



Immigration Department
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Guidebook for Entry for Residence as Dependants
in Hong Kong

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I. Introduction

This guidebook sets out the entry arrangement for persons who wish to enter the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (hereafter “HKSAR”) for residence as dependants.

2. This entry arrangement does not apply to:
 - (a) Chinese residents of the Mainland [except for those whose sponsors have been admitted to take up employment (as professionals under the General Employment Policy, the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme or the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, for investment to establish/join in business, or for training) or studies (in full-time undergraduate or post-graduate local programmes¹ in local degree-awarding institutions), or whose sponsors have been admitted as entrants under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme², the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, the Top Talent Pass Scheme or the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme²];
 - (b) former Mainland Chinese residents residing in the Macao Special Administrative Region (hereafter “SAR”) who have obtained Macao identity cards for less than seven years, unless they have acquired residence in the Macao SAR through the One-way Permit Scheme; and
 - (c) nationals of Afghanistan and Korea (Democratic People’s Republic of).

II. Eligibility Criteria

3. For a sponsor who has been admitted into the HKSAR to take up employment (as a professional under the General Employment Policy, the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme or the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, for investment to establish/join in business, or for training) or studies (in a full-time undergraduate or post-graduate local programme¹ in a local degree-awarding institution), or who is permitted to remain in the HKSAR as an entrant under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme², the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, the Top Talent Pass Scheme or the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme², the following dependants may apply to join him/her for residence in the HKSAR:

¹ Local programmes refer to programmes leading to degrees awarded by local degree-awarding institutions whereas non-local programmes refer to programmes leading to degrees awarded solely by non-local institutions, irrespective of whether the programmes are jointly run by local and non-local institutions.

² The Capital Investment Entrant Scheme has been suspended since 15 January 2015, while the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme was launched on 1 March 2024.

- (a) (i) his/her spouse; or
- (ii) the other party to a same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, “same-sex marriage”, opposite-sex civil partnership or opposite-sex civil union entered into by him/her in accordance with the local law in force of the place of celebration and with such status being legally and officially recognised by the local authorities of the place of celebration³; and
- (b) his/her unmarried dependent children under the age of 18.

4. For a sponsor who is a Hong Kong permanent resident or a resident who is not subject to a limit of stay (i.e. a resident with the right to land or on unconditional stay), the following dependants may apply to join him/her for residence in the HKSAR:

- (a) (i) his/her spouse; or
- (ii) the other party to a same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, “same-sex marriage”, opposite-sex civil partnership or opposite-sex civil union entered into by him/her in accordance with the local law in force of the place of celebration and with such status being legally and officially recognised by the local authorities of the place of celebration³;
- (b) his/her unmarried dependent children under the age of 18; and
- (c) his/her parents aged 60 or above.

5. An application for admission of a dependant may be favourably considered if:

- (a) there is reasonable proof of a genuine relationship between the applicant and the sponsor;
- (b) there is no known record to the detriment of the applicant; and
- (c) the sponsor is able to support the dependant’s living at a standard well above

³ For the avoidance of doubt, the terms “civil partnership” and “civil union” above mean a legal institution of a nature which is akin to spousal relationship in a marriage. The same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, “same-sex marriage”, opposite-sex civil partnership and opposite-sex civil union entered into in accordance with laws outside Hong Kong are limited to only relationships which are legally and officially recognised in the places of celebration. Such relationships normally have the following features: (a) the entering into and dissolution of the relationship are governed by legislation of the place where it is entered into; (b) the relationship requires registration by the competent authority specified by the legislation of the place where it is entered into; (c) the registration is evidenced in a written instrument issued by the competent authority; and (d) parties to the relationship have a mutual commitment to a shared life akin to spouses to the exclusion of others on a permanent basis. Such relationships do not include de facto spouse, partners in cohabitation, fiancé/fiancée, etc.

the subsistence level and provide him/her with suitable accommodation in the HKSAR.

III. Application Procedures

Supporting Documents

6. Please refer to the checklist in Part VII of this Guidebook.

Submission of Application

7. Applicants shall submit the applications and upload all supporting documents online with the relevant application fee⁴ paid (if applicable) through the designated GovHK website at the following link: www.gov.hk/en/nonresidents/visarequire/visasentrypermits/applydependant.htm. For an applicant under the age of 16, the application form must be signed by his/her parent or legal guardian.



