



Ministry of Governance, Police and Public Safety
Directorate General of Migration and
Immigration
Service, Justice and Transparency

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Ministry of Governance, Police and Public Safety
Directorate General of Migration and Immigration
San Jose, Costa Rica

Directorate General

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CIRCULATORY NOTE
DG-0042-11-2016

TO: All immigration agents abroad, Directorates, Managements, Units, Departments, Delegations and Regional Offices of the Directorate General of Migration and Immigration

DATE: **7 of November, 2016**

FROM: Gisela Yokchen-Mora
Director General of Migration and Immigration

EFFECTIVE: **15 NATURAL DAYS AS OF ITS PUBLICATION IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE** (published in Supplement ("Alcance") # 272 of the Official Gazette # 228 of November 28, 2016)

RE: General Guidelines for Entry Visas for Non-Resident Persons

**GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ENTRY VISAS FOR
NON-RESIDENT PERSONS**

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

FIRST: LEGAL FOUNDATION

GENERAL ACT ON MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION, LAW N° 8764

ARTICLE 47.-

The Directorate General will convey the general guidelines for entry visas and permanence



for non-residents, for foreigners who come from other countries or geographic regions, based on existing international agreements and treaties and security, convenience or opportunity reasons for the Republic of Costa Rica.

ARTICLE 51.-

Foreign persons who intend to enter under a non-resident immigration category will be required the appropriate entry visa with the exceptions set forth by the guidelines for entry and permanence for non-residents. The length of permanence will be authorized by the Directorate General authority when the foreign person enters the country in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Directorate General. Prior to the granting of a visa, immigration agents abroad shall obtain the appropriate entry authorization from the Directorate General, when applicable, according to the general guidelines for entry visas and permanence for non-residents.

BY-LAWS FOR THE GRANTING OF VISAS, EXECUTIVE DECREE N° 36626-G

ARTICLE 6.-

The General Guidelines for Entry Visas and Permanence for Non-Residents shall contemplate the nationals of those countries who will not be required a visa, those who will be required a consular visa and those who will be required a restricted visa.

ARTICLE 8.-

For the purpose of these by-laws, non-residents will be considered as those foreign persons to whom the Directorate General grants entry and permanence authorizations for a period that shall not exceed ninety days according to the General Guidelines for Entry Visas as regulated by articles 47 and 48 of the Law.

SECOND: DEFINITION OF ENTRY AND PERMANENCE AS A NON-RESIDENT. Persons admitted in the country in their quality as **NON-RESIDENTS** may carry out those activities defined as **tourism** by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and it shall comprehend any activity carried out during their trip for leisure, business or professional purposes and as long as they are not remunerated or lucrative.

THIRD: ENTRY. In accordance with dispositions of article 42 of the General Act on Migration and Immigration, Law N° 8764, and the Executive Decree N° 36769-G “By-Laws on Immigration Control”, foreign persons who intend to enter in Costa Rica must bear: 1) a passport or a valid travel document (see below: validity for each group of countries), 2) a visa if it is required, 3) proof of economic sufficiency in a minimum of USD\$100.00 (one hundred American dollars) for each month of legal permanence in the country, 4) a bill, ticket or voucher for the continuation of their trip, or else, the navigation plan in which the destination port is attested, 5) Not having an impediment to enter in the Costa Rican territory.

FOURTH: As described in article 55 of the General Act on Migration and Immigration, a visa



implies a mere expectation of a right and it does not entail the unconditional admission of the foreign person into the country nor an authorization for the maximum permanence as arranged for that group of countries or as expected by the individuals, who shall be subject to the immigration control that the competent authority may execute at the port of entry in order to verify the fulfillment of all the legal and by-law necessary requirements for their entry.

