entry into India. However, he/she should be in possession of any of the following identity documents -
- (i) Nepalese/ Bhutanese Passport; or
 - (ii) Nepalese/ Bhutanese Citizenship Certificate; or
 - (iii) Voter Identification Card issued by the Election Commission of Nepal/ Bhutan; or
 - (iv) Limited validity photo-identity certificate issued by Nepalese Mission/ Royal Bhutanese Mission in India when deemed necessary.
 - (v) For children between age group of 10-18 years, photo ID issued by the Principal of the School, if accompanied by parents having valid travel documents. No such document is required for children below the age group of 10 years.
- (B) A citizen of Nepal or Bhutan must be in possession of a Passport when entering India from a place other than Nepal/ Bhutan.
- (C) A citizen of Nepal or Bhutan must have a visa for India if he/she is entering India from China, Macau, Hong Kong, Pakistan and Maldives.
- (D) If a citizen of Nepal or Bhutan visits India on valid Nepalese/ Bhutanese passport, he/ she may not be allowed to proceed to any third country from India, unless he/ she obtains a 'No objection Certificate' from the Embassy of Nepal/ Royal Bhutanese Mission in India.

3 A photograph is necessary irrespective of age i.e. even for minor children below 15 years of age, if their name is included in the passport of either of their parents.

4 Minor children whose names are entered in their parent's passport must obtain a valid Indian visa for travel to India.

Note: Children above the age of 16 years must possess a separate valid national passport, to travel to India. Children who have arrived on their parent's passport must obtain a separate passport when they attain the age of 16 years while in India.

5 Application for grant of visa

An applicant for a visa shall have to submit an application on the on-line system in the standard visa application form. For this purpose, the applicants may log on to <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in> . The foreigner should be present within the jurisdiction of the Indian Mission/ Post concerned at the time of making an application and grant of visa.

6 Period of validity of passport and visa

Passport should have at least six months validity at the time of making application for grant of visa. It should have at least two blank pages for stamping by the Immigration Officer. The validity of all visas will commence from the date of issue of visa.

7 Application from non-residents

A foreigner can apply for any type of visa (including Employment/ Business Visa) from a country other than the country of his origin/ domicile. However, in such cases, visa will be granted only after consulting the Indian Mission concerned in the country of origin/ domicile of the foreigner.

8 Fee for visa

Fee for the grant of a visa will be charged in local currency in accordance with the instructions issued by the Ministry of External Affairs from time to time. Except in cases where a visa is cancelled, visa fee shall not be refunded. In cases where a visa has not been utilised within its validity period, the fee realised is not refundable.

9 Categories of visa

Main categories of visa being granted to a foreign national and sub-categories of visa are given in **Appendix-I**.

10 Activities permitted on a visa

Foreign nationals shall be required to strictly adhere to the purpose of visit declared while submitting the visa application. However, a foreign national (other than a Pakistani national) coming to India on any type of visa will be allowed to avail activities permitted under Tourist Visa.

11 For all visa related services within India like registration, extension of visa, exit permission etc., application is to be submitted online to the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO)/ Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) concerned. For this purpose, please visit <https://indianfrro.gov.in>

12 Conversion of e-visa/ Visa-on-Arrival/ Tourist Visa/ Employment Visa/ Business Visa/ Student Visa/ Research Visa to Entry visa

If a foreign national on e-visa/ Visa-on-Arrival/ Tourist Visa/ Employment Visa/ Business Visa/ Student Visa/ Research Visa marries an Indian national/ Person of Indian Origin/ OCI cardholder during the validity of his/her Visa, his/ her visa may be converted to Entry ['X-2'] Visa by FRRO/ FRO concerned.

13 Procedure to be adopted in case a foreigner on Tourist/ Employment/Business/ Student/ Research Visa falls ill after coming to India

If such a visa holder is suffering from a minor medical condition which does not require hospitalization and prolonged treatment, then he/ she will be allowed to take treatment. Further, in case of sudden illness which requires continuous treatment of less than 180 days or the stay stipulation period prescribed on the visa, the foreigner can take permission for treatment from FRRO/ FRO concerned by submitting a medical certificate from a government / ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research)/ NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers)/ MCI (Medical Council of India)/ CGHS (Central Government Health Scheme) recognized hospital. FRRO/ FRO concerned will issue a 'Medical Permit' without converting the Visa to a Medical Visa. Conversion to Medical Visa will be required only if the treatment exceeds 180 days or the stay stipulation period prescribed on the visa.