Online Application for
Entry for Residence as
Dependant in Hong Kong

Note: The online application systems for the General Employment Policy or the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme, the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, entry for investment as entrepreneurs in Hong Kong, entry for training in Hong Kong, the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Resident, the Top Talent Pass Scheme and the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme, as well as the online application system and the application form (ID 995A) for entry for study in Hong Kong, have built in the sections for the accompanying dependant's application. The sponsor may include his/her accompanying dependant's application for entry for residence when submitting the aforesaid applications online or when completing the aforesaid entry application form.

IV. Travel Documentation Requirement

8. A visa/entry permit (in the form of "e-Visa") will be issued upon successful application. Upon immigration arrival clearance in the HKSAR, an "e-Visa" holder should present his/her valid travel document and the "e-Visa" saved on a personal mobile device or

⁴ An applicant who makes an application as a dependant under a "Specified Scheme" is required to pay an application fee and, upon approval of the concerned application, the relevant visa/entry permit issuance fee according to the two-tiered fee structure. The application fee paid is non-refundable in any circumstance irrespective of the application result. For more details about the fee structure for visa applications under Specified Schemes, please visit the website of the Immigration Department (hereafter "ImmD") at www.immd.gov.hk/eng/specifiedschemes.html.

printed on a sheet of A4 white paper, and scan the encrypted QR code on the “e-Visa” with the optical reader at an immigration counter.

9. Successful applicant who is a Chinese resident of the Mainland should apply for an Exit-entry Permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao (hereafter “EEP”) and a relevant exit endorsement from the relevant Mainland authorities. The applicant holding an EEP bearing the relevant exit endorsement should also present the “e-Visa” issued to him/her for immigration arrival clearance.

V. Extension of Stay

10. A dependant may apply for extension of stay for residence in the HKSAR with the relevant application fee paid⁵ (if applicable) within three months/four weeks⁶ before his/her limit of stay expires. Such applications will be considered only when the applicant continues to meet the eligibility criteria for entry for residence as dependants (including that there is no change in circumstances which would have otherwise resulted in loss of sponsorship for the applicant, e.g. change in marriage relationship between the dependent spouse and the sponsor, or death of sponsor) and the sponsor remains a bona fide Hong Kong resident living in the HKSAR. For a dependant under the age of 16, the application form must be signed by his/her parent or legal guardian.

11. Extension of stay in respect of dependants of persons who are Hong Kong permanent residents or residents who are not subject to a limit of stay (i.e. a resident with the right to land or on unconditional stay), if approved, will normally follow the 3-3 years pattern for the spouse or the other party to a same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, “same-sex marriage”, opposite-sex civil partnership or opposite-sex civil union entered into by him/her in accordance with the local law in force of the place of celebration and with such status being legally and officially recognised by the local authorities of the place of celebration⁷ and unmarried dependent children under the age of 18; and the 2-2-3 years pattern for parents aged 60 or above.

⁵ An applicant who makes an application as a dependant under a “Specified Scheme” is required to pay an application fee and, upon approval of the concerned application, the relevant visa/ entry permit issuance fee according to the two-tiered fee structure. The application fee paid is non-refundable in any circumstance irrespective of the application result. For more details about the fee structure for visa applications under Specified Schemes, please visit the ImmD’s website at www.immd.gov.hk/eng/specifiedschemes.html.

⁶ A dependant under a “Specified Scheme” may apply for extension of stay within three months before his/her limit of stay expires; whereas other dependants may do so within four weeks before their limit of stay expires. For details of the Specified Schemes, please visit the ImmD’s website at www.immd.gov.hk/eng/specifiedschemes.html.