GROUP OF ENTRY WITH NO CONSULAR VISA

- **ENTRY: NO CONSULAR VISA**
- **PASSPORT: ONE DAY MINIMUM VALIDITY**
- **MAXIMUM PERMANENCE: UP TO NINETY NATURAL DAYS.
NON-EXTENDIBLE.**

ANDORRA	KOREA (REPUBLIC OF)
ARGENTINA	LATVIA
AUSTRALIA *	LIECHTENSTEIN
AUSTRIA	LITHUANIA
BAHAMAS (THE)	LUXEMBOURG
BARBADOS	MALTA
BELGIUM	MEXICO
BRAZIL	MONACO (PRINCIPALITY OF)
BULGARIA	MONTENEGRO
CANADA	NORWAY *
CROATIA	NEW ZEALAND *
CHILE	NETHERLANDS (THE; HOLLAND) *
CYPRUS	PANAMA
CZECH REPUBLIC	PARAGUAY
DENMARK *	PERU
ESTONIA	POLAND
FINLAND	PORTUGAL
FRANCE *	PUERTO RICO
GERMANY	QATAR (STATE OF)
GREECE (HELLENIC REPUBLIC)	ROMANIA
HUNGARY	SAN MARINO
ICELAND	SERBIA
IRELAND	SINGAPUR
ISRAEL	SOUTH AFRICA
ITALY	SLOVAKIA
JAPAN	SLOVENIA



SPAIN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND NORTHERN
IRELAND (THE) **
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA *
URUGUAY
VATICAN (THE; HOLLY SEE)

* Their territories with same treatment

** Includes: England, Scotland and Wales

- **PASSPORT: VALIDITY OF THREE MONTHS**
- **ENTRY: NO CONSULAR VISA**
- **MAXIMUM PERMANENCE: UP TO NINETY NATURAL DAYS. NON-EXTENDIBLE.**

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
BELIZE
BOLIVIA
BRUNEI (STATE OF)
DOMINICA
EL SALVADOR *
FIJI
GRENADA
GUATEMALA
GUYANA
HONDURAS
KAZAKHSTAN
KIRIBATI
MALAYSIA
MALDIVES
MARSHALL ISLANDS
MAURITIUS
MICRONESIA (FEDERATED STATES OF)
NAURU
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

PALAU
PHILIPPINES (THE)
RUSSIAN FEDERATION (THE)
SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS
SAINT LUCIA
SAINT VINCENT AND THE
GRENADINES
SAMOA
SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE
SEYCHELLES
SOLOMON ISLANDS
SURINAM
TAIWAN (REGION)
TONGA (KINGDOM OF)
TUVALU
TURKEY
UKRAINE
VANUATU
VENEZUELA

* See section with specific regulations for the Republic of El Salvador.



DEPENDENCIES

BRITISH

ANGUILA	FALKLANDS (THE; ISLAS MALVINAS)
ASCENSION	GIBRALTAR
BERMUDA	MAN ISLAND
BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY	MONTSERRAT
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS	PITCAIRN ISLANDS
CAYMAN ISLANDS	SAINT HELENA
CHANNEL ISLANDS	TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

FRENCH

FRENCH GUYANA	NEW CALEDONIA
FRENCH POLYNESIA	REUNION
FRENCH SOUTHERN AND ANTARTIC LANDS	SAINT MARTIN
GUADELOUPE	SAINT PIERRE AND MIQUELON
MARTINICA	WALLIS AND FUTUNA
MAYOTTE	

THE NETHERLANDS (HOLLAND)

ARUBA	CURAÇAO
BONAIRE	NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

DANISH

FAROE ISLANDS	GREENLAND
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AUSTRALIAN

COCOS ISLANDS	HEARD AND MCDONALD ISLANDS
CHRISTMAS ISLANDS	NORFOLK ISLANDS

AMERICAN

AMERICAN VIRGIN ISLANDS	GUAM
AMERICAN SAMOA	UNITED STATES MINOR OUTLYING ISLANDS



NEW ZEALANDER
COOK ISLANDS
NIUE
TOKELAU
NORWEGIAN
BOUVET ISLAND
SVALBARD AND JAN MAYEN

GROUP OF ENTRY WITH CONSULAR OR RESTRICTED VISA

- **ENTRY: WITH A CONSULAR VISA**
- **PASSPORT: MANDATORY VALIDITY OF SIX MONTHS**
- **MAXIMUM PERMANENCE: UP TO THIRTY NATURAL DAYS.
EXTENDIBLE FOR UP TO NINETY NATURAL DAYS.**

Foreign persons authorized entry into the country and permanence under an immigration category of non-residents for a period under ninety days shall have the possibility to extend their permanence when they request an authorization prior to the expiry date of their legal permanence and prove their sufficient means of economic support.