14 Conversion of visa of Person of Indian Origin to Entry Visa

e-visa/ Visa-on-Arrival/ Tourist Visa/ Employment Visa/ Business Visa/ Student Visa/ Research Visa of Persons of Indian Origin, who are otherwise entitled for Entry Visa, may be converted to Entry ['X-1'] Visa by FRRO/ FRO concerned.

15 Restriction on engaging in tabligh activities

Foreign nationals granted any type of visa and OCI cardholders shall not be permitted to engage themselves in tabligh work. There will be no restriction in visiting religious places and attending normal religious activities like attending religious discourses. However, preaching religious ideologies, making speeches in religious places, distribution of audio or visual display/ pamphlets pertaining to religious ideologies, spreading conversion etc. will not be allowed.

16 Issue of short duration visa to foreign nationals already holding longer duration visa

In the event of a foreign national availing short duration visas such as Conference Visa, Transit visa, e-Visa and Visa-on-Arrival while already having a long duration visa for India like multiple entry Tourist/ Business/ Employment/ Student/ Research Visas, the long duration visas will not get cancelled. In such cases, the long duration visa will be kept on hold for the period of the short duration visa.

17 Dock Entry Permit to foreigners visiting the dock area in the seaports

Foreigners must take NOC (No Objection Certificate) from the FRRO/ FRO concerned at the respective seaport to enter the dock area as the port premise is a notified Prohibited Place. In such circumstances, the local shipping agents should make a request to the FRRO/ FRO concerned to issue "No Objection Certificate".. Such Dock Entry Permit will be issued by the Port authorities only on the basis of NOC from the FRRO/ FRO concerned.

18 Persons arriving from Yellow Fever (YF) endemic countries

Persons arriving from Yellow Fever (YF) endemic countries (or if he/she has visited any Yellow Fever (YF) endemic country during past 6 days) will be required to possess a valid certificate of Yellow Fever vaccination from an authorized vaccination centre. The validity period of an international certificate of vaccination for yellow fever is lifelong beginning 10 days after vaccination.

At present, the following countries are regarded as yellow fever infected: -

AFRICA: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Cote d' Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda (30 countries).

AMERICA: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad (Trinidad only), Venezuela, Panama, Paraguay, Peru (13 countries).

19 Persons arriving from a country which is having public health risk

If a person is arriving from a country which is having public health risk with regard to any condition which has been declared as public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) by WHO DG, then he/ she may be required to undergo medical screening or additional measures as decided by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

20 Identity documents required for Indian Citizens travelling to Nepal

A citizen of India entering Nepal by land or air does not require a passport or visa for entry. However, while travelling by air between India and Nepal, he/she is required to be in possession of any of the following identity documents –

- (i) Valid National Passport; or
- (ii) Photo Identity card issued by the Government of India/State Govt./UT Administration in India to their employees or Election ID card issued by the Election Commission of India; or
- (iii) Emergency certificate issued by the Embassy of India, Kathmandu; or
- (iv) Identity Certificate issued by Embassy of India, Kathmandu.
- (v) Persons in the age group of above 65 yrs and below 15 years would be exempted from the requirement of approved identity documents mentioned at Sl.No.(i), (ii), (iii) or (iv). However, they must have some document with a photograph to confirm their age and identity such as PAN card, Driving licence, CGHS card, Ration card etc.
- (vi) Children between the age group of 15 to 18 years may be allowed to travel between India and Nepal on the strength of the Identity Certificate issued by the Principal of the School.
- (vii) In case of a family (family means husband, wife, minor children and parents) traveling together, the approved identification documents at sl.no.(i), (ii), (iii) or (iv) would not be insisted upon from all the family members if one of the adult members of the family has in his/ her possession any one of the prescribed identification documents at sl..no.(i), (ii), (iii) or (iv) above. The other family members must, however, have some proof of their identity with a photograph and their relationship as a family viz., CGHS Card, Ration Card, Driving license, ID card issued by School/College etc.

