

Visa recommendation guild lines – Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development

1. ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND ENTREPRENURSHIP DEVELOPMENT (MoIED) IN VISA RECOMMENDATION

The Ministry of Industries plays a vital role in facilitating the growth and development of the local manufacturing industry sector in Sri Lanka by supporting manufacturing investments and industrial operations. As part of its mandate to promote industrial development and ensure the smooth functioning of manufacturing industries, the Ministry assists in facilitating the entry and residence of essential foreign personnel (experts) required for industrial activities.

One of the key functions of the Ministry is the **issuance of visa recommendations for foreign investors, executives, technicians, and skilled labourers** engaged in manufacturing industries operating in Sri Lanka. These recommendations support the **entry and extension of residence visas** required for such personnel who contribute specialized expertise, technology transfer, and managerial capacity to the local industrial sector. Through this function, the Ministry ensures that industrial enterprises are able to access the necessary foreign expertise while maintaining compliance with national immigration policies and regulatory frameworks.

(Visa issuance is governed by **Immigrants and Emigrants Act, No. 20 of 1948** (as amended))

2. MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND ENTREPRENURSHIP DEVELOPMENT (MoIED) PROCEDURE ON RECOMMENDATION ISSUANCE OF EXTENSION AND RESIDENCE VISAS.

The MoIED recommends Entry and Residence visas for foreign investors, executives, skilled technicians, and technicians required for manufacturing industries operating under its purview. These recommendations are issued to facilitate the establishment, operation, and expansion of industrial enterprises that contribute to the development of the national manufacturing sector.

The Ministry issues recommendations for the **entry and extension of visas** for such foreign personnel engaged in manufacturing activities, subject to the provisions and restrictions outlined in **Circular No. 01/2006 dated 11.09.2006 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.**

To ensure efficiency and transparency in the process, visa recommendations are coordinated directly with the Department of Immigration and Emigration (through an email) in accordance with the prevailing immigration regulations and procedures.

Manufacturing industries requesting visa recommendations are required to ensure compliance with the applicable government regulations, relevant approvals, and operational requirements governing manufacturing industries in Sri Lanka.

3. COMPLIANCES FOR PROCESSING OF VISA RECOMMENDATIONS

Applicants must comply with the requirements applicable to the foreign investors, and recruitment of executives, technicians, and skilled labourers for manufacturing industries. The necessary **documents and compliance requirements for visa processing** are specified in the para 4 and para 8 of this guideline.

Manufacturing industries are requested to refer to the **official visa application and compliance requirements available on the Ministry of Industries website** and ensure that all required documentation and information are submitted accurately to avoid delays or interruptions in the visa recommendation process.

The Ministry may request **additional supporting documents or clarifications** where necessary to verify the eligibility of the enterprise and the foreign personnel for whom visa recommendations are sought.

4. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VISA RECOMMENDATION

Manufacturing industries applying for visa recommendations through the MoIED are required to submit the documents listed under **4.1 & 4.2**, together with the completed application and supporting documents relevant to the category of visa request.

General Requirements

The following documents must be submitted with all visa recommendation requests:

- Letter of request from the manufacturing industry
- Completed visa application

4.1 Entry / Residence Visa Applications

In order to allow sufficient time for processing by the relevant ministry officials, all required documents shall be submitted **at least three (3) weeks** prior to the expiry of the current visa and **at least five (5) weeks** prior to entry into Sri Lanka.

For Entry and Residence Visa recommendations for foreign investors, executives, skilled technicians, and technicians engaged in manufacturing industries, the following documents are required:

- Ministry of Industries Registration (First-time applicants)
- Company Profile
- Copies of passports of the applicant(s)

- Educational qualifications (for specialized positions/divisions)
- Previous work experience records
- Evidence of efforts made to recruit Sri Lankan nationals for the relevant vacancies
- Police Clearance Report obtained from the relevant country of residence
- Copy of the letter of appointment, contract agreement, or agreement issued by the recruitment agent
- Responsibility undertaking affidavit issued by the Board of Directors
- Copies of Employees' Provident Fund / Employees' Trust Fund payment receipts for the last three (03) months
- **Marriage/Birth Certificate** (for dependent visa applications).