ALBANIA
ANGOLA
ARGELIA
ARMENIA
AZERBAIJAN
BAHRAIN
BENIN

BELARUS
BHUTAN
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
BOTSWANA
BURKINA FASO (ALTO VOLTA)
BURUNDI
CAPE VERDE



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CAMBODIA	MALAWI
CAMEROON	MALI
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	MAURITANIA
CHAD	MOLDOVA
COLOMBIA	MONGOLIA
CONGO (REPUBLIC OF)	MOROCCO
CONGO (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF, AFTER ZAIRE)	MOZAMBIQUE
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	NAMIBIA
COMOROS	NEPAL
CHINA (PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF)	NICARAGUA *
DJIBOUTI	NIGER
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	NIGERIA
ECUATOR	OMAN
ECUATORIAL GUINEA	PAKISTAN
EGYPT	PAPUA NEW GUINEA
GABON	RWANDA
GAMBIA	SAHRAWI ARAB DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
GEORGIA	SAUDI ARABIA
GHANA	SENEGAL
GUINEA	SIERRA LEONE
GUINEA BISSAU	SUDAN (NORTH)
INDIA	SUDAN (SOUTH)
INDONESIA	SWAZILAND
JORDAN	TANZANIA
KENYA	TAJKISTAN
KYRGYZSTAN	THAILAND
KOSOVO	TIMOR-LESTE
KUWAIT	TOGO
LAOS (PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF)	TUNISIA
LEBANON	TURKMENISTAN
LESOTHO	UGANDA
LIBERIA	UZBEKISTAN
LIBYA	VIETNAM
MACEDONIA (REPUBLIC OF)	YEMEN
MADAGASCAR	ZAMBIA
	ZIMBABWE

* See section with specific regulations for the Republic of Nicaragua.



- **ENTRY: WITH A RESTRICTED VISA**
- **PASSPORT: MANDATORY VALIDITY OF SIX MONTHS**
- **MAXIMUM PERMANENCE: UP TO THIRTY NATURAL DAYS. EXTENDIBLE FOR UP TO NINETY NATURAL DAYS**
- **CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMISSION ON RESTRICTED VISAS FOR THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES:**

AFGHANISTAN
BANGLADESH
CUBA
ERITREA
ETHIOPIA
HAITI
IRAN
IRAK

JAMAICA
MYANMAR (AFTER BIRMANIA)
NORTH KOREA (PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF)
PALESTINE
SYRIA (ARAB REPUBLIC OF)
SOMALIA
SRI LANKA



SECTION I: COUNTRY-SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR

According to the reciprocal Administrative Agreement between the DGMI (Directorate General of Migration and Immigration) of El Salvador and the DGMI of Costa Rica signed in San Jose on April 23, 2008, entry of nationals of El Salvador will be allowed with their valid passport until the date of expiry.

REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA

1. The legal permanence for Nicaraguan persons shall be of up to 90 days.
2. Nicaraguan nationals may obtain a simple or a double transit visa at those Consulates of Costa Rica in Nicaragua according to the procedure and requirements described in the regulations of the By-laws for the Granting of Visas (“Reglamento para el Otorgamiento de Visas”). The validity for the transit visa shall be of 180 days to be used following the date of entry into any of the neighboring countries.

PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS

1. Nationals of Hong Kong and Macau who bear a valid British or Portuguese passport shall receive the same treatment as nationals of the “group of entry with no consular visa”. Therefore, they shall not be required a visa for the purpose of entering in the country and their permanence shall be of up to thirty days. Nationals of Hong Kong and Macau who do not bear the aforesaid travel document shall be required a consular visa and will be applied the corresponding regulations for the People’s Republic of China.
2. Chinese persons who bear a passport for public affairs will not require an entry visa into national territory.
3. Visa applications for children under age of Chinese nationality will be processed exclusively by the Commission on Restricted Visas. These applications must be presented by the children’s parents or their legal guardians, who shall demonstrate possession of the custody of the minors. The process for these applications for persons under age of Chinese nationality is as stipulated in the By-laws for the Granting of Visas (“Reglamento para el Otorgamiento de Visas”), Executive Decree N° 36626-G, Chapter 6, articles 125 et seq.

REPUBLIC OF CUBA

Persons with a service passport from the Republic of Cuba who are sent to perform duties of their offices may obtain a consular visa according to the regulations of the By-laws for the Granting of Visas (“Reglamento para el Otorgamiento de Visas”).



