

Law No. 21 of 2015 Regulating the Entry, Exit and Residence of Expatriates

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Chapter 1: Definitions (1-1) ▶

Chapter Two: Entry and Exit of Expatriates (2-7) ▶

Chapter Three: Residence of Expatriates in the State (8-16) ▶

Chapter Four: Recruitment of Expatriates (17-20) ▶

Chapter Five: Change of Employer (21-23) ▶

Chapter Six: Departure, Deportation, Deportation and Return (24-28) ▶

Chapter Seven: Entry, Exit and Residence of Certain Categories (29-37) ▶

Chapter Eight: Penalties (38-41) ▶

Chapter Nine: Reconciliation (42-45) ▶

Chapter Ten: General Provisions (46-50) ▶

We, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar,
after perusal of the Constitution,
the Labour Law promulgated by Law No. 14 of 2004, as amended thereof,

Law No. 4 of 2009 regulating the entry, exit, residence and sponsorship of expatriates, the proposal of the Minister of Interior, the draft law submitted by the Council of Ministers, and after taking the opinion of the Shura Council, have decided the following law:

Chapter One: Definitions

Article 1

In the application of the provisions of this Law, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings assigned to each of them, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Ministry" means the Ministry of Interior.

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Competent Authority: The competent administrative unit of the Ministry.

Recruiter: The entity, employer, head of the family or host, who recruits the Expat or to whom his residence is transferred, in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Expat: Any non-Qatari person who enters the State for work, residency, visit, or for any other purpose.

Attribute: Permission for the expatriate to enter the country.

Travel document: A document issued by the competent authorities in the country of the holder or any other recognized authority, acting as a passport, and authorizing the holder to return to the country from which he comes.

Residence Permit: A license that proves the identity of the expatriate and allows him to reside in the State in the cases and conditions specified in this Law, its executive regulations and the decisions implementing it.

Entry and exit stamp: A stamp proving the entry or exit of the expatriate from the ports specified under the provisions of this Law.

Departure: The exit of the expatriate from the country after the end of the purpose for which he was licensed to enter or reside.

Deportation: Obliging the expatriate to leave the country if an order is issued to deport him.

Chapter Two: Entry and Exit of Expatriates

An expatriate may not enter or exit the State unless he holds a valid passport or travel document and obtains an entry visa from the competent authority indicating the purpose of entry.

The provision of the preceding paragraph shall not apply in the event of departure.

Article 3 An expatriate may not enter or exit the State except from the ports specified by the Minister for this purpose, and after placing the entry or exit stamp on his passport or travel document or any other mechanism determined by the Minister.

Article 4 The competent authority, or any other authority determined by the Minister, shall issue entry visas in accordance with the provisions of this Law, and any such entry visas may be revoked after their issuance for reasons of public interest.

The entry visa shall not be granted to an expatriate for the purpose of work except under an employment contract concluded with the recruiter in accordance with the conditions and controls prescribed by law.

It is prohibited to assign or dispose of attributes to third parties in any way or circulate them by third parties, whether assigning, disposing or trading for or without consideration.

The executive regulation of this law shall determine the conditions and controls for granting such visas, and the periods for each of them.

Article 5 Captains of ships and pilots of aircraft, vehicles and other means of transport shall, upon their arrival in the State and before its departure, submit to the competent authority a list of the names and data of the crew and passengers of their ships, aircraft or vehicles, and shall inform the competent authorities of any passengers who do not hold valid passports, travel documents or entry visas, and prevent them from leaving the ship or aircraft, as the case may be.

In all cases, the carrier shall be obliged to return, at its expense, a passenger who does not have a passport, travel document or entry visa to the country of origin or his domicile of nationality.

Article 6 The managers of hotel and tourist establishments, or their representatives, shall provide information to the competent authority about the persons who have been allowed to enter the State through them, and they shall accommodate them in the place where the visas were issued to them, unless otherwise necessary, and in the event that any of them is absent from the place of residence for a period exceeding forty-eight hours, without notifying the hotel or tourist establishment thereof, the competent authority must be informed within a period not exceeding twenty-four hours following

that. Hotel or tourist all obligations of the recruiter towards the expatriate.