⁷ For the avoidance of doubt, the terms “civil partnership” and “civil union” above mean a legal institution of a nature which is akin to spousal relationship in a marriage. The same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, “same-sex marriage”, opposite-sex civil partnership and opposite-sex civil union entered into in accordance with laws outside Hong Kong are limited to only relationships which are legally and officially recognised in the places of celebration. Such relationships normally have the following features: (a) the entering into and dissolution of the relationship are governed by legislation of the place where it is entered into; (b) the relationship requires registration by the competent authority specified by the legislation of the place where it is entered into; (c) the registration is evidenced in a written instrument issued by the competent authority; and (d) parties to the relationship have a mutual commitment to a shared life akin to spouses to the exclusion of others on a permanent basis. Such relationships do not include de facto spouse, partners in cohabitation, fiancé/fiancée, etc.

12. The length of stay of dependants of persons who have been admitted into the HKSAR to take up employment or who are permitted to remain in the HKSAR as entrants under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme⁸, the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, the Top Talent Pass Scheme and the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme⁸ will normally be linked to that of their sponsors. Dependants of persons who have been admitted into the HKSAR to take up studies will normally be granted an initial stay of 12 months upon entry which is subject to annual extension upon approval.

VI. Other Information

13. In general, unless a person has the right of abode or right to land in the HKSAR, he/she requires a visa/entry permit to take up residence as dependant in the HKSAR. While each application is determined on its individual merits, an applicant should meet normal immigration requirements (such as holding a valid travel document with adequate returnability to his/her country of residence or citizenship; be of clear criminal record and raise no security or criminal concerns to the HKSAR; have no likelihood of becoming a burden on the HKSAR, etc.) as well as the relevant specific eligibility criteria detailed above before he/she may be considered for the grant of a visa/entry permit. It should be noted that the eligibility criteria may be subject to change from time to time without prior notice. Please check the ImmD's website at www.immd.gov.hk for up-to-date information.

Conditions of Stay

14. Dependants of the following persons are not prohibited from taking up employment in the HKSAR:

- (a) Hong Kong permanent residents;
- (b) persons who are not subject to a limit of stay (i.e. residents with the right to land or on unconditional stay);
- (c) persons who have been admitted for employment (as professionals under the General Employment Policy, the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme or the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, for investment to establish/join in business or for training); and
- (d) entrants under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme⁸, the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, the Top Talent Pass Scheme or the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme⁸.

⁸ The Capital Investment Entrant Scheme has been suspended since 15 January 2015, while the New Capital Investment Entrant Scheme was launched on 1 March 2024.

15. However, dependants of persons who have been admitted into the HKSAR to study are prohibited from taking up employment in the HKSAR unless they have obtained prior permission from the Director of Immigration.

16. All dependants do not require prior permission from the Director of Immigration to study in the HKSAR.

Re-entry into the HKSAR

17. Non-permanent residents of the HKSAR, irrespective of their nationality and type of travel document held, do not require a re-entry visa/entry permit to enter the HKSAR provided that they return within the currency of their permitted limit of stay and that the circumstances upon which they have acquired their residential status remain unchanged.

Right of Abode

18. Persons admitted for residence as dependants who have ordinarily resided in the HKSAR for a continuous period of not less than seven years may apply for the right of abode in the HKSAR in accordance with the law.

Payment of Fees

19. For entry visa/permit applications or change of condition of stay (including extension of limit of stay) applications made under a “specified scheme”, the dependant applicant(s) are required to pay a non-refundable application fee and the corresponding visa issuance fee. For more details on the fee structure, please visit the ImmD’s website at www.immd.gov.hk/eng/specifiedschemes.html.

20. Upon approval of the applications, the notification of the application result issued by the ImmD will include a webpage link for payment of the visa issuance fee. Payment of relevant fees could be made through the said webpage link or the GovHK website or the ImmD Mobile Application by credit card (VISA, Mastercard, UnionPay and JCB only), Payment by Phone Service (hereafter “PPS”), Faster Payment System (hereafter “FPS”) or Mainland e-wallets (Alipay, WeChat Pay and UnionPay App only). After payment, applicants could instantly download or print the “e-Visa” by themselves.

Processing Time

21. It normally takes six weeks to process a visa/entry permit application for residence as dependant upon receipt of all the required documents and the relevant application fee⁹ (if applicable). The ImmD will not be able to start processing the application unless all the required documents and information⁹ (if applicable) have been received.

22. All applications are processed and determined by the ImmD. Approval of applications is entirely discretionary and is subject to changes in government policies. The Director of Immigration reserves absolute discretion to refuse any application even if the application meets all eligibility criteria.