SECTION II: WAIVERS FOR THE ADMISSION FOR THOSE IN THE “GROUP OF ENTRY WITH A CONSULAR OR A RESTRICTED VISA” INTO NATIONAL TERRITORY

Nationals of those countries with a consular or restricted visa requirement that may fit in any of the waivers or conditions for entry which are stipulated as follows, may be dispensed from the consular or restricted visa procedures to Costa Rica:

- A. Nationals of those countries with a consular or restricted visa requirement who possess a multiple entry visa (tourism visa, crewmember visa or business visa) to the United States of America (exclusively a B1-B2 type visa, a D type visa or a C1/D multiple entry visa) or Canada (exclusively a multiple entry visa), may be dispensed from the consular visa for the purpose of entering into Costa Rica. Their maximum term of permanence will not be longer than that of validity of such visa once it is presented and it shall not exceed 30 days.
- B. Nationals of those countries with a consular or restricted visa requirement with a legal permanence that allows for multiple entries and a minimum validity of six months in the United States of America, Canada and the countries of the European Union, may be dispensed from the consular visa for the purpose of entering into Costa Rica. Such term of six months must be counted as of the date of entry into Costa Rica. Those foreign nationals with whether a consular or restricted visa requirement who do not meet the legal permanence of six months as minimally required, may choose to apply for a Costa Rican consular visa in the corresponding country and which may be granted under the guidelines of the Executive Decree N° 36626-G, “By-laws for the Granting of Visas”. The application -or not- of this modality will be of the Consul’s discretion. The maximum permanence will be of 30 natural days and the validity of the passport shall be of six months.
- C. Nationals of those countries with a consular or restricted visa requirement who possess a legal permanence with a minimum validity of no less than six months in those countries with no visa requirement, may apply for a **Costa Rican consular visa** within the said country of their legal permanence, which shall be granted in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Executive Decree N° 36626-G, “By-laws for the Granting of Visas”, as long as they submit to the corresponding Costa Rican Consul the identity document that certifies such legal permanence. Costa Rican Consuls shall verify the authenticity of such condition with the immigration authorities of the country of such legal permanence. Such term of six months must be counted as of the date of entry in Costa Rica. The maximum term of permanence will be of 30 natural days and the validity of the passport shall be of six months.
- D. **ATTENTION:** Legal permanence shall be reliably demonstrated to the immigration control officer. Legal permanence documents must contain the security measures established mandatorily by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Stamps, handwritten documents, sheets, documents



that attest for residencies in process or documents with alterations, shall not be admitted. **Mandatorily, the documents must include a duly apostilled or legalized translation into Spanish and in the case of a translation into English language the admission into national territory shall be of the immigration authority's discretion.**

- E. These waivers and exceptions are not applicable to those who have a legal permanence as refugees, in which case they shall obtain a **consulted entry visa** according to the procedure described in the Executive Decree N° 36626-G, “By-laws for the Granting of Visas”.
- F. If the foreign person does not meet a waiver or exception for the admission into national territory as described in these Guidelines, they may file for an entry visa according to the regulations of the By-laws for the Granting of Visas (“Reglamento para el Otorgamiento de Visas”), Executive Decree N° 36626-G.

SECTION III: REGULATIONS FOR CONSUL-GENERALS AND HONORARY CONSULS AS IMMIGRATION AGENTS ABROAD

- A. Costa Rican Consul-Generals, Consuls, Vice-consuls and diplomatic staff in consular duties may issue exclusively tourism visas and provisional visas under those categories as authorized in the By-laws for the Granting of Visas (“Reglamento para el Otorgamiento de Visas”) in favor of any national of the “group of entry” which requires a consular visa, in accordance with the regulations described in the By-laws for the Granting of Visas (“Reglamento para el Otorgamiento de Visas”) and accordingly with the General Act on Migration and Immigration, article 22, paragraph 5.
- B. Honorary Consul-Generals, Honorary Consuls and Honorary Vice-Consuls shall only issue those visas that the Directorate General of Migration and Immigration may authorize. Hence, with no exception all requests shall be consulted with this authority.

TRANSITORY PROVISION I

Nationals of those countries not stipulated in the aforesaid groups shall be included in the group of restricted visas.

TRANSITORY PROVISION II

The Circulatory Note DG-0022-08-2014 is derogated as of the date of publication of these new Guidelines in the Official Gazette Journal.