Appendix –I**Categories and sub-categories of Visa**

S. No.	Main category of visa	Sub-categories	Description	Remarks
1	e-Visa	e-TV	e-Tourist Visa	A foreign national may undertake recreation, sight seeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives and attending a short term yoga programme
		e-BV	e-Business Visa	A foreign national may visit for Business purposes
		e-Med V	e-Medical Visa	A foreign national may undertake medical treatment including treatment under Indian systems of medicine.
2	Transit Visa	TR	Transit Visa	For travelling through India to a destination outside India
3	Tourist Visa	T-1	Tourist Visa for individual tourists	-
		T-2	Tourist Visa for group tourists	For group tourists as part of organized tour including tourist coming by chartered flights
		T-3	For Cruise tourism	For foreign nationals coming on cruise tourism
4	Medical Visa	MED	For all foreign nationals coming on Medical Visa	-
5	Medical Attendant Visa	MED X	For foreign nationals coming as Medical Attendants	-
6	Business Visa	B-1	Business Visitor coming to attend business meetings, technical meetings etc. for a short period	-.
		B-2	Business Visitor from small and medium business	For all such business visitors from small and medium business [with turnover upto Rs.10 crore] who are required to visit India frequently in connection with their business activities.
		B-3	Business Visitor from large business	For all such business visitors from large business [with turnover of Rs.10 crore and above] who are required to visit India frequently in connection with their business activities.
		B-4	Business Visa for Investors	For those who are eligible for Business Visa in terms of the eligibility conditions prescribed for Permanent Residency Status.

		B-5	Crew of non-scheduled airlines chartered flights operated by such airlines and Special flights.	-
		B-6	Foreign academicians/ experts covered under GIAN	-
		B-7	Foreign nationals who are partners in the business and/ or functioning as Directors of the company	-
		B-8	Other Miscellaneous categories eligible for Business Visa not covered by above sub-categories	-
		B-Sports	Foreign nationals who are engaged in commercial sports events in India on contract (including coaches) with remuneration.	-
		B-1 X B-2 X B-3 X B-4 X	For dependents of Business Visa holders	Depending on the type of Business Visa granted, the dependents may be granted B-1 X, B-2 X, B-3 X and B-4 X visa.
7	Employment Visa	E-1	Short term remunerative employment up to 6 months	-
		E-2	Long term remunerative employment beyond 6 months	-
		E-3	For Intra-company transferee	-
		E-4	For honorary work with NGOs	-
		E-5	Staff/ Faculty in South Asian University and Nalanda University	-
		E-1 X E-2 X E-3 X E-4 X E-5 X	For dependents of Employment Visa holders	Depending on the type of Employment Visa granted, the dependents may be granted E-1 X, E-2 X, E-3 X, E-4 X and E-5 X visa.
8.	Project Visa	P	For those coming to execute projects in Steel and Power sectors with sector specific numerical ceilings	-
		P-X	Dependents of Project Visa holders	-
9	Intern Visa	I-1	Intern under French VIE programme	-

		I-2	Intern with business house, including those sponsored by AIESEC	For all those coming for internship in Business houses earning some remuneration including those sponsored by AIESEC.
		I-3	Intern with NGOs and Educational Institutions including those sponsored by AIESEC	For all those coming for internship with NGOs and Educational Institutions including those sponsored by AIESEC.
		I-4	Intern with Foreign Media Organizations/ Indian Media Organizations in India	-
10	Films Visa	F	For foreign nationals coming for shooting of a feature film/ reality TV show and/or commercial TV serials.	-
11	Student Visa	S-1	For studies in regular courses in India in Colleges/ Universities etc. imparting higher education	-
		S-2	For School education	-
		S-3	Provisional Student Visa	-
		S-4	For studies in short term courses	For studies in short term courses.
		S-5	For studies in Yoga, Vedic Culture and Indian Systems of Music and dance and for Buddhist studies	-
		S-6	For those coming under Student Exchange Programme in terms of Agreements with various countries including trainees at a designated civilian or defence establishment	-
		S-7	For students of South Asian University and Nalanda University	-
		S-8	For Theological Studies and for Missionary students	-
		S-1 X S-6 X	For dependents of those coming under S-1, and S-6 visas.	For dependents of those coming under S-1 and S-6 Visas. In respect of other category visas, no dependent visa will be granted.
12	Research Visa	R-1	Research scholar at a recognized Indian Institution	-
		R-2	Visiting faculty at recognized Indian Institution	-
		R-3	Research Scholar on a bilateral exchange	-

