

ZAMBIA - IMMIGRATION & LEGAL SERVICES



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15.05.2016

INTRODUCTION

Zambia is a country in Southern Central Africa surrounded by Angola, Zaire, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia. Formerly known as “Northern Rhodesia”, Zambia is part of the Copper belt and Zambia remains the largest copper producer in Africa.

The abundance of natural wealth has led to continuous foreign involvement in the country.

This manual/brochure aims to provide a brief overview of the immigration landscape of Zambia.

ABOUT IBN

IBN Business & Immigration Solutions provides a full range of immigration services for Southern Africa. With our professional and trusted network of partners on the ground, we have the pulse on policy issues and the practical reality which governs immigration rules & regulations.

IBN has been in the industry for nearly 2 decades. The company holds its headquarters in Cape Town and boasts 2 offices, in Johannesburg and Stellenbosch. With its team of over 20 caring and dedicated immigration professionals prepared to go the extra mile to find the best immigration solution for you.

OUR SERVICES FOR ZAMBIA

Our immigration specialists’ team will facilitate your immigration to Zambia. We provide superior comprehensive service and expert advice – to global corporations as well as individuals - on all immigration requirements to be met according to the nature of your visit/stay to Zambia and will advise on the best immigration solutions. Our immigration team at IBN will offer tailored solutions to all your immigration needs for Zambia with the assistance of our professional and trustworthy team on the ground.

ZAMBIA IMMIGRATION LANDSCAPE

The immigration Act in Zambia is a modern one, promulgated in 2010.

The influx of foreign investment, the growth of the economy and internationalization of the market resulted in an influx of foreign laborers in Zambia. This created an increase of work permit applications and longer processing times and posed a major challenge to the authorities.

Another noticeable phenomenon is the “Zambianisation” consisting in privileging the employment of nationals instead of foreign workers; the objective is to lower the unemployment rate and increase the availability of skilled workers.

WHAT IS A VISA?

A visa is an official endorsement in a passport, which allows the bearer to proceed to the relevant country’s territory provided that such bearer complies with the terms and conditions stipulated on the obtained visa.

TYPE OF VISAS ISSUED TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

- Business visitor’s visa (30 days)
- Short term work permit (3 months)
- Employment permit (24 months)
- Accompanying spouse visa
- Investor’s permit
- Study permit (duration of the studies)
- Permanent residence permit

VISA EXEMPT COUNTRIES

Nationals who do not require visas to enter Zambia

1	Anguilla	33	Mauritius
2	Antigua and Bermuda	34	Montserrat
3	Australian Antarctic Territory	35	Mozambique

4	Bahamas	36	Namibia
5	Barbados	37	Nauru
6	Belize	38	Niue
7	Bermuda	39	Norfolk Island
8	Botswana	40	Pitcairn Islands
9	British Antarctic Territory	41	Romania
10	British Indian Ocean Territory	42	Ross Dependency
11	British Virgin Islands	43	St. Helena
12	Cayman Islands	44	St. Kitts and Nevis
13	Channel Islands	45	St. Lucia
14	Cyprus	46	St. Vincent and Grenadines
15	Dominica	47	Samoa
16	Falkland Islands	48	Serbia-Montenegro
17	Falkland Islands Dependencies	49	Seychelles
18	Fiji Islands	50	Singapore
19	Gibraltar	51	Solomon Islands
20	Grenada	52	South Africa
21	Hong Kong	53	Swaziland
22	Ireland	54	Tanzania
23	Isle of Man	55	Tokelau
24	Jamaica	56	Tonga
25	Kenya	57	Trinidad and Tobago
26	Kiribati	58	Tuvalu

27	Lesotho	59	Turks and Caicos Island
28	Malawi	60	Uganda
29	Malaysia	61	Vanuatu
30	Maldives	62	Western Samoa
31	Malta	63	Zimbabwe
32	Marshall Island		

WHAT IS A TOURIST VISA?

A tourist visa is aimed for people coming to visit Zambia solely, it is not meant for people wishing to conduct any form of business or to perform any work related activities.

People from visa-exempt countries can enter Zambia with their valid passport and will get a visa for 30 days at port of entry. This visa can easily be renewed for up to 90 days in a 12 months period.

People from visa-restricted countries will need to apply in their home country at the Zambian Representation (Embassy or High Commission).

WHAT IS A BUSINESS VISA?

A business visa is intended for a person who comes to Zambia intending to attend meetings, conferences, seminars, corporate events, business prospection missions, arranging business transactions, signing contracts, to consult, to advise, for training and even learning as an observant in a classroom. This also applies to a volunteer or an overseas worker who is paid by an employer abroad.

Business visas are issued for a maximum of 30 days annually (not a calendar year but 1 year from the date of the visa issuance). The visa holder can chose to use the 30 days in one single trip or to spread them throughout the year.

WHO NEEDS A BUSINESS VISA?

People who conduct visits to Zambia of a business nature. For example: to attend corporate meetings, seminars, conferences, business prospecting, etc. Business visas do not apply in any way to people conducting any type of work or taking up employment.

WHERE TO APPLY FOR A TOURIST OR BUSINESS VISA?

People from visa restricted countries will have to apply for a business or tourist visa prior to travelling to Zambia, at the Zambian Embassy or High Commission (certain countries have both) in their country.

For non-visa restricted countries, one can travel to Zambia without making prior arrangement. A tourist visa will be issued at port of entry and, for those who wish to conduct some form of business, a business visa will be issued for an annual period of 30 days.

It is recommended to provide an “invitation letter” from the receiving entity when asking for a business visa.

WHAT IS A WORK PERMIT?

A work permit is an authorization granted for the employment of foreign nationals specifying the length of time allocated for the specific employment and description of persons authorized to be employed and the exact nature of their work activity.

