COVID-19 Contingency arrangements for Employment Permits & Immigration for non-EEA current / future staff

The below aims to provide some important information to non-EEA nationals currently employed by or due to start at Trinity College Dublin.

Every effort has been made to provide the most up to date information, however, please refer to the links below for updates as this situation develops daily.

COVID-19 Contingency Arrangements Employment Permits System

The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) have put in place a Contingency Plan to help address the challenges we face in relation to Employment Permits.

The main points of the Contingency Plan are:

- **Electronic (PDF) copy of Employment Permit will issue by e-mail**
  The usual “hard copy” of Employment Permits will not be issued at this stage. The electronic copy will suffice for travel/visa purposes in the meantime. In time, when the DBEI operations return to normal, hard copies will be issued.

- **Employment Permits Section will facilitate the changing of start dates to applications that have been received but, yet to be processed**
  Where the proposed start date may need to be changed, such change will be facilitated by the DBEI.

- **Applications for Stamp 4 Letters of Support can be submitted electronically**
  Non-EEA nationals holding a Critical Skills Employment Permit for at least 20 months must apply for a Letter of Support from the DBEI in order to change their Stamp at the end of their Permit (from Stamp 1 to 4).
  
  Applications for such letter of support may now be made electronically, by filling out the required form and e-mailing it (along with other support documentation) to EPStamp4@dbei.gov.ie

- **Employment Permit applications for visa-required nationals**
  Employment Permit applications for visa-required nationals may still be submitted however, priority will be given to healthcare professionals, health researchers, and elderly care professionals.

  In addition, the Department of Justice and Equality has temporarily ceased the processing of new visa applications, unless in certain priority/emergency cases.

  While it will still be possible to apply for an Irish visa online in the normal manner, these temporary measures mean that applicants will not be able to complete their application process. Please note that any application made online will remain valid until such time as restrictions are lifted.

Immigration arrangements by the Department of Justice and Equality

- As part of the combined efforts to tackle COVID-19 the Registration Office at Burgh Quay has closed from 20 March 2020. All appointments have been cancelled and the online appointment system suspended until further notice.
- Every non-EEA national with Stamps expiring between 20\textsuperscript{th} March and 20\textsuperscript{th} May 2020 will have their permissions automatically renewed for 2 months. Their Stamp will remain the same as of the one expiring.

- The Department of Justice and Equality has temporarily ceased the processing of new visa applications, unless in certain priority/emergency cases. While it will still be possible to apply for an Irish visa online in the normal manner, these temporary measures mean that applicants will not be able to complete their application process. Please note that any application made online will remain valid until such time as restrictions are lifted.

The following links will provide more information and will be a source of up to date information as the COVID-19 situation develops.

**Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation Contingency Plan:**


**Department of Justice and Equality – Immigration Service Delivery – FAQs:**


**FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q.** My Employment Permit was submitted before the 27th March 2020. How will the COVID-19 crisis affect its processing?

**A.** The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern. As such, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) is prioritizing employment permits for medical staff (healthcare professionals, health researchers, and elderly care professionals). The DBEI will facilitate change in start dates that are required due to the COVID-19 crisis.

**Q.** I need my Employment Permit for a visa application. Will I receive a hard copy of my permit?

**A.** Employment Permits will be issue electronically (PDF) until the DBEI operations return to its normality. At that point, hard copies of Employment Permits will be issued to employers and employees.

**Q.** My Employment Permit is due for renewal. Will an application be processed normally, since I am already in Ireland?

**A.** As per above, the DBEI is prioritizing applications made in respect of healthcare professionals. An application for renewal may still be submitted and the Department advises that an employment permit holder may continue to work whilst their renewal application permit is being processed and in such instances no person will be asked to cease work or to leave the country, where the employment permit has expired.
Q. Can I still submit a visa application online?

A. The Department of Justice and Equality has temporarily ceased the processing of new visa applications, unless in certain priority/emergency cases. While it will still be possible to apply for an Irish visa online in the normal manner, these temporary measures mean that applicants will not be able to complete their application process. Please note that any application made online will remain valid until such time as restrictions are lifted.

Q. My Stamp is approaching its expiry date and I have a GNIB appointment booked. Should I still present in person for the appointment?

A. No. Every non-EEA national with Stamps expiring between 20th March and 20th May 2020 will have their permissions *automatically renewed for 2 months*. All appointments have been cancelled and the online appointment system suspended until further notice.

Q. I was due a change to my Stamp and my appointment has been cancelled. What happens now?

A. If your current Stamp is expiring between 20th March and 20th May 2020, the Department of Justice will *automatically renew it for 2 months*. Your Stamp will remain the same as of the one expiring.

Q. My Employment Permit is due for renewal. Will an application be processed normally, since I am already in Ireland?

A. As per above, the DBEI is prioritizing applications made in respect of healthcare professionals. An application for renewal may still be submitted and the Department advises that an employment permit holder may continue to work whilst their renewal application permit is being processed and in such instances no person will be asked to cease work or to leave the country, where the employment permit has expired.

Q. Where can I get up-to-date information regarding the topics above?
