

Work Visas for Non-CIS Citizens

A work visa is required in order to travel to Russia for employment. It entitles the visa holder the right to remain in Russia for the period of the visa. It is issued for up to 3 years based only on a work invitation letter from a company in Russia. The foreigners are required to be employed only by the companies that invited them for work. Letter of Invitation processing fees charged by the agencies vary from RUR 75,000 - 95,000 for a period of one year to RUR 135,000 for a period of three years; processing times may vary from 1.5 to 2 months. Degree certificates and passports are required to be submitted along with their notarized Russian translations.

The obtaining of a work visa by an employer is a complicated and multiple stage process.

The prospective employer obtains a quota for the employment of a non-CIS, Georgia, or Turkmenistan citizen.

The employer and vacancy details are submitted to the State Employment Service.

Obtaining FMS permission to hire foreign nationals.

Obtaining a plastic card (work permit) that allows the foreign national to work in Russia.

Applying for the invitation for a potential employee.

Completing visa application form. 'Wage employment' must be specified as the purpose of the trip.

Getting the passport stamped with a work visa.

The foreigners with work visas must register with the local migration service office at the place of their stay. They are required to renew their registration upon each crossing of the Russian state border. Besides, they are entitled to apply for the visas for their family members. In such cases, 'accompanying family member' must be specified as the purpose of trip in their visa application forms.

Reasons for a business visa denial:

Incorrect name of the inviting company. Company name in the letter of invitation does not correspond with the company name in the visa application form.

The period of stay in the letter of invitation does not correspond with the period of stay in the visa application form. It is advisable that they be the same or at least don't exceed the requested period of stay.

The purpose of visit: the visit is not specified as 'Business trip', and 'Search for employment opportunities' is specified in this field. Please note, that business visa is not supposed to be used for employment and generating the revenue.

The visa application form was submitted prior to the obtaining a visa directive (telex) by the consulate. Important note: telex can be sent to the consulate and obtained by it from 10 am to 5 pm. For this reason it is recommended that the visa application form be filled in the day after the day on which the visa directive is sent.

The place of stay in the letter of invitation does not correspond with the place of stay in the visa application form. It is important to fill in 'Trip itinerary' field correctly and specify the place of stay exactly as it is given in the letter of invitation.

Failure at the interview: consulate officials may require the applicant to appear in person for an interview or arrange a phone interview. The interview consists of questions concerning key facts about the inviting company, its name and location.

Areas closed for visiting by foreigners are included in the visa application. In such cases, prior authorization must be obtained.

The rule of 90 days is often violated. Previous overstay in Russia with a multi visa constitutes a compelling reason for the Russian visa denial.