

We published the article below a while ago informing clients and the public about some new measures at Ghana Immigration Service which were to take effect from 1st June, 2014. In respect of the effective date of operation however, these measures have only recently been implemented. That apart, we have incorporated updates clarifying a few of the issues relating to implementation of the measures. We therefore deem it necessary to re-publish the following article for your information.

GHANA IMMIGRATION SERVICE – NEW MEASURES IN RESPECT OF PAYMENTS OF FEES FOR CERTAIN SERVICES – EMERGENCY ENTRY VISAS, WORK PERMITS AND RESIDENCE PERMITS.

Immigration Law and procedures change day in, day out. They need constant monitoring and evaluation. As part of our corporate and legal responsibility to our clients and society at large, we frequently monitor legal developments; inform and advise accordingly. This piece should therefore be deemed as one assisting to inform our clients and the general public about a few changes at the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) in respect of services involving applications for ***Emergency Entry Visas, Work Permits and Residence Permits*** made to the Ghana Immigration Service.

What's new?

The Ghana Immigration Service informs the public that:

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Effective **1st June, 2014**, with respect to Work and Residence Permits, management of GIS has decided to conjoin the application processes since approval of one leads to the other, respectively. In effect, a one-time payment will be made for the processing of Work and Residence Permits. Exceptional applications may be approved or disapproved based on the assessment of the case officer.

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All corporate and individual applicants seeking the above mentioned services, with effect from **1st June, 2014**, will be required to make full payment of the prescribed fees before the application is accepted and processed.

Employers to note:

- The work and residence permits applications have now been fused into one application for the purposes of payment of Government fees.

- The practice in the past, until the above change was effected from the stated date, had been that payments were made after approval and grant of work permit and at the point of submission of residence permits.

The key point worth noting is the change in payment time of the applications as regards the relevant services: that is, full payment of the prescribed fees will no longer be contingent on approval; rather, full payment of the fees will now be made upon submission of applications.

GT Legal Analysis:

- **Submissions of applications to Ghana Immigration Service (GIS):**
In respect of work and residence permits applications submitted to the GIS directly, payment of the required fee must be made at the time of submission of the applications.
- **Submissions of applications to Petroleum Commission:**
The position now has been clarified by the relevant agencies as follows:
Applicants will not be required to pay the prescribed fees directly to the Petroleum Commission when they submit their applications to the Commission. As part of the process, if it supports the application, the Petroleum Commission will forward the applications to GIS for further processing and final approval. At this point, GIS will notify applicants to pay the prescribed fees to the Service before further processing and approval.
- **Submissions of applications to Free Zones Board:**
The process with the Ghana Free Zones remains the same. Payment has to be made directly to the Free Zones Board when the relevant work/residence permit application forms (Form 11) are purchased from the Board.
- Processing times will not be affected.

Conclusion

As a law firm, we feel duty-bound to inform and advice as much as possible. We are also committed to working hard as usual to seek answers to relevant questions. In that way, we feel we have done our share. We hope to follow up with any new development. In the meantime, you can comment, tweet or share your comments on our blog and social media pages (Google+, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn). For more information, you can contact us via info@globetrotterslegal.com or you can call us on (00233) 302 245 254/ 30 703 1085.

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