

## News Release

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# UAE extends validity of residence, visit visas for foreign nationals

Foreign nationals, including overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with expired visas before March 1, 2020 are exempted from overstay fines as the UAE Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship extended the validity of their residence and visit visas until the end of the year, in an effort to ease the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

In particular, foreign nationals with expired or cancelled residence permit before March 1, 2020 will be exempted from overstay fines if they depart the UAE within three months starting from May 18, 2020 until August 17, 2020. However, those who remain in the said country and change their immigration status in the UAE are not exempted.

Meanwhile, foreign nationals with cancelled residence permit after March 1, 2020 will be subject to overstay fines when they depart the UAE or change their immigration status after the expiry of the 30-day grace period. Those who decide to remain in the UAE during the grace period and do not have a new employment offer, may change their immigration status and obtain a visit visa for tourism to avoid fines.

On the other hand, foreign national residents that are stranded outside the UAE will be permitted to return to the said country provided that they have a valid residence visa, as well as having a family member who are currently residing or employed in the UAE.

Applications to obtain permission to return should be submitted through the Federal Identification and Citizenship "ICA" portal found in their website. Authorized holder will be allowed to return to UAE within 21 days from the approval date.

Also, applicants are advised to submit a letter of support explaining the reason for their return to the UAE. As such, Filipino workers who wish to return for employment must submit a supporting letter coming from his/her employer.

Those who initially applied and whose application was rejected, can still reapply for permission to return to UAE. ###