4.2 Visa Extension Applications

For visa extension requests, enterprises must submit the following documents:

- Ministry of Industries Registration (First time)
- Company Profile
- Copies of passports of applicant
- Copies of previous visa recommendation letter
- Police clearance report obtained from the relevant Sri Lankan police station (A Police Clearance Certificate issued within the preceding three (3) months is required)
- Copies of Employees Provident Fund (EPF)/ ETF Payment Receipts for the last 03 months
- Extended contract agreement
- **Marriage/Birth Certificate** (for dependent visa applications).
- Responsibility undertaking affidavit issued by the Board of Directors

5. COMPANY ELIGIBILITY

Manufacturing industry seeking visa recommendations through the MoIED must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- The company must be **registered under the Ministry of Industry and entrepreneurship development**
- The company must be **actively engaged in manufacturing** within Sri Lanka.
- The company must maintain **valid operational status and comply with all applicable regulatory requirements** governing manufacturing industries.
- The enterprise must demonstrate a **genuine requirement for foreign investors, executives, technicians, or skilled Labour** where the necessary expertise is not readily available in the local labour market.
- The company shall maintain a minimum permanent local-to-foreign employee ratio of 10:1.

Requests to recruit expatriates above 60 years of age will be considered only under exceptional circumstances and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, particularly where technical expertise specialized is required for the manufacturing operation.

6. VISA CATEGORIES – MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT(MoIED)

The following visa categories are applicable for foreign nationals engaging with projects, companies, and activities under the purview of the Ministry of Industries.

i. Director of a Board of Director

This category applies to foreign nationals who have invested in or hold shares in companies approved by the relevant authorities. Eligible individuals may obtain residence visas to manage, supervise, or participate in the development of such industrial ventures. For this a category a certified copy of Form 20 or Form 1 shall be submitted.

Applicants shall provide documentary evidence of their investment or shareholding, including certified financial and corporate records.

ii. Commercial presence

This category applies to foreign nationals who have been appointed by the parent company to manage and oversee the operations of its business in Sri Lanka. For this category, a formal appointment letter issued by the parent company shall be submitted

iii. Expatriate (Employee) Category

This category is granted to foreign professionals employed in companies registered under the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development. Recommendations are issued after verifying the applicant's qualifications, professional experience, and the availability of suitable local expertise.

Permitted employment categories include:

- **Foreign Investors**
- **Executive**
- **Technicians**
- **Skilled Labourers**

iii. Dependent Category

This category is applicable to the immediate dependents (such as spouse and children) of approved investors, senior management personnel working in companies registered under the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development.

07. VISA RECOMMENDATION RESTRICTIONS

The following restrictions apply to visa recommendations issued by the MoIED for foreign nationals associated with industrial projects:

- Extension visa is granted only to individuals who are previously obtained an entry/residence visa.
- **Residence visas are not transferable between companies**
- **Dependent visas** are only issued for the legal dependents of the Directors, or top management.

All provisions relating to employment and other matters of dependents shall be governed by the prevailing immigration and emigration laws of Sri Lanka

08. VISA RECOMMENDATION PROCESS

- Submitting the duly completed application and other documents listed in para 4 of the application to relevant sector director
- Field Inspections will be conducted if required.
- Calling observations on relevant government organizations will be done if required.
- Refer relevant applications and other documents to the Visa Recommendation Review Committee. (VRRC) of the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development
- As per the decision of VRRC, the visa recommendation letter signed Deputy Director who is handling the visa subject will be issued via e-mail to the Controller General of Department of Immigration and Emigration with a copy to the applicant.
- In case of inability to make visa recommendations, the applicant will be notified via email.
- There is no charges applicable
- In order to allow sufficient time for processing by the relevant ministry officials, all required documents shall be submitted **at least three (3) weeks** prior to the expiry of the current visa and **at least five (5) weeks** prior to entry into Sri Lanka.

09. THE VISA CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

- Companies must **notify the MoIED and the Department of Immigration and Emigration in writing** if a foreign employee's contract is terminated, or if the employee leaves the company.
- The **MoIED** will also process the notification and inform the **Department of Immigration and Emigration** to proceed with visa cancellation.

10. EXPIRY OF VISA

- Companies are responsible for **renewing or extending visas before their expiry**, if continued stay is required.

(In order to allow sufficient time for processing by the relevant ministry officials, all required documents shall be submitted at least **three (3) weeks** prior to the expiry of the current visa)

- If a company fails to renew or extend a visa prior to its expiry, the existing legal provisions of the Department of Immigration and Emigration shall apply to any overstay of the foreign employee in Sri Lanka.

Note: The company shall bear responsibility for any delays arising from the submission of incomplete documents or late submissions

Application format is attached as annexure 1