

*Reading Time: 3 minutes*

While Guatemala is renowned for its national beauty and rich history, this Central American country has much more to offer — including lucrative opportunities for expatriates and international businesses. If your company is planning to expand to Guatemala, one of your top priorities is most likely building a team of skilled employees to make the move with you. But before they can begin living and working in Guatemala, your company will need to ensure that they have the proper permits to do so.

If you don't have time to worry about immigration on top of all the other aspects of your global expansion, Globalization Partners can help. As a global PEO, we understand how to get a work visa in Guatemala, how to set up payroll, and everything else your company requires to stay compliant during your international business endeavors.

## What Types of Work Permits Are Issued in Guatemala?

Foreign nationals who plan to travel to Guatemala to work or study will need to obtain a visa, much like they would for any other country. Available visas and permits include:

- Business visas
- Tourist visas
- Student visas
- Work permits

The Guatemalan government issues two different types of work permits to foreign nationals who would like to work in the country. These permits are for:

- Expatriates who have spouses or children with Guatemalan citizenship
- Foreign nationals who have received a job offer from a company in Guatemala

The requirements for these two categories of work permits differ slightly, as do the application processes. For example, workers in the first category may apply on their own behalf, whereas foreign workers without family in Guatemala should expect the company to file the work permit application for them.

## What Are the Requirements to Obtain a Guatemalan Work Permit?

Applicants who have spouses or children in Guatemala will need to produce the following documents when applying for a Guatemalan work permit:

- A written job offer
- Police records from their country of residence
- A copy of the birth certificate or marriage certificate proving their ties to a Guatemalan citizen
- A written request addressed to the Guatemalan Ministry of Labor
- A copy of the applicant's temporary visa or residency visa, or proof of a pending visa application

Applicants who do not fall under this category may obtain a work permit application form from the Ministry of Labor, but it's the responsibility of their employer to submit the application. The prospective employee should provide personal documents to the employer for submission along with the application.

To obtain a temporary residence permit, applicants will need to provide:

- A recent passport photo
- A valid passport along with an additional copy
- Certification of the validity of the passport from the applicant's legal country of residence
- A criminal background check
- Identifying documents and financial statements from the applicant's guarantor in Guatemala, such as the employing organization

## The Guatemalan Working Visa Application Process

Before foreign nationals can work in Guatemala, they need a temporary residence permit as well as a work permit. It's necessary to begin the process with the application for a temporary residence permit, as proof of the application is a minimum requirement to obtain a work permit. The applicant (or the company, depending on the status of the prospective employee) should provide the necessary documents to the General Directorate of Migration and wait for approval.

The application procedure for a Guatemalan work permit is similar. The application form and accompanying documents should be submitted to the Guatemalan Ministry of Labor by the prospective employee or the employer depending on the category of work permit required.

After the Ministry of Labor has been presented with the necessary documents, it generally takes 10 to 15 days for the issuance of the work permit. Once the foreign national has a work permit as well as a temporary residence visa, they can travel to Guatemala.

## Unique Considerations for Foreign Workers in Guatemala

Employees should be aware that the issuance of a visa is not a guarantee of their entry into Guatemala. The final decision is left to the discretion of the immigration officials at the Guatemalan border or point of entry.

## Stay Compliant in Guatemala With Globalization Partners

If your company is in the process of a global expansion, you can leave the details to us. The team of global experts at Globalization Partners will hire employees, obtain working visas, and make sure your company is compliant as you begin this exciting new stage for your business. [Reach out to us](#) to learn more about employing talented workers in Guatemala with our Global Expansion Platform™.