



INDIA | Bangalore FRRO Implements New Residence Registration | Visa Renewal Requirements

Effective immediately, the Bangalore Foreigner's Regional Registration Office (FRRO) has announced that all foreign nationals with new Employment ("E") and Student ("S") Visas valid for more than 180 days, and who intend to reside in the Bangalore Foreigner's Regional Registration Office (FRRO) jurisdiction, are required to undergo residence registration, irrespective of their intended length of stay in India. For dependent family members (Co-Terminus or "X" Visa holders), FRRO registration will only be required if their stay exceeds 180 consecutive days during a single visit to India, unless their visas are otherwise endorsed with an FRRO registration requirement. In addition, new documentation requirements for Employment and Co-Terminus Visa holders renewing their status may increase overall renewal application processing times.

Mandatory FRRO Registration Requirements

The Indian Bureau of Immigration's general national policy requires that all foreign nationals who arrive on a long-term visa (i.e., a visa valid for more than 180 days), and who expect to remain in India for more than 180 consecutive days during a single visit or stay are required to undergo residence registration with the local registration office in the city of residence.

Prior to now, only "E" and "S" visa holders intending to remain in the Bangalore region for more than 180 consecutive days were required to register (unless otherwise indicated on their visa endorsement). While not yet publicized on its [website](#), the FRRO has announced that all foreign nationals with "E" or "S" visas valid for more than 180 days must register with the FRRO within 14 days of arrival in Bangalore.

Current Exceptions to the FRRO Registration Requirement

Please note that that the FRRO is currently excluding registration requirements for accompanying "X" visa holders intending to stay in India for less than 180 consecutive days. "E" and "X" visa holders already physically present in Bangalore who do not intend to stay for more than 180 consecutive days, and who do not have a visa

endorsed with a mandatory registration requirement, are also excluded from the FRRO registration requirement.

"X" Visa Holders Required to Submit Additional Documentation

Spouses issued with new "X" visas and accompanying "E" visa holders intending long-term residence in India will now be required to present an original, civil marriage certificate authenticated with an Apostille. In cases where the marriage certificate is issued by a country that does not issue Apostilles, the certificate must be legalized by the appropriate Indian consular post.

(Please note that for children with "X" visas, authenticated birth certificates are not yet required by the FRRO.)

Spousal "X" visa holders are also required to submit a "No Work" letter to the FRRO confirming he or she will not engage any productive work while resident in India.

"E" and "X" Visa Renewals Will Require Additional Documents

All "E" and "X" visa renewal applications filed with the Bangalore FRRO on or after August 24, 2011 will require additional documentation as follows:

- Foreign nationals granted "E" visas prior to October 2010, and who earned an annual salary of less than US\$25,000 (approx. INR1,143,000), must request their Indian host company HR to request a salary attestation declaration from the appropriate Employee's Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) confirming that the employee will earn at least US\$25,000 for the coming year.
- Indian host company HR must supply a confirmation letter that no qualified Indian national workers are readily-available to assume the "E" visa holder's current position, and the "E" visa holder's specialized-knowledge services are continued to be required in India.
- "E" visa holders must submit a photocopy of his or her Permanent Account Number (PAN) Card or evidence official registration for a [PAN card](#).
- The Indian host company must submit an income letter confirming the breakout of the "E" visa holder's annual base salary, allowances and any bonuses that will be paid for the coming year. The income letter must be signed by an authorized company representative in India and affixed with the Indian company's corporate seal.
- Spouses renewing their "X" visas must submit an authenticated marriage certificate. For those spouses with "X" visa renewal applications already filed with the FRRO, it is recommended to check if an authenticated marriage certificate

will be required for approving a renewal application. For those in need to submit an "X" visa renewal application now, but do not yet possess an authenticated marriage certificate, the spouse can submit a letter confirming he or she will be obtaining appropriate certification as soon as possible.

- Spousal "X" visa renewal applications are also required to have a "No Work" letter addressed to the FRRO confirming that the spouse will not engage any productive work while resident in India.

What's Changed?

"E" and "S" visa holders valid for more than 180 days, who have not yet entered India with their visas, must now register with the Bangalore FRRO within 14 days of arrival. For those "E" and "X" visa holders who have visa renewal applications underway, or preparing to file a renewal application, the new documentation requirements may delay processing or filing of renewal applications.

Action Items for Employers

The Bangalore FRRO registration requirement may prove onerous for employers obtaining "E" visas for employees going for short-term work assignments lasting less than 12 months. As FRRO registration will require documentation and participation from the Indian host company HR and the employee, employers obtaining new "E" visas for assignees in the Bangalore region should review the FRRO registration requirements prior to the employee's departure for India.

For "E" visa renewal applications, employers should follow up with the Indian host company HR to confirm their understanding of the new salary attestation letters and PAN requirements. For those companies with employees assigned to Indian client sites, it is especially important to confirm the host company HR understands their obligations to assist in preparing these letters and ensuring assignees have proper PAN documentation. Spouse's intending to renew their "X" visas will need to arrange for authenticated marriage certification and executing "No Work" letters. Clients are welcome to review all of the above new requirements with their Pro-Link GLOBAL immigration specialist to ensure proper documentation is submitted on a timely basis.

Caveat Lector | Warning to Reader

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