

Korea 101: Visa

Living in Korea, published by the Investment Consulting Center, provides necessary information and helpful tips for day-to-day life in Korea. Here's what's featured this month.

General Information

(1) What is a Visa?

When an alien enters the Republic of Korea, he/she shall hold a valid passport and a visa issued by the Minister of Justice (Article 7 (1) of the Immigration Act).

The view about a visa is divided into two groups: Some countries view it as 'the confirmation of an entry permit' while others consider it 'a consul's recommendation for entry' in relation to foreigners' entry requests. The Republic of Korea follows the latter perspective about a visa and regards a visa as a consul's recommendation for an entry permit. Therefore, an officer at the airport immigration services can refuse an entry to a foreigner with a visa to Korea if the foreigner does not meet the country's entry requirements.

* What is the difference between a visa and the status of stay?

The status of stay refers to a legal status allowing an alien to stay in Korea and engage in certain activities.

The Immigration Act grants certain rights to the status of stay which is divided into 36 categories.

In this sense, a visa and the status of stay can be considered the same in practical terms.

(2) Types of Visa

There are two kinds of entry visas to Korea: A single-entry visa for a single entry and a multiple-entry visa for multiple entries within the visa validity period (three months from the date of issuance).

(3) Visa Application Procedures

- ① Location: An overseas diplomatic mission (Korean Embassy or Consulate abroad)
- ② Documents: A passport, a visa application form, and proof of the applicant's status of stay

* Check required documents for each status of stay at www.hikorea.go.kr.

Sample of Entry Visa to Korea



Sample

- ① Visa number: A serial number of the visa issued
- ② Status: The type of social activities and status that a foreigner can perform and have while staying in Korea
- ③ Period of stay: The allowed period of stay from the date of entry into Korea
- ④ Entries: The type of visa - S (single-entry) or M (multiple-entry)
- ⑤ Issue date: The date a visa is issued
- ⑥ Expiry date: The date the visa will be expired. The visa holder must enter Korea before the date, after which the visa becomes invalid.
- ⑦ Issued at: Information on the location where the visa is issued.

■ Visa Issuance to Foreign-Invested Companies

(1) Corporate Foreign Investor Visa (D-8-1)

Visa Types	Eligibility
Investment in a corporation (D-8-1)	Investment in a Korean company; investment of KRW 100 million or more and 1/10 or more of shares; indispensable professional specialist intending to work in the field of operation, management, manufacturing or technology of the invested company
Investment in a venture (D-8-2)	A person certified as a venture (or provisionally confirmed as a venture) for outstanding technological competence including possession of industrial property rights or intellectual property rights
Investment in a company run by an individual	Investment in a company run by a Korean national; ownership of at least 1/10 in the company's total equity investment; joint representative with a Korean
Tech startup (D-8-4)	A person with an associate degree or higher in Korea or a bachelor's degree or higher overseas, a startup founder with intellectual property rights, etc.

*The Investment Consulting Center of KOTRA's Foreign Investor Support Center actively supports visa issuance for corporate foreign investment (D-8-1).

A. Eligibility

Indispensable professional specialist* who wants to engage in the fields of business management, administration, production or technology in a foreign- invested company registered in Korea** according to the Foreign Investment Promotion Act (hereinafter to be referred to as the 'D-8-1' visa).

*Except those hired in Korea

**Only a corporation that has completed incorporation

B. Visa application

① Basic requirements

- The investment target should be a Korean corporation (only a corporation that has completed incorporation).
- The investment amount should be KRW 100 million or more while the foreigner owns at least 10/100 of the total number of voting stocks issued by the Korean corporation (Article 2 (2) 1 of the Enforcement Decree of the Foreign Investment Promotion Act) or the foreigner owns stocks, etc. of a Korean corporation and dispatches or appoints an executive officer (Article 2 (2) 2 of the same Act).

② Where to apply

In principle, the application should be made at the Korean mission in the applicant's home country.

- * When the applicant resides abroad and operates a business (including long-term residents with a permanent residence permit, etc.) there, he/she can make visa application at the country's Korean diplomatic mission.



If you have further questions please contact



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