

South Africa's growing economy, warm climate, and rich cultural history make the country an excellent choice for companies in the midst of international expansions. However, some companies are deterred by the complex employment laws and regulations surrounding work visas and permits for foreign citizens in South Africa. If you're not sure how to get a work visa in South Africa, a global PEO like Globalization Partners can help.

What Types of Working Visas Are There in South Africa?

South Africa has several different categories of work visas, including:

- **General Work Visa:** This is the most common type of visa for foreign citizens seeking employment in South Africa.
Intracompany Transfer Visa (ICT): This visa is for individuals who are employed by multinational companies and transferred to work in South Africa.
- **Critical Skills Work Visa:** Highly skilled migrants may be eligible for this visa, which allows foreign citizens to come to South Africa without the prerequisite of a job offer.
- **Business Visa:** Individuals planning to move to South Africa to open a business or invest in an existing business should apply for this visa.
- **Corporate Visa:** This visa is not for individuals, but corporations. A corporate visa allows a company to employ a set number of foreign workers with Individual Corporate Worker Certificates.

For most companies planning to extend operations into South Africa, employees will need General Work Visas. This visa is valid for up to five years and can be renewed if necessary.

Permanent residence in South Africa is a possibility for employees with certain work visas. Workers are eligible to apply for permanent residence in South Africa after five years of living in the country with a General Work Visa. Individuals with Critical Skills Work Visas may apply for permanent residence permits immediately provided that they have five years of experience in their field.

Requirements to Obtain a South African Work Visa

Several factors determine what documentation is required to apply for a work visa in South Africa. Requirements may vary based on the type of visa being applied for, the applicant's country of residence, and the embassy the application is lodged with. Common requirements include:

- A passport that is valid for at least one month after the applicant's intended return date
- Proof of employment in South Africa
- Medical documentation, such as vaccination records and radiology reports
- Bank statements to demonstrate sufficient funds
- Proof of medical insurance for the duration of time to be spent in South Africa

Keep in mind that there are additional requirements in many cases. For example, an applicant may need to provide police clearances from every country they've lived in as an adult or a cash deposit to cover the return trip to their country. For a full list of requirements, applicants should get in touch with the South African embassy or consulate in their country.

What Are the Necessary Steps to Get a Visa to Work in South Africa?

To get a visa to work in South Africa legally, the applicant must visit their country's South African embassy, diplomatic representative, or consulate in person. They will need to bring the relevant documents along with them to apply, so they should confirm the requirements in advance.

The Department of Home Affairs will process and finalize all applications. Processing time will vary with the type of visa and location of the applicant.

Other Unique and Important Considerations

In South Africa, a work permit must be secured and sponsored by the employer. The employer must be a locally licensed and incorporated entity. Companies without an established presence in South Africa can hire employees through a PEO, which acts as the Employer of Record.

You should also consider that some of your employees may be traveling with family, especially if your company plans to relocate members of your existing team. Spouses and children may receive residence visas after the employee has obtained a permanent residence permit or a work visa. Family members can also apply for work and study visas for their time in South Africa.

Contact Globalization Partners to Learn More

If your company is taking on the challenge of expanding worldwide, our Global Expansion solution can help make the transition as smooth as possible. [Reach out today](#) to learn more about how Globalization Partners can help grow your bottom line without added stress.