In all cases, anyone who shelters an expatriate must inform the security department in whose district the hotel or tourist establishment or the place of accommodation is located of the name and address of the expatriate within twenty-four hours from the time of his arrival.

Article 7 (Amended By Law 13/2018) (Amended By Law 1/2017)An expatriate for work subject to the aforementioned Labor Law shall have the right to temporary exit or final departure from the country during the validity of the employment contract, and the recruiter may submit a reasoned and prior request to the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs in the names of those he deems necessary with their prior approval to leave the country due to the nature of their work, provided that it does not exceed (5%) The number of employees with it, and in the event that the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labor and Social Affairs approves the application, the competent authority shall be notified of this.

For expatriates who are not subject to the aforementioned Labour Law, the controls and procedures for their exit from the country shall be determined by a decision of the Minister.

In the event that an expatriate is unable to leave the country for any reason, an expatriate may resort to the Expatriates Exit Grievance Committee, which shall be formed and determine its terms of reference, the procedures to be followed before it, and its work system shall be determined by a decision of the Minister.

The Committee shall decide on the grievance within three working days.

Chapter Three: Residence of Expatriates in the State

Article 8

Every expatriate residing in the State for any purpose must obtain a license from the competent authority.

The recruiter shall carry out the licensing procedures and renew it, within a period not

exceeding ninety days from the date of its expiry.

The employer shall hand over to the expatriate to work his passport or travel document after completing the licensing or renewal procedures, unless the expatriate requests the employer in writing to keep it for him, provided that he delivers it to him upon request.

Article 9 The competent authority shall issue a residence permit for an expatriate in accordance with the provisions of this Law, and shall print on it his name, photo, signature and identity data determined by a decision of the Minister.

Article 10 The recruiter shall enable the expatriate to review the competent authorities, within thirty days from the date of the expatriate's entry into the country, to complete the residence or visit permit procedures, and the expatriate may not refrain from completing these procedures.

The competent authority may authorize the recruiter or the expatriate to act on their behalf by a person who performs some of the procedures stipulated in the preceding paragraph.

Article 11 An expatriate who enters the State for the purpose of visiting, or for other purposes for a period not exceeding thirty days, shall be exempted from the obligations stipulated in the preceding Article.

The expatriate may not remain in the State after the expiry of the aforementioned period, unless it is renewed or residency is obtained.

Article 12 The competent authority may grant residence permits to the spouse of the residence licensee, his male children who have not completed their university studies until the age of twenty-five, and his unmarried daughters.

The Minister or his deputy may make an exception to this age, and with the approval of the Minister or his representative, a residence permit may be granted to the parents of the licensee, if he deems it justified.

The competent authority may grant a residence permit to the husband and children of a Qatari who is married to a non-Qatari in accordance with the law, and a residence permit may be granted to his non-Qatari parents.

The conditions for granting residence in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be determined by a decision of the Minister.

Article 13 An expatriate who has licensed his family to reside must apply for a residence permit for his child within ninety days from the date of birth or entry into the

country.

In the event that the birth takes place outside the State and the parents or one of them has a valid residence, the newborn shall be authorized to enter within six months from the date of birth, and the competent authority may waive this period.

The expatriate woman must apply for a change in the status of her child born in the State within sixty days from the date of birth.

Children of expatriates born within the UAE shall be granted a residence permit in accordance with the conditions and controls issued by a decision of the Minister.

Article 14 An expatriate who has been licensed to reside may not remain outside the State continuously for a period exceeding six months, unless he obtains, before his departure or before the lapse of one year from the date of his departure, permission to return from the competent authority, after payment of the prescribed fees, provided that no more than sixty days have passed since the end of his residence.

The Minister or his deputy may exceed the periods stipulated in the preceding paragraph.

Article 15 During his stay in the State, the expatriate shall submit his passport, travel document or residence permit to the competent authority, when requested to do so, and shall submit any data that he may be asked for, within the time specified for him.

In the event of loss or damage to the passport, travel document or residence permit, the expatriate shall inform the competent authority immediately upon discovering the loss or damage, and shall obtain a replacement for the lost or damaged one.