			programme	
		R-4	Members of Botanical, Scientific, Anthropological etc. expeditions	-
		R-1 X R-2 X R-3 X	Dependents of holders of Research Visa.	For dependents of Research Visa holders depending on the type of Research Visa.
13	Conference Visa	C-1	For participants of conferences organized by Government authorities including Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous bodies under Government	-
		C-2	For participants of conferences organized by non-Governmental agencies/ organizations	-
14	Mountaineering Visa	MX	For foreign nationals coming for Mountaineering expeditions	-
15	Missionary Visa	M-1	For Missionary/ Religious worker of approved organizations	-
		M-1 X	For dependents of Missionary/ Religious worker of approved organizations	-
16	Journalist Visa	J-1	Foreign audio-visual or print media journalists accredited in India	-
		J-2	Audio-visual or print media journalists visiting India	-
		J-3	Foreign nationals coming for shooting of advertisement/ documentary films etc.	-
		J-T	Journalist visiting India for tourism purpose	-
		J- 1X	Dependents of foreign audio- visual or print media journalists accredited in India	-
17	Entry Visa	X- 1	For Persons of Indian Origin who do not possess OCI card	-
		X-2	Foreign nationals married to Indian Citizen/ Persons of Indian Origin/ OCI cardholder and their children (other than those who are registered as OCI cardholder)	-

		X-3	For those coming to join Auroville Foundation or Missionaries of Charity or Aurobindo Ashram, Puducherry or similar approved organizations	-
		X-4	For those who own property in India	-
		X-5	Diplomats/ Officials on a personal (Non-official) visit to India	-
		X-5 D	Ordinary passport holding dependents of diplomats/ officials assigned to India (including in the UN and Non-UN International organizations).	-
		X- Misc.	For purposes which are not covered by any other visa category	-
		X-SP	For Sports Persons	-
18	Diplomatic Visa	D-1	Diplomats assigned in India (on Diplomatic Passport only)	-
		D-2	Diplomat on a visit to India for meetings and other official purposes (on Diplomatic passport only)	-
		D-3	Diplomats assigned to Non-UN International Organization (such as ADB, ICRISAT, ICRC etc.) in India	-
		D-1 X D-2 X D-3 X	For dependents of Diplomats depending upon the type of Diplomatic Visa	-
19	Official Visa	O-1	Non-diplomatic official assigned to a diplomatic Mission in India (On Official/ Service/ Special Passport only)	-
		O-2	Non-diplomatic official on a visit to India for official purpose	-

			visit to India for official purpose	
		O-1 X	Dependent of Non-diplomatic official assigned in India (on Official/ Service/ Special Passport)	
		O-2 X	Dependent of non-diplomatic official visiting India for official purpose (on Official/ Service passport only)	
20	UN Diplomat Visa	UD-1	UN Diplomat assigned to India	
		UD-2	UN Diplomat on a visit to India	
		UD-1 X	Dependent of UN Diplomat assigned to India	
		UD-2 X	Dependent of UN Diplomat on a visit to India	
21	UN Official Visa	UO-1	UN Non-Diplomatic official assigned to India	
		UO-2	UN Non-Diplomatic official on a visit to India	
		UO-1 X	Dependent of UN Non-diplomatic official assigned to India (including ordinary passport holders)	
		UO-2 X	Dependent of UN Non-diplomatic official on a visit to India	
22	Pakistan Specific Visas	V	Visitor Visa	
		PG-1	Pilgrim Visa (under Religious Protocol)	
		PG-2	Group Pilgrim Visa for minority communities in Pakistan	
23	Bangladesh Specific Visa	X- Double Entry	Double Entry Visa	For those coming to India to apply for visa to foreign missions accredited to both India and Bangladesh.
24	Visa on Arrival	VA	Double entry visa for 60 days (being offered to Japanese Nationals)	

Note : The applicant will apply for the broad category of visa and the granting officer will decide exact sub-category.

(Pratap Singh Rawat)

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