There are 2 types of work permit in Zambia, a “short-term” work permit and an “employment” permit.

- The short-term work permit: is issued for up to 3 months and can be renewed only once and in country.
- The employment permit: is issued for up to 24 months; it can easily be renewed by a process called “variation” and by which all that is required are the new company registration documents, a motivation letter and a contract of employment.

One cannot change from a short-term work permit to an employment permit in country.

MAIN CATEGORIES OF WORK PERMITS IN ZAMBIA

- There are 2 types of work permits that applicants can apply for to work in Zambia:
 - (1) Short-term work visa (valid for 3 months maximum)
 - (2) Employment permit (valid for 24 months maximum)
- Short-term work visas are for temporary employment and can be renewed only once, up to a maximum of 6 months in total. One can come in Zambia on a business permit and apply for a short-term work permit in country.
- Employment permit are for long term employment and cannot be applied for in country. The applicant must be outside Zambia to apply for an employment permit.

PROCESSING TIME FOR A SHORT-TERM WORK PERMIT

The processing time is approximately 1 to 2 weeks.

PROCESSING TIME FOR A (LONG-TERM) EMPLOYMENT PERMIT AND HOW LONG IS IT VALID FOR?

The processing time for an employment permit is approximately 4 to 6 weeks and it is valid for up to 24 months.

CAN A WORK PERMIT BE RENEWED?

Yes, both short-term and long-term (“employment”) work permits can be renewed.

WHAT DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED FOR A WORK PERMIT?

- For short-term work permits, the following documents are required: valid passport/ 2 photos/ CV/ copies of qualifications/ motivation letter from employer/ cover letter from the employer addressed to the DG of Immigration Dt with job description of the applicant.

- For (long-term) employment permits, in addition of the documents provided for a short-term application, the other main documents required are: unabridged birth certificate/ police clearance from the country of origin/ medical certificate/ radiological certificate/ contract of employment/ info about prospective employer/ reference letters/ motivational letter from the company/ letter of invitation from the Zambian company/ transfer skills plan.

INSTITUTION(S) ISSUING WORK PERMITS AND PLACE OF SUBMISSION

Work permits applications are processed in Zambia by the Department of Immigration.

PROCESSING TIME FOR WORK PERMITS

The processing time for work permits vary according to the type of work permit required.

- For a “short-term work permit” (3 months) the average processing time is 1 to 2 weeks.
- For a “work authorisation” (24 months), the average processing time is 4 to 6 weeks.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IN CASE OF REJECTION OF WORK PERMIT APPLICATION

Once a rejection is received the applicant has 2 to 3 days to leave the country. Should the recipient of the rejection want to lodge an appeal, there is an ad hoc Committee who deals with appeals. However, it is important to note that the “rejection letter” does not give arguments and, therefore, the applicant will not know the cause of the rejection which makes it difficult to argue against to get it reversed.

HAS ZAMBIA GOT A QUOTA SYSTEM?

No, there is no cap on the number of foreign employees allowed to work for companies in Zambia.

WHAT OTHER PERMITS ARE THERE FOR ZAMBIA?

- Study permit: to be applied for by the individuals who wish to attend the educational system in Zambia or to undergo any form of training.
- Investor's permit: to be applied for by individuals who wish to establish a new company in Zambia either by establishing a new company or by investing in an existing business.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR A STUDY VISA?

The immigration law in Zambia is not very specific on this subject. However, all children who are older than 7 years of age and attending school must apply for a study visa.

To apply for a study visa, it is essential to provide an acceptance letter from a registered institution.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR AN INVESTOR'S PERMIT?

The application for an investor's permit is a 2 step process:

- 1- The investor must first obtain an "investment license" from the Zambian Development Agency (ZDA). This document represents the authorisation to proceed with a specific investment.
- 2- The second step consists in proving the availability of funds of an amount of \$250,000 if the investor is forming a new company or of \$150,000 if the investor is joining an existing company.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW FOR AN INVESTOR'S PERMIT?

First of all, it is necessary to obtain a recommendation from the Home Affairs in Zambia.

When the recommendation is approved and the investment has been made and a company is fully established, only then can the investor apply for a self-employment permit.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO OBTAIN PERMANENT RESIDENCE?

A residence permit is usually granted to foreign nationals who have been working in Namibia for a given number of years consecutively or who have been investing in the country for a specific amount of years.

You need to have been on a valid employment permit in Zambia for a period of 10 years before being able to apply for PR.

HOW DO I QUALIFY FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE?

To obtain permanent residence in Zambia, a person must have been on a valid employment permit for at least 10 years or have been on an investor's permit for at least 3 years.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO ISSUE A PERMANENT RESIDENCE PERMIT?

The processing time for a permanent residence permit is about 8 weeks.

DOES ZAMBIA RECOGNISE "LIFE PARTNERS"?

No. Life partners do not benefit from any specific rights under the immigration law of Zambia. Therefore, a life partner cannot qualify for a spousal visa and will have to qualify in his/her own right for his/her permit.

WHAT IS ZAMBIA VIEW IN RESPECT OF SAME-SEX COUPLES?

Same-sex marriage is not recognised in Zambia. Therefore, similarly to life partners, they need to qualify in their own right.

IBN OUTBOUND SERVICES

The preparation of immigration applications for outbound is done at our offices in South Africa, thus ensuring fast response and processing times, leaving our trusted network of local partners the role of assisting with the local submission when required and as our point of contact with the immigration authorities in their respective countries.

For corporate and private clients located in South Africa and in need of outbound migration services we are able to assist them with short-term visas as well as work permit applications submitted to the local Embassies in these countries.

We can also assist you in other countries, for example India and UAE, please just ask us,

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