Article 16 An expatriate who has been licensed to enter or reside for a specific purpose, or to work in a specific entity, shall not violate the purpose for which he was licensed by Postpone it, or leave the work with the recruiter, or work for an unlicensed entity.

It shall not be considered contrary to the purpose of the residence permit for an expatriate to exercise, with the approval of the competent authority, some of the management work in the company in which he is a partner and authorized to sign.

Chapter Four: Recruitment of Expatriates

Article 17

The person responsible for the residence of the expatriate shall be determined as follows:

- 1- The employer alone and no other, for the working expatriate.
2. The head of the family, in the case of his family members residing with him in the State, and the woman's residence may remain the responsibility of the head of the family, even if she joins any work.

If the marital relationship is terminated for any reason, any of the family members may transfer to another recruiter after the approval of the competent authority, in accordance with the controls issued by a decision of the Minister.

- 3- Host, for visiting expatriate.
 4. The concerned authorities in the State, for expatriates for other purposes.
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Article 18 The recruiter, whether a natural or legal person, shall meet the following conditions:

- 1- He must be a Qatari or an expatriate residing in the State in accordance with the law, and if the recruiter is a legal person, his head office shall be in the State or have a subsidiary department therein.
 - 2- To be qualified to bear the responsibility imposed on him by this law towards the expatriate.
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Article 19 The recruiter shall comply with the following:

- 1- Inform the competent authority within fourteen days from the date of the expatriate leaving his work, or refraining from leaving the country after canceling his residence permit, expiry of the license, the lapse of the period stipulated in Article (8/second paragraph) of this law, or the expiry of the period of his visit or the purpose for which he was licensed to enter.
2. Bear the expenses of deporting the expatriate to his country in the cases provided for in this Law, and if it is proved that the expatriate was working for another party in violation of the provisions of this Law, that entity shall bear the expenses of his deportation, and if that entity cannot be known, the expatriate shall bear such expenses,

and in the event that he is unable to pay them and has no funds inside the State, the recruiter shall bear such expenses.

In all cases, whoever employs any expatriate who did not recruit him to work for him in violation of the provisions of this Law shall pay the expenses of his deportation, without prejudice to any of the legally prescribed liability.

3. Bear the expenses of preparing and burying the body of the deceased expatriate in the cemeteries designated for this purpose in the State, regardless of the cause of death.

In the event that one of the heirs of the deceased or any concerned party requests the transfer of the body outside the State, the recruiter shall bear the costs of transportation to the original home or permanent residence of the deceased expatriate.

Article 20 The Ministry may oblige the expatriate recruiter for work subject to the aforementioned Labor Law to submit a bank guarantee to ensure the fulfillment of his obligations towards the Ministry and the expatriate, in accordance with the controls issued by a decision of the Minister.

The Ministry may also collect the expenses of his deportation from his salary and entitlements, in coordination with his employer.

Chapter Five: Change of Employer

Article 21 (Amended By Decree-Law 19/2002)

An expatriate may transfer to work for another employer, in accordance with the rules and procedures set by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs.

Article 22 is repealed (repealed by Decree-Law 19/2020)

Article 23 (Amended By Decree Law 19/2002) It is prohibited for any natural or legal person to employ expatriates without concluding an employment contract, or to employ expatriates whom he recruits to work for him to work for other parties.

As an exception, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs

may authorize the recruiter to secondment expatriate workers to another employer to work for him for a period not exceeding six months, renewable for another similar period. It may also authorize an expatriate to work part-time for another employer in addition to his original work. In all cases, the consent of the recruiter and the expatriate must be obtained to work

Chapter Six: Departure, Deportation, Deportation and Return

Article 24

An expatriate shall leave the State if he does not obtain a residence permit in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

He must also leave the State if his residence permit expires, or it is revoked for any reason, or the purpose for which he was licensed expires, within ninety days from the date of expiry or cancellation of the permit or the expiry of the purpose.

The expatriate may, after the approval of the competent authority, return to the State if he meets the necessary conditions for entry, in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Executive Regulations.

Article 25 Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, the Minister may issue an order for the deportation of any expatriate who proves that his presence in the State threatens its security or safety at home or abroad or harms the national economy, public health or public morals.

Article 26 If a worker is dismissed disciplinarily in accordance with the provisions of the aforementioned Labour Law or in accordance with the provisions of the laws regulating the affairs of state employees or any other law, and the decision is not challenged before the competent court, or if he is challenged and his appeal is rejected by a final judgment of the competent court, he may not return to the State to work until four years have elapsed from the date of his departure.

An expatriate whose deportation or deportation has been issued by a court ruling may not return to the State except by a decision of the Minister.

Article 27 The Minister or his deputy may grant an expatriate whose deportation order has been issued and who has interests in the State that require time to liquidate them, a

period not exceeding ninety days, renewable for another similar period or periods, provided that he provides an acceptable guarantee.

Article 28 The Minister may, if necessary, deposit an expatriate whose deportation has been ordered by a court ruling or ordered to be deported by the State in the designated place for a period of thirty days, renewable for another similar period.

The Minister may also, when the judgment or order stipulated in the preceding paragraph cannot be implemented, impose on the expatriate to reside in a specific destination for a renewable period of two weeks.

The expatriate shall submit to the security department in which this authority is located on the dates specified in the order issued in this regard, until he is deported or deported.

Chapter Seven: Entry, Exit and Residence of Certain Categories

Article 29

The entry, exit and residence of the categories provided for in this Chapter shall be in accordance with the provisions set forth therein.

Article 30 (Amended By Decree Law 23/2019)The competent authority may issue entry visas and grant residence permits without a recruiter for the following categories:

- 1- Investors subject to the provisions of the law regulating the investment of non-Qatari capital in economic activity.
 2. Real estate owners and beneficiaries, in accordance with the provisions of the law regulating the ownership and use of real estate by non-Qataris.
 3. Any other categories determined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.
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Article 31 To issue residence permits for the categories referred to in the preceding article, the following conditions must be met:

- 1- The applicant must submit the supporting documents for his application.

2- To be of good reputation.

Article 32 (Amended By Decree Law 23/2019) The period of residence of real estate owners and beneficiaries shall be five years, automatically renewed after payment of the prescribed fees, throughout the period of their ownership or use of real estate and in accordance with the controls issued by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

The period of residence of investors and other categories shall be five years, renewable for another similar period or periods.

Article 33 Residence permit may be granted without the requirement of work to the spouse, children and parents of the person licensed to reside, in accordance with the provisions of Article (30) of this Law.

Article 34 A residence permit may leave the State during its validity period without obtaining a permit or permit.

Article 35 A residence permit shall not violate the purpose for which he is licensed to reside, except after obtaining permission to do so from the competent authority.

Article 36 (Amended By Decree Law 23/2019) In the event of the expiry of residency, the Minister or his deputy may grant the licensee and his family members a period to leave the State not exceeding ninety days from the date of expiry of his residency, and this period may be extended when necessary.

Article 37 The residence permit of the licensee shall be revoked in the following cases:

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If it is proven that he obtained it based on incorrect information or documents.

2. If his continued residence threatens the security or safety of the State at home or abroad or harms the national economy, public health or public morals.

3. If he violates or denies the purpose for which he was licensed to reside, without obtaining permission from the competent authorities.

Chapter VIII: Penalties

Article 38

Without prejudice to any more severe penalty provided for in another law, anyone who violates any of the provisions of Articles (2/first paragraph), (3), (4/third paragraph), (11/second paragraph), (16/first paragraph), (23/ first paragraph), (24/first and second paragraph), (28/third paragraph), and (35) of this law shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine not exceeding fifty thousand (50,000) riyals, or by either of these two penalties.

In the case of recidivism, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a period of not less than thirty days and not exceeding three years and a fine of not less than twenty thousand (20,000) riyals and not exceeding (100,000) one hundred thousand riyals, or one of these two penalties.

The accused shall be deemed to be a recidivist if he commits a similar offence within one year from the date of completion of the execution of the sentence imposed or its lapse by the lapse of time.

Article 39 Without prejudice to any more severe penalty provided for in another law:

- 1- A fine not exceeding (25,000) twenty-five thousand Saudi Riyals shall be imposed on anyone who violates the provisions of Article (8/third paragraph) of this law.
2. A fine not exceeding fifty thousand (50,000) Saudi Riyals shall be imposed on anyone who violates the provisions of Article (19/Clause 1) of this Law.

Article 40 Without prejudice to any more severe penalty provided for in another law:

- 1- A fine not exceeding twenty thousand (20,000) Saudi Riyals shall be imposed on anyone who violates the provisions of Article (6) of this Law.
 2. Whoever violates any of the provisions of Articles (5) first paragraph, (8/ first and second paragraph), (10/ first paragraph), (13/ first and third paragraph), and (15) of this law shall be punished by a fine not exceeding (10,000) ten thousand riyals.
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Article 41 The execution of a fine imposed for one of the crimes stipulated in this Law may not be suspended.

Chapter IX: Reconciliation

Article 42

The Minister or his deputy may approve the reconciliation procedure in the crimes specified in the reconciliation schedule attached to this Law, before a final judgment is issued in the criminal case, in return for the accused paying the amount specified in the schedule for the crime attributed to him on the date determined by the competent authority.

If the accused refuses the composition or does not execute it, the criminal proceedings shall be initiated.

Article 43 The employees of the competent authority shall conduct reconciliation in the crimes stipulated in this law, and the composition shall be presented to the accused and recorded in a report, and the accused who wishes to reconcile shall pay the amount specified in the table attached to this law, in exchange for waiving the conduct of the criminal case, and the amount of the composition shall be deposited in the Ministry's treasury.

The criminal case shall be terminated by composition, and the composition shall not result in the forfeiture of the right to collect fees.

Article 44 A person accused of one of the crimes stipulated in this Law may not leave the State before paying the amount specified for reconciliation, issuing a final judgment in the case of acquittal or executing the penalty imposed on him, as the case may be, provided that he may be authorized to leave the State if he presents a guarantor who undertakes to pay the amount specified for reconciliation or the fine imposed against him when due.

As an exception to the provision of the preceding paragraph, the Minister may order the cancellation of the residence permit of an expatriate accused of one of the crimes stipulated in this Law and order his deportation from the State, if he does not pay the

amount specified for reconciliation, or if the court orders his imprisonment or a fine and does not pay it.

Article 45 The Minister or his deputy may, in accordance with the requirements of the public interest or for humanitarian considerations, exempt the accused from the amount of reconciliation prescribed for any of the crimes stipulated in this Law, or reduce it to the extent he deems appropriate.

Chapter X: General Provisions

Article 46

Without prejudice to the provisions of international conventions to which the State is a party, the following categories shall be excluded from the application of the provisions of this Law: 1-

1- Heads of foreign states, their family members and their companions.

2. Heads and members of foreign diplomatic and consular missions, international bodies accredited to the State, attachés, administrators, their families and persons affiliated to them, as well as official delegations.

3. Captains and crews of civil ships and aircraft coming to the State who hold passports or documents from the competent authorities of the State to which they belong after obtaining permission to disembark in the State.

4- Citizens of the Cooperation Council for the States of the Gulf Arabic.

5. Those whom the Minister deems an exception for considerations related to the principle of reciprocity, international courtesies, public interest, or humanitarian considerations.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall, by a decree, regulate the conditions for granting entry visas and residence permits and exemption therefrom for the categories mentioned in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Article.

Article 47 Without prejudice to any of the legally prescribed aspects of liability, the name of the recruiter or expatriate violating the provisions of this Law may be included in the prohibition list prepared by the competent authority for this purpose, by a decision of

the Minister or his deputy, until the violation is settled or the judgments issued against him are executed.

Inclusion in the aforementioned prohibition list shall result in the non-consideration of all or some of the applications submitted by the violator to benefit from the provisions of this Law.

Article 48 The Minister shall issue the executive regulations and decisions necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this Law, and until their issuance, the regulations and decisions currently in force shall continue to operate to the extent that they do not conflict with the provisions of this Law.

Article 49 The aforementioned Law No. 4 of 2009 shall be repealed, as well as any provision contrary to the provisions of this Law.

Article 50 All competent authorities, each within its jurisdiction, shall implement this Law. It shall enter into force one year after the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Please do not consider the material presented above official