

United Arab Emirates

Visa regimes

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United Arab Emirates (UAE)

United Arab Emirates, federation of seven emirates along the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula.

The largest of these emirates, Abu Dhabi (Abū Ḥaby), which comprises more than three-fourths of the federation's total land area, is the centre of its oil industry and borders Saudi Arabia on the federation's southern and eastern borders.

The port city of Dubai, located at the base of the mountainous Musandam Peninsula, is the capital of the emirate of Dubai (Dubayy) and is one of the region's most vital commercial and financial centres, housing hundreds of multinational corporations in a forest of skyscrapers.

The smaller emirates of Sharjah (Al-Shāriqah), 'Ajmān, Umm al-Qaywayn, and Ra's al-Khaymah also occupy the peninsula, whose protrusion north toward Iran forms the Strait of Hormuz linking the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman.

The federation's seventh member, Al-Fujayrah, faces the Gulf of Oman and is the only member of the union with no frontage along the Persian Gulf.

Historically the domain of individual Arab clans and families, the region now comprising the emirates also has been influenced by Persian culture owing to its close proximity to Iran, and its porous maritime borders have for centuries invited migrants and traders from elsewhere.

In the 18th century, Portugal and the Netherlands extended their holdings in the region but retreated with the growth of British naval power there; following a series of truces with Britain in the 19th century, the emirates united to form the Trucial States (also called Trucial Oman or the Trucial Sheikhdoms).

The states gained autonomy following World War II (1939–45), when the trucial states of Bahrain and Qatar declared independent statehood. The rest were formally united in 1971, with the city of Abu Dhabi serving as the capital. The stability of the federation has since been tested by rivalries between the families governing the larger states of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, though external events such as the Persian Gulf War (1990–91) and an ongoing territorial dispute with Iran have served to strengthen the emirates' political cohesion.

The emirates comprise a mixed environment of rocky desert, coastal plains and wetlands, and waterless mountains. The seashore is a haven for migratory waterfowl and draws birdwatchers from all over the world; the country's unspoiled beaches and opulent resorts also have drawn international travelers. Standing at a historic and geographic crossroads and made up of diverse nationalities and ethnic groups, the United Arab Emirates present a striking blend of ancient customs and modern technology, of cosmopolitanism and insularity, and of wealth and want.

Embassy of United Arab Emirates in Islamabad

The bilateral relations between the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan are characterized by strong and strong relations based on common bases of history, religion and culture, and are more profound in the provinces of Baluchistan and Sindh.

The city of Karachi, the capital of the region, has strong economic and trade ties with the UAE, because it is the financial and business city and consider as the main port in Pakistan.

In particular the economy, trade and social welfare. The relief assistance provided by the UAE to the victims of floods over the past years and the development projects include the sectors of education, health and infrastructure Which is set up by the UAE in different regions, is one of the priorities of the UAE's foreign policy in accordance with the directives of its leadership to support brotherly and friendly countries in critical times and natural disasters and to provide charitable and humanitarian assistance to them.

In terms of investments in Pakistan, the UAE is ranked second among investors. The UAE investments include banking, real estate, energy infrastructure, telecommunications, ports, housing and aviation.

Embassy of United Arab Emirates, Islamabad is situated at Ramna 5, Diplomatic Enclave – Islamabad, Pakistan.

When visiting the consular/visa section of the Embassy of United Arab Emirates, Islamabad, you must take the Diplomatic Shuttle. The shuttle stop is located at Third Avenue near Quaid-e-Azam University Road, G-5 Islamabad

General Contact Information

Address: 1-22, Diplomatic Enclave, Quaid-e-Azam University Road

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Different Types of Dubai Visas

To enter Dubai, you need to apply for a visa. However, there are several types of visas available and you need to know the difference between them to be able to apply for the right one. Here we rounded up the different types of visas you can apply for when travelling to Dubai.

Tourist Visa

Tourist visa is for those who are not eligible for visa on arrival or a visa-free entry to the UAE. Tourist visa can be obtained for eligible individual tourists from around the world. Females below the age of 18 are not eligible to apply for this type of visa unless they are travelling with their parents.

According to a Cabinet resolution passed in July 2018, children under the age of 18 years who are accompanying adults, can get free visa for their visit from 15 July to 15 September each year.

Depending on your plan, tourist visas to the UAE can be issued for 30 days or 90 days duration, single entry or multiple entry.

The UAE embassies do not issue tourist visas. In order to get a tourist visa to the UAE, you need to get in touch with one of the UAE-based airlines, a tour agency or a prospective hotel in the UAE who will apply for visa on your behalf to the official visa-issuing authorities in the UAE.

Tourist visas through airlines

Each airline has some conditions, which must be met in order for your visa to be arranged by them. One of the conditions is flying with them. For more updated and specific information, check the following UAE-based airlines for visa types, facilities, terms and conditions:

- [Visa services from Etihad Airways - Etihad Airways](#)
- [Visa Services offered by Emirates Airline - Emirates Airline](#)
- [Visa services from Fly Dubai - Fly Dubai](#)
- [Visa services from Air Arabia - Air Arabia](#)

Tourist visas through agencies and hotels

Licensed travel agents and hotels in the UAE can arrange a tourist visa for you provided you purchase the ticket through them and maintain hotel reservation with the specific hotel.

You may also contact travel agencies in your country for any tourist packages available to the UAE in collaboration with a local tour operator.

It is important to check the authenticity of travel agents you are dealing with and refrain from paying or sending copies of your official documents until after you are 100 per cent sure the tourist operator is genuine. You may seek the help of the UAE embassy in your country for verification.

Also learn about the provisions of a transit visa to the UAE.

Renewing or extending tourist visa

All types of visit and tourist visas can be extended for 30 days twice, upon renewal without the need to leave the country.

Visitors and tourists can apply for the second renewal before the expiry of the first one against AED 600 each time of renewal.

Visa over stayers who do not renew, as above, will have to pay AED100 fine for each day of their overstay, to be calculated from 10 days after the visa expiry.

However, the new rule for extension does not apply on the following categories:

- visitors and tourists who are residents in GCC countries
- residents accompanying GCC nationals
- those on special entry permits
- those on 96-hour permit for special missions.

Transit visa

The UAE issues two types of transit visas: one for 48 hours which is free of charge, and another for 96 hours for AED 50 only. Transit visas are sponsored only by the UAE-based airlines and must be processed and approved before entering the UAE. Both types of transit visas are not extendable.

If you are not one of the nationalities that are eligible for visa on arrival or a visa-free entry to the UAE, then you need a transit visa.

Who can apply for your transit visa?

Only the UAE based-airlines you are travelling through can arrange your transit visa prior to your journey. If your trip is through a travel agency, the agency could also help you get the visa, but all visas are routed through the airline. Airline agents can apply online for transit visas through one of the following means:

- the eChannels portal
- the ICA UAE eChannels app for Apple and Android
- Online channels offered by the relevant General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) in each emirate.

Duration of transit visa

Transit visa is issued either for 48 hours or for 96 hours. Please note that once a 48 hours visa is issued, it cannot be extended to 96 hours.

Transit visas for 48 hours

Transit visas for 48 hours are issued free of charge to passengers transiting through the UAE's airports. You need to apply for the visa in advance through a UAE-based airline. This visa is not extendable, nor renewable. The validity of the visa is 48 hours from entry into the UAE, and you must leave the UAE within 48 hours from arrival.

- To get a transit visa, you must have:
- a passport or travel document with a minimum validity of three months
- a photo of self against a white background
- an onward ticket booking to a 3rd destination, other than the one you are coming from.

Transit visas for 96 hours

Transit visas for 96 hours are issued against a fee of AED 50 to passengers transiting through the UAE's airports. You need to apply for the visa in advance through a UAE-based airline. This visa is not extendable, nor renewable. The validity of the visa is 96 hours from entry into the UAE, and you must leave the UAE within 96 hours from arrival.

To get a transit visa, you must have:

- a passport or travel document with a minimum validity of six months
- a photo of self against a white background

- an onward ticket booking to a 3rd destination, other than the one you are coming from.

Important note

- No fees or additional amounts can be imposed by any federal, local or private entity. A departure fee of AED 30 is levied on each passenger passing through the UAE's airports.

Useful links:

- [Transit guide - Abu Dhabi Airports](#)
- [International connections - Abu Dhabi International Airport](#)
- [Check the requirements for your UAE visa - Etihad Airways](#)
- [How to apply for your UAE visa - Emirates Airline](#)

Student visa

Long-term visa for outstanding students

On 24 November 2018, the UAE government approved a decision to grant a 5-year visa to outstanding students.

Eligibility conditions for a 5-year visa are:

- School students must graduate with a grade of at least 95 per cent from secondary schools whether public or private.
- University students must graduate with a distinctive GPA of at least 3.75 from universities within and outside the country.

Visa benefits will also include families of the outstanding students.

Whom is student visa's for?

A student's visa is for a university or a college student studying in the UAE. It is issued to expatriate students who are residing in the UAE under the sponsorship of their parents or relatives, or to foreign international students who come from abroad to join one of the higher educational institutes in the UAE.

Key requirements of a student's visa

In order to secure a freshman student's visa, the applicant must obtain an official admission letter from the university he is studying at. For older students, a certificate of continuation of study is needed. Other requirements include:

passing medical fitness test

a visa sponsor, either the university itself or a parent or relative

approval of the relevant General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA).

What is the term of validity of the student's visa?

Currently, a student's visa is given for a duration of one year, at a time, renewable for a similar period upon an official proof of continuation of a study issued from the relevant higher educational institute in the UAE where the student is admitted.

Who can provide a student's visa?

Student's visa in the UAE can be secured either by residents sponsoring their children or by one of the accredited universities/colleges in the UAE. Visa applications are processed through visa authorities represented by the relevant General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in each emirate.

How can universities and colleges secure a visa for their students?

Accredited universities and colleges in the UAE can secure a visa for their students whether international students or students already residing in the UAE. Students should refer to terms and conditions listed in each university or college to know specific requirements for admission and visa process.

Admission in one of the UAE universities does not guarantee that visa will be issued. Visa issuance is subject to certain requirements, which include passing a medical fitness test, a security check and the approval of the GDRFA in the relevant emirate. These are the available channels to apply for a student's visa in the UAE.

How can UAE expatriate residents secure a student's visa for their children?

UAE laws do not allow a resident expatriate to continue sponsoring their male children above the age of 18. An exception is given to male students who continue their studies in one of the higher educational institutes in the UAE or abroad. Therefore, male students over the age 18 can remain on their parent's residence visa sponsorship as long as they provide an evidence of attendance at a higher educational institute for a minimum of one year's course. Expatriate parents may continue to sponsor their female children for study, regardless of their children's age.

Note: New rules for children's visa sponsored by parents

Starting from 21 October 2018, students who graduate from their universities or secondary schools or complete 18 years of age will be granted a one-year residence visa, renewable for another year from the graduation date or on completing 18 years.

For this type of visa, parents are not required to place bank deposits. The visa will cost AED100 for first time issuing and renewal.

To avail this service, parents must present duly attested graduation certificates from universities or schools, whether inside the country or abroad.

Residence visa

Long-term residence visas in the UAE

Starting from 3 February 2019, the UAE will implement a new system for long-term residence visa. The new system enables the expatriate residents to live, work and study in the UAE without the need of a national sponsor and with 100 per cent ownership of their business on the UAE's mainland. These visas will be issued for 5 or 10 years and will be renewed automatically

Eligibility for a 10-year visa without a sponsor

The following categories are entitled to apply for a 10-year residence visa in the UAE.

1-Investors in public investments of at least AED 10 million

The investment may take many forms such as:

- A deposit of at least AED 10 million in an investment fund inside the country
- Establishing a company in the UAE with a capital of not less than AED 10 million
- Partnering in an existing or a new company with a share value of not less than AED10 million
- Having a total investment of not less than AED 10 million in all areas mentioned, on condition that the investment in sectors other than real estate is not less than 60 per cent of the total investment.

Conditions

Granting a visa is subject to the following conditions:

- The amount invested must not be loaned.
- The investment should be retained for a least three years.
- There should be a financial solvency up to AED 10 million.
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- Visa can be extended to include business partners, on the condition that each partner contributes AED 10 million.
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- The long-term visa could include the spouse and children, as well as one executive director and one advisor.
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- Investors from abroad may apply for a multiple-entry permit for a six-month period.

2-Persons with specialised talents

This includes specialized talents and researchers in the fields of science and knowledge such as doctors, specialists, scientists, inventors, as well as creative individuals in the field of culture and art. The visa advantage extends to the spouse and children. All categories are required to have a valid employment contract in a specialized field of a priority in the UAE.

Conditions

Granting a visa is subject to the following conditions:

- Scientists must be accredited by Emirates Scientists Council or holders of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Medal for Scientific Excellence.
- Creative individuals in culture and art must be accredited by Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development.
- Inventors must obtain a patent of value, which adds to the UAE's economy. Patents must be approved by Ministry of Economy.
- Exceptional talents must be documented by patents or a scientific research published in a world-class journal.
- Executives must be owners of a leading and internationally recognized company or holders of a high academic achievement and position.
- Doctors and specialists must meet at least two of the following conditions:
 - a Ph. D. degree from one of the top 500 universities in the world (refer to ICA for information)
 - an award or certificates of appreciation in the field of the applicant's work
 - contribution to a major scientific research in the respective field of work
 - published articles or scientific books in distinguished publications in the respective field of work
 - membership in an organisation related to the field
 - a Ph. D. degree, in addition to 10-year professional experience in his field
 - specialisation in areas of priority to the UAE.

Eligibility for a 5-year visa without a sponsor

The following categories are entitled to apply for a 5-year residence visa in the UAE.

1. Investors in a property in the UAE

Conditions:

Granting a visa is subject to the following conditions:

- The investor must invest in a property of a gross value of not less than AED 5 million.
- The amount invested in real estate must not be on loan basis.
- The property must be retained for a least 3 years.

2. Entrepreneurs

- This category includes those having an existing project with a minimum capital of AED 500,000, or those who have the approval of an accredited business incubator in the country.
- The entrepreneur is allowed a multi-entry visa for six months, renewable for another six months. The long-term visa includes the spouse and children, a partner and three executives.

Getting a work and residency permit

Read about how and where to get a work and residency permit.

Work permit for a new job

Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MoHRE) issues work permits. The employer needs to apply to MoHRE for the work permit. Check the ministry website for documents and conditions.

Under Article 1 of Ministerial Decree No. 766 of 2015, an employee whose employment was terminated because of expiry of his contract, whether limited or non-limited can get a new work permit when he wishes to join new employment.

An employee can also get a new work permit for all limited and non-limited contracts if:

- it is determined that the employer has failed to meet the legal and contractual obligations, including but not limited to failure to pay wages for more than 60 days
- MoHRE confirms that the employer has not provided work due to the firm being inactive for more than two months and if the worker reports to the ministry during this period
- the final ruling in a labour case (which MoHRE referred to the Labour Court on the basis of a complaint) is in favour of the employee and where the case pertains to early termination or outstanding wages which are less than two months of dues for end of service.
- If the employee is in the UAE, he must maintain a status which allows him to transfer his residency to a different sponsor.

Related links:

- [Ministerial Resolution No.\(764\) of 2015 on standard employment contracts](#)
- [Job offers and contracts services - MoHRE](#)

New permits for unskilled workers

A new permit can be granted when both the worker and the employer mutually consent to terminating the contract during the term provided that the worker has completed at least six months' employment.

The ministerial decree notes that a new permit can be issued to a worker whose employer terminated him unfairly, without the need to complete six months.

New permits for skilled workers

The requirement of six months' employment is waived if workers qualify for the skill set series 1, 2 or 3 as classified by the ministerial decree, which denotes holding a university degree, post-secondary diploma or high school diploma respectively. This is applicable if the employee fulfills his contractual commitments.

Related links from MoHRE:

- [Ministerial Decree No. 766 of 2015 on rules and conditions for granting a permit to a worker for employment by a new employer](#)

Is there a maximum age for expatriates to get a work permit?

The UAE's Labour Law No. 8 of 1980, as amended does not specify a particular age to terminate employment contracts on the basis of age or seniority. As per Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MoHRE), the fees for issuing an initial approval for a work permit for those who are 65 and above is AED 5,000 every two years.

Procuring a work visa

Procuring a work visa involves MoHRE and the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) of the emirate where a person is employed.

The process starts with procuring a work permit for an expatriate from MoHRE. The work permit allows the holder to enter the UAE for employment and it is valid for two months from the date of issue.

After the employee enters the UAE on the basis of the work permit, the sponsoring company arranges to complete the formalities of medical testing, obtaining UAE Resident Identity (Emirates ID) Card, Labour Card and stamping the work residency permit on his passport within a scope of 60 days. The work residency permit on the employee's passport denotes that he is sponsored by the company he is employed by.

After this process, the employee can sponsor his family members and bring them into the country. Read about sponsoring family members.

The authority for issuing employment visas is GDRFA under Ministry of Interior. Its office is located in each emirate. Below are links to the local GDRFA offices.

- [Abu Dhabi](#)
- [Dubai \(Amer\)](#)
- [Sharjah](#)
- [Ajman](#)
- [Ras Al Khaimah](#)
- [Fujairah](#)

Work visas - offshore

To expedite the process of work visas, MoHRE and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation have set up centres outside the UAE. At the centres, employees would be able to know their rights, duties and terms and conditions of employment and all privileges they are entitled to, in the language they understand. This mechanism ensures a transparent contractual relation between employers and employees and prevents any fraudulent attempt to replace job offers upon the arrival of the employee in the UAE.

NB: Source of the information for this document is the Official Portal of the UAE Government

<https://www.government.ae/en/information-and-services/visa-and-emirates-id/residence-visa/getting-a-work-and-residency-permit>