

When you begin your company's expansion to other countries, you may want to send some of your current employees abroad. As individuals familiar with your company and its processes, they can offer valuable insight at your new location. To keep your international employees legal, though, you'll need to apply for the proper visas and permits.

Types of Work Visas in Bhutan

In Bhutan, work permits and work visas are two different documents. Both are required for nonnationals to work in the country. An employment visa is only required for entering the country for work, whereas a work permit is necessary for performing labor within the borders.

The government only issues work permits for one year at a time, meaning applicants will have to reapply annually to maintain legal employment status. After three years of holding a work permit, the permitholder must exit the country for at least six months and reapply.

Requirements to Obtain Bhutan Work Visas

Applicants will need to provide a series of documents with their permit application to receive a confirmation for work. As an employer, you may choose to help your employee with this process, though it's not required. Necessities include:

- A valid passport.
- Approval from the Department of Labor.
- A completed employer undertaking form.
- A medical fitness certificate.
- A signed declaration of compliance.

The employer undertaking form requires a list of all nonnationals you intend to hire and your signature confirming these individuals. You'll also need to sign the declaration of compliance along with your nonnational employee. Applicants must receive the medical fitness certificate from a government-certified medical official in the country.

Application Process

Before your employee travels to Bhutan, they should apply for an employment entry visa online or at their nearest consulate. Certain citizens can receive an entry visa on arrival, including:

- Indian nationals.
- Nationals from Bangladesh and Maldives.
- Thai and Swiss nationals holding Diplomatic passports.
- Nonnationals with an SAARC visa exemption sticker.

To obtain an employment visa, applicants will need approval from the Ministry of Labor, along with a completed application form and a copy of a valid passport. As the employer, you must obtain permission from the Ministry of Labor on your employee's behalf.

After the visa holder enters the country with their employment visa, they'll need to file biometric data with the Department of Immigration. Once the visa holder gains clearance to enter the borders, they can apply for a work permit. They should submit all the necessary materials with the completed application form to the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs under the Department of Immigration.

Other Important Considerations

Approval from the Ministry of Labor is required for any nonnational employment that lasts longer than a month. As the employer, you're responsible for obtaining this approval before your employee applies for an entry visa.

The approval process starts when you submit an application to the Ministry with an explanation for hiring. The Ministry of Labor will submit this documentation with your employee's passport number to the Department of Immigration for verification. They'll determine whether your hiring of a nonnational works with current immigration laws.

You can be denied the ability to hire a nonnational employee if the Department

of Immigration feels it does not align with current laws and requirements.

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