

Immigration Alert



February 2021

Ministry of Interior Releases New Guidelines for Expatriate Quota (EQ) Approvals

Background

On 24 January 2022, the Ministry of Interior (MOI), released new guidelines and requirements that will be applicable to companies who have been issued or wish to be issued Expatriate Quota Approvals. This is in line with the Ministry's drive to further monitor and regulate the Expatriate Quota administration in Nigeria.

Overview

The new guidelines take effect from 24 January 2022 and key changes are outlined below:

1. Introduction of inspection fees

Companies applying for the renewal of their Expatriate Quota Approval must pay a mandatory inspection fee renewable after 3 years. The fees are determined by location:

- Out of State inspection of business organization that will require a flight and overnight stay- N 150,000
- In State or Out of State that will not require a flight but require overnight stay- N 80,000
- In State and neighboring states that do not require a flight or overnight stay- N 45,000

2. Appraisal of EQ Positions on Permanent Until Reviewed (PUR) Status:

All companies with EQ Positions on PUR status are required to submit clear copies of their letters for review and approval to the office of the Deputy Director (E, I & I) before 28 February 2022. It is expected that this exercise will enable the Ministry to determine the length of time the PUR has been held, its proper utilisation, and the continued eligibility of the holder. This exercise is expected to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the PUR utilization by companies.

3. Monthly Returns to be Submitted Online:

Expatriate Monthly Returns will now be mandatorily submitted electronically at www.ecitibiz.interior.gov.ng taking effect from 24 January 2022. Manual submissions have subsequently been canceled. The Ministry has further emphasised that all expatriates and understudies must have National Identification Number (NIN) and these indicated on the returns.

4. Update of Details of Company Representatives:

All companies utilising facilities granted by the Citizenship and Business Department of the Ministry of Interior are required to update their contact details by forwarding a formal letter introducing the company representatives. This letter should be addressed to the office of the Director of the Citizenship and Business Department and must contain the full name, contact details, 2 passport photographs and a copy of the representative's official ID Card.



Takeaway

The Ministry of Interior has in recent times taken several measures to guarantee the proper administration of issued Expatriate Quotas by the relevant companies. It has held stakeholder meetings in the last two years and in December 2020 the Minister inaugurated the Special Ministerial Task Force to monitor and enforce Business permit and Expatriate Quota utilisation.

All affected companies are enjoined to take steps to ensure that they follow these guidelines to maintain their compliance status and avoid penalties by the authorities.

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