Warning

23. It is an offence to make false statements or representations to an immigration officer. To verify the authenticity of the information and documents submitted with a visa application, field visits may be conducted. A person who knowingly and wilfully makes a statement or gives information which he/she knows to be false or does not believe to be true shall be guilty of an offence under the Laws of Hong Kong and any such visa/entry permit issued or permission to enter or remain in the HKSAR granted shall have no effect.

Disclaimer

24. The information in this guidebook serves as reference only. The ImmD of the HKSAR is not responsible for any loss or damage whatsoever arising out of or in connection with any information in this guidebook. The ImmD reserves the right to omit, suspend or edit any information in this guidebook at any time in its absolute discretion without giving any reason or prior notice. The ImmD further reserves the right to change the eligibility criteria and details of the arrangements set out above from time to time without prior notice.

Enquiries

25. For more information about the entry arrangements for residence as dependants in Hong Kong, please contact the ImmD by enquiry hotline at (852) 2824 6111, by fax at (852) 2877 7711, by email to enquiry@immd.gov.hk, or visit the ImmD's website at www.immd.gov.hk.

⁹ An applicant who makes an application under a Specified Scheme as a dependant is required to pay an application fee and, upon approval of the concerned application, the relevant visa/entry permit issuance fee according to the two-tiered fee structure. The application fee paid is non-refundable in any circumstance irrespective of the application result. For more details about the fee structure for visa applications under Specified Schemes, please visit the ImmD's website at www.immd.gov.hk/eng/specifiedschemes.html.

VII. Checklist of Documents to be Uploaded

(A) Documents to be Uploaded by the Applicant

Documents Required
The applicant's recent photograph
The applicant's valid travel document containing personal particulars, date of issue, date of expiry and/or details of any re-entry visa held (if applicable). For an applicant who is currently staying in Hong Kong, his/her valid travel document page containing the latest arrival stamp/landing slip/extension of stay label in the HKSAR and the latest issued "e-Visa" (if applicable). A Chinese resident of the Mainland who has not been issued with a valid travel document may submit his/her People's Republic of China resident identity card.
The applicant's Hong Kong identity card (if any)
Proof of the applicant's relationship with the sponsor, e.g. marriage certificate, birth certificate, family photographs, family letters (with envelopes), census record book and Privilege Card for Single Child (if applicable)
The applicant's Visit Permit for Residents of Macao SAR to Hong Kong SAR and Macao identity card <i>[for Macao SAR residents only]</i>
The applicant's household registration transcript in Taiwan and Taiwan identity card <i>[for Taiwan residents only]</i>
Proof of the applicant's overseas residence, such as official documents showing applicant's conditions of stay and limit of stay endorsed by overseas authorities <i>[for overseas Chinese holding PRC passports only]</i>

(B) Documents to be Uploaded by the Sponsor

Documents Required
The sponsor's Hong Kong identity card
The sponsor's valid travel document containing personal particulars, date of issue, date of expiry, and the current visa/entry permit/extension of stay label in the HKSAR and the latest issued "e-Visa" (if applicable) (for non-permanent residents of the HKSAR only)
Proof of the sponsor's financial standing, e.g. bank statements, savings accounts passbooks, tax receipts and salary slips
Proof of sponsor's accommodation, e.g. rental receipts

(C) Documents to be Uploaded by the Applicant for Extension of Stay Application

Documents Required
Page 1 to 3 of Application for Extension of Stay (ID 91) <i>[only applicable to whose sponsor is admitted under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme#]</i>
The applicant's valid travel document and, where applicable, his/her previous travel document page showing the latest visa/entry permit label/arrival stamp/landing slip/extension of stay label in the HKSAR and the latest issued "e-Visa" (if applicable)
The applicant's Hong Kong identity card
The sponsor's valid travel document (showing personal particulars and current permission of stay) or Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card
Declaration of Sponsor (ID 481A) <i>[only applicable to whose sponsor is admitted under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme#]</i>
Declaration of Dependant Applicant (ID 481B) <i>[only applicable to whose sponsor is admitted under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme#]</i>

For applicants whose sponsor is admitted under the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme, they shall complete page 1 