

Alert on immigration

September 2020



On 27 August 2020, in the meeting of the Government with the competent authorities and some provinces, the Vietnam Prime Minister requested that the related authorities must review carefully but speed up the visa issuance procedure for foreign investors and experts to enter Vietnam in a simpler and more convenient manner. In addition, the Prime Minister also requested the Ministry of Health to provide detailed guidance on receiving short-term foreign investors and experts to enter Vietnam.

Accordingly, on 31 August 2020, the Ministry of Health issued Official letter No. 4674/BYT-MT ("the guidance") to ministries, ministerial agencies, government agencies and the provincial People's Committees providing guidelines on Covid-19 prevention and control for a short-term visit by foreigners of less than 14 days to Vietnam. Notably the 14 days quarantine is not mandatorily required for those foreigners upon entry as long as regulations on Covid-19 prevention and control are fully and strictly complied with.

Highlights in the guidance affecting the application for entry for foreigners are as follow:

Regulated subjects

- Foreigners who travel to Vietnam on a short-term trip of less than 14 days, including: investors, experts, highly skilled workers, business managers and their family members as well as other persons by mutual agreement with each country (so called "experts");
- People who enter Vietnam for diplomatic or official purposes (so called "diplomat");
- People who have contact with the experts or diplomats during their entry and stay in Vietnam.

Requirements for experts

- Experts are not subject to 14 days centralized quarantine upon arrival. However, they must strictly and fully follow guidance on preventing and control of Covid-19 to avoid cross-infection at their workplaces and in the community;
- The experts must hold an international health

insurance covering Covid-19 treatment, or the sponsoring organization must commit to pay Covid-19 treatment expenses if the experts contract Covid-19;

- The experts must undertake a Covid-19 test by Real time -PCR within 3 to 7 days before entering Vietnam and be negative to the pandemic. The test must be taken in the laboratories of a competent health authority in those foreign countries;
- The experts shall arrive in Vietnam at least one day earlier than the date they start work to complete health monitoring procedures and are subject to a Covid-19 test upon arrival into Vietnam.
- The experts shall be provided with separate lodging places eg hotels and the enterprise's approved lodging places, arranged by the provincial People's Committee and must strictly follow approved working, transport and quarantine plans during their stays in Vietnam;
- The experts are required to install the Blue Zone application, complete an e-health declaration and are subject to medical supervision requirements;
- After 14 days from arrival date, if the expatriates test negative to Covid-19 and need to extend their stay in Vietnam to work, they may continue working without quarantine

Requirements for sponsoring organisations

The guidance sets out certain requirements for the sponsoring organization before arrival and during the working period the experts are in Vietnam, specifically:

a. Before arrival

- Prepare working, lodging, transport and quarantine plans for the experts to prevent the infection of Covid-19 between the experts and their contacts while working in Vietnam;
- Complete the procedures to have the above plans approved by the competent authorities

b. During the experts' stay in Vietnam

- Arrange a separate lodging place for the experts as approved by the provincial people committee;
 - Organize the transport of the experts from border gate/international airport to their lodging and between lodging and work locations. The transport of the experts during their stay in Vietnam must be done with dedicated vehicles and satisfy certain medical requirements;
 - Compile a list of participants in the meeting between the experts and their contacts for medical surveillance within 14 days after the meeting/contact;
 - Report to the People's Committee of the province/Ministry/central authority on the implementation of the plan.
- Arrange isolated lodging places and work-places, maintain health monitoring and the experts' isolation from the community during their short-term visits;
 - Organise the inspection, supervision and assessment of performance of Covid-19 prevention and control tasks during the experts' stay in Vietnam;
 - Report to the National Steering Committee for Covid-19 Prevention and Control on any issues that occur

The provincial Department of Health shall be delegated by the provincial People's Committee to:

- carry out health monitoring, handle suspected cases of Covid-19 infection
- provide instructions on cleaning and disinfecting the environment during the stay of foreign experts and diplomats in Vietnam;
- assign persons responsible for health monitoring at their lodging, workplaces, meeting places, fields;
- prepare for hospitalization of Covid-19 cases.

Requirements for the competent authorities

The provincial People's Committees shall:

- Inform and instruct organisations in their provinces to implement the guidance while sponsoring their experts to enter Vietnam for short-term visits;
- Review and approve the working, lodging, transport and quarantine plans prepared by sponsoring organisations;

KPMG notes

Based on the Official letter No. 4674 and its guidance, it is expected that the sponsoring organisations will still need to complete all the entry approval and visa application for the experts such that they are able to travel to Vietnam.

Further, in order to invite the short-term visitors-experts to Vietnam, the organisations must compile comprehensive working, lodging, transport and quarantine plans for the experts such that the plans can be approved by the competent authorities. Therefore, it is recommended that organisations review their facilities capability then seek further guidance from the provincial relevant authorities on the application.

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