

Sponsorship of UK Expansion Workers

Please note that the information provided below should not be taken as legal advice. Please contact Samar Shams, Managing Partner on the details at the end of this document if you have questions. The information is up to date as of the date of writing, 3 July 2024.

Summary

A UK Expansion Worker sponsor licence is appropriate if a company intends to set up a trading presence in the UK, as a branch or wholly-owned subsidiary. The company must establish a UK 'footprint' by registering with Companies House or having premises in the UK. Any business that is already active and trading in the UK will not be eligible for a UK Expansion Worker sponsor licence.

Once the UK Expansion Worker sponsor licence is granted, the first worker can apply for their UK Expansion Worker visa. The applicant must have been working with the UK company's corporate group for at least 12 months prior to the date of application, unless the UK salary will be £73,900 or more. After they travel to the UK and record changes to the sponsor licence, the company in the UK can sponsor a further 4 Expansion Workers.

Fees

Setting up the UK corporate entity

We can refer you to a Corporate and Commercial Law solicitor who can assist with the corporate set up and drafting important documents that are required to support the company's expansion to the UK. Please let us know if you prefer to register a UK branch rather than a subsidiary. A branch is not a separate legal entity and is subject to the laws of the parent company's jurisdiction. Because it's part of the same legal entity as the parent company, the parent company is fully responsible for debt and liability.

Sponsor licence application

Our fees for assistance with the application form and document submission stages of the UK Expansion Worker sponsor licence application process are £4,000 to 4,500 plus VAT if applicable and disbursements. Also included is advice on the required HR policies. However, additional fees would apply for a review of the company's HR policies. The company will have to pay a sponsor licence application fee directly to the Home Office, which is £536 if the company in the UK is a small company. The size determination turns on 3 factors: number of employees, turnover and balance sheet total.

The Home Office is taking about 8 weeks to process sponsor licence applications. A £500 priority service is available for processing in 10 working days.

UK Expansion Worker applications

Our fees to assist with UK Expansion Worker applications are set out in bold in the below table. Fees listed in bold are exclusive of any applicable VAT and disbursements. Disbursements will include the government fees listed in the table below for each type of application.



UK Expansion Worker applying from overseas	UK Expansion Worker applying for extension within the UK	Dependants applying at the same time
<p>£2250</p> <p>Government fees: <i>Sponsorship stage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25 Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) fee <p><i>Visa stage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £298 visa application fee • Immigration Health Surcharge £1035 per year • Optional £500 Priority Service • Appointment fees if applicable • 9% exchange rate and transaction fees apply to visa stage fees 	<p>£2000</p> <p>Government fees: <i>Sponsorship stage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25 Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) fee <p><i>Visa stage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £298 visa application fee • Immigration Health Surcharge £1035 per year • Optional £500 Priority Service or £1000 Super Priority Service 	<p>£750 for spouse £500 for child £1000 for unmarried partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £298 visa application fee • Immigration Health Surcharge £1035 for adults or £776 for children, per year • Priority and exchange fees are the same as those for the main applicant

Process

The process includes the following stages:

- The company registers a UK entity;
- The company applies for a UK Expansion Worker sponsor licence, as follows:
 - The company prepares HR policies to be able to fulfil sponsor duties. We will provide guidance on this;
 - Gathering required documentation and information;
 - Completion and submission of the online sponsor licence application form;
 - Submission of supporting documents;
- The Home Office processes the sponsor licence application;
- The company assigns a certificate of sponsorship to the worker; and
- The worker applies for a visa. Family members apply once the worker’s application is submitted.
- Note that the UK Expansion Worker visa is valid for one year with the option of extending for a further year. The company is expected to add a Skilled Worker ‘tier’ to its sponsor licence and sponsor workers as Skilled Workers by the end of the 2-year period.

Timescale

We estimate an overall timescale of 4-5 months, depending on whether the priority service is used.



Get in touch

If you have any questions, or would like to proceed with an application on the basis of the above terms, please contact:



Samar Shams

Managing Partner

samar.shams@changesimmigration.com

mob: +44 (0)75 9138 5033