



Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Advisory

PR-199-2013

4 November 2013

New Rules Governing the Foreign Workers Violating Labor and Residency Rules After the Correction Period

(RIYADH, 4 November 2013) – The Saudi Government has informed the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh, through a formal diplomatic Note, of the new rules (*copy attached*) that will govern foreign workers violating the labor and residency laws following the end of the correction period.

Following is a summary of the most salient provisions of the new rules:

- Foreign workers who work illegally for their own account, absconded from their sponsors, and overstayers will be apprehended, penalized and deported;
- Those who employ illegal or absconded workers, provide cover, harbor or transport them, or “aids them by any means” will also be pursued;
- Employers will bear the cost of deportation of illegal workers, except where the foreign worker works for himself in which case he will bear the cost of his own deportation;
- Illegal workers who are unable to afford the travel ticket will be deported at the cost of the Saudi Government;
- Overstayers will be deported at the expense of the employer, or, if he works for himself, the company or person who sponsored his visit will bear the cost of deportation;
- All companies and individual employers, including government agencies, shall ensure that their workers obtain and renew their *iqamas* in due time;
- Deported foreign workers shall be prohibited from returning to the Kingdom;
- Offending foreigners will be accommodated in Saudi Government centers pending deportation.

The Embassy urges all Filipino nationals in the Kingdom to familiarize themselves with the new rules.

In the meantime, the Philippine Embassy and the Consulate advise all those who have taken steps to process their final exit and repatriation to remain calm and not panic. The Embassy and the Consulate continue to coordinate with the concerned authorities for the processing of the final exit of those waiting to be repatriated. The Embassy is currently confirming the procedures and timeframe for those who have no original copy of their residence card or iqama, their passport with the border number, or those who have not encoded their fingerprint. The Embassy in Riyadh has already received advice on procedures for the females, and is coordinating for the procedures for males.



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The Embassy and the Philippine Consulate in Jeddah have also created special roving teams that will go around jails, prisons and detention centers around the Kingdom to any violators that have been detained and provide them with Travel Documents to facilitate their early deportation.

The Embassy assures the Filipino community all over the Kingdom that the Philippine Government is ready to provide appropriate assistance to Filipinos.

Further queries may be made thru the following existing 24-hour hotlines in addition to the landlines posted on the Embassy's website:

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|---|-----------------------------|
| • Embassy's Assistance to Nationals Section | - 056 9893301 |
| • Consulate's Assistance to Nationals Section | - 055 5219613 |
| • Philippine Overseas Labor Office (Riyadh) | - 054 5917834 / 050 7537997 |
| • Philippine Overseas Labor Office (Eastern Province) | - 050 126 9742 |

(END)

Rules Governing Law-Breaching Foreign Workers

Article 1

The Ministry of Interior, represented by its law enforcement agencies, shall undertake the following:

1. Pursue, apprehend, penalize and deport foreign workers who work for their own account (illegal labor) or abscond from work as well as overstayers (including holders of *Hajj*, *Umrah*, visit (of all types), tourism, medical treatment or transit visas) and infiltrators arrested outside the border area.
2. Pursue anyone who employs offenders referred to in Article 1(1) of these Rules, allows his workers to work for their own account (illegal labor), provides cover, harbors or transports the same or aids them by any means, as well as recruiters who do not report the overstay of their recruits.

Article 2

1. An offending foreign worker shall be deported at the expense of the employer, unless the worker absconds from work and this is reported in due time. In such case, the deportation cost shall be borne by the person employing him. An offending worker who works for his own account shall be deported at his own expense, but if he is unable to afford the travel ticket, he shall be deported at the expense of the State. Necessary and sufficient funds shall be allocated for such purpose.
2. An offending foreigner entering the Kingdom under *Hajj* or *Umrah* visa, visit visa of all types or other types of visa shall be deported at the expense of the person employing him. If he works for his own account, he shall be deported at his own expense; otherwise, he shall be deported at the expense of the company, establishment or person sponsoring his visit or at the expense of the carrier or the person providing him with cover.

Article 3

Hajj and *Umrah* companies and establishments shall notify the competent authority of any visitor who overstays his *Hajj* or *Umrah* visa.

Article 4

The person sponsoring a visitor shall immediately notify the competent authority of his guest's overstay. Otherwise, said sponsor shall be deemed to be committing an instance of cover up.

Article 5

All companies, private establishments and individuals shall ensure that their workers obtain and renew *iqama* (residence) and work permits in due time, and shall not employ workers of third parties, nor allow their workers to work for third parties without following established statutory rules or work for their own account, and shall, within five days, notify the competent authorities of workers absconding from work.

Article 6

All government agencies shall ensure that all foreigners working for them or in fields falling within their jurisdiction have valid *iqama* and work permits or are employed under officially approved contracts.

Article 7

Any person found to be employing offending foreign workers, allowing his workers to work for their own account or for third parties or employing workers of third parties without following established statutory rules shall be deprived of the right to obtain work or visit visas for a period not exceeding five years.

Article 8

Any deported foreigner shall be prohibited from entering the Kingdom in accordance with periods and procedures specified in regulations to be issued pursuant to a decision by the Minister of Interior.

Article 9

Offending foreigners referred to in these Rules shall be accommodated in centers created for this purpose pending deportation.

Article 10

The Ministry of Interior shall apply to offenders referred to in Articles 1, 3 and 4 of these Rules penalties stipulated in Articles 4 and 5 of the Statute on Treatment of Persons Entering the Kingdom under *Hajj*, *Umrah*, Visit, Work or Other Visas issued pursuant to Royal Decree No. M/42 on 18/10/1404 H.

Article 11

Committees formed in the General Directorate of Passports and its branches shall review offenses referred to in these Rules and decisions thereof shall be subject to the approval of the Minister of Interior or his designee. The power to review such offenses may, pursuant to a decision by the Minister of Interior, be transferred to committees formed for this purpose at the Ministry of Interior.

Article 12

Any person against whom an administrative decision is issued by the committees referred to in Article 11 of these Rules shall have the right to appeal said decision to the Minister of Interior within a period not exceeding thirty working days from the date of notification or knowledge of said decision.

Article 13

The Minister of Interior shall issue the executive decisions required for the application of these Rules.

Article 14

These Rules shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall enter into force as of the date of publication.