EMPLOYEE GUIDE

Introduction

This guide has been drawn up especially for you to ensure that your migration process be as smooth as possible. You may consider it as a "first aid kit" that will help you organize your documents and prepare you for communicating with Estonian public authorities, as well as just help you settle comfortably in Estonia. Follow these steps and see for yourself!

Short-term employment

General rule is, that if you plan to stay up to 1 year in Estonia, you can cover that employment period with a short-term employment registration and an Estonian type D visa. As a foreigner who is from outside of European Union, you can work in Estonia for a short time, if the employment is registered and you have a legal basis to stay in Estonia (an Estonian visa for example).

Short-term employment has to be registered at the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board before the actual work commences. On the basis of short-term employment, you can work up to 365 days within 455 days on general basis (seasonal work up to 270 days within 365 days). The application can be submitted by an employer who is entered in the Estonian commercial register.

The application will be overlooked within 15 business days from taking the application to the proceedings or from elimination of shortcomings in the application. The employer has to pay you the salary according to Estonian Aliens Act which is Estonian annual gross salary (from 06.03.2025 it is 1981€ on general basis). Your Estonian employer can find helpful information where to apply a short-term employment registration here.

In case the Estonian Police and Border Guard grants the short-term employment registration, then that will give you the right to work in Estonia. Nevertheless, the short-term employment registration itself does not give you the right to enter or stay in Estonia. For that you will need to have a legal basis for arriving and staying in Estonia.

Legal basis for arriving and staying in Estonia (a legal basis to stay)

Since the short-term employment registration itself is not a legal basis to stay in Estonia, you will have to apply an Estonian type D visa in case you want to enter and stay in Estonia for the period you plan to work here. This means that the Estonian employer applies the short-term employment registration and the employee, meaning you, apply for a long-term (type D) visa based on the short-term employment registration.

Usually, one applies for a long-term visa, which can be issued for a stay in Estonia for up to 365 days within 12 months. The maximum period of stay in Estonia on the basis of several long-term visas is up to 548 days out of 730 days. You will need to contact your nearest foreign representation of the Republic of Estonia and make a reservation for submitting your long-term visa (D-type) application based on the short-term employment registration.

Here you can find the list of foreign representations which are handling visa applications.

For specific information about the documents that the embassy might ask you to attach to the visa application, please contact the Embassy where you are planning to submit the application. Processing of the visa application at a foreign representation may take up to 30 calendar days. You may start making your travel arrangements after the visa is issued. More detailed information about D-type visa can be found here.

If you are already in Estonia based on a legal basis (can be visa free regime stay or valid Schengen C-type visa, for example), then you have the possibility to apply for an Estonian long-stay (D-type) visa in Estonia at the Police and Border Guard Board. For submitting the application at the Service Office, a the reservation is recommended. Please be noted that the application for a D-type visa must be submitted to the Police and Border Guard Board at least 30 days before your period of stay expires, but not earlier than 2 months before your period of stay expires.

The Police and Border Guard Board will decide whether to grant or refuse a long-term visa within 30 days of processing the application.

Before going to the service office, you will need to fill in the long-stay (D-type visa) form in the visa pre-applications environment.

All the necessary documents for applying a visa and activities before going to the Service Office are explained in this link: apply for a D-type visa.

Longer employment

If your stay should be longer than 1 year, you may apply for temporary residence permit (TRP) for employment. This type of residence permit is intended for coming to Estonia and working for a specific employer.

Book an appointment

For submitting an application, you must address in person a foreign representation of the Republic of Estonia. A foreigner who has a legal basis for staying in Estonia (for example D visa), may submit the application at the service of the Police and Border Guard Board. For submitting the application in the Service Office a reservation needs to be made https://broneering.politsei.ee/ (service nr. 4).

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Prepare your documents

Before you go to the Estonian Embassy or a service office for your appointment, you will need to fill out the necessary forms and gather all the necessary application documents. The list of necessary documents for submitting the application, can be found here.

By signing the application, the applicant confirms the existence of legal income and existence of insurance. The case handler of the application may ask you to submit additional information or documents, if necessary.

The processing of the residence permit application takes roughly 90 days and may take even longer if there are additional questions or some documents are missing. If the answer is positive to your application, the residence permit card will be printed within 30 days from the decision. By applying for a temporary residence permit at the Estonian Embassy, the documents will be sent to Estonian Police and Border Guard Board by diplomatic post, where they will be accepted to the proceedings. The application is overlooked within 90 days from the acceptance to the proceedings or from last needed explanations/documents. From the moment of a positive decision, the document (TRP card) will be printed within 30 days and sent to the Embassy where you can pick it up.

Change of employer

TRP for employment is for working in Estonia in a specific company. In case you want to change your employer/quit your job, you must also apply for a new TRP if you wish to stay in Estonia. In case you do not change your employer, but change the position in the company to whom you hold an employment-based residence permit and the new position has other qualification requirements, you also must apply for a new TRP.

Losing a job

If you lose your job, the residence permit for employment is revoked (normally within 30 days). In case of redundancy (you are laid off), in the cases provided for in subsections 1 and 2 of § 89 of the Employment Contracts Act, the residence permit for employment remains valid for 90 days as of the day of becoming unemployed. Nevertheless, after 90 days the residence permit for employment will be revoked.

Migration advice

If you have any further questions related to migration, we will gladly help you! Please, feel free to contact us directly:



Telephone: +372 612 3500
Mon-Fri 9AM-3PM
(Estonian time)

Email: migrationadvice@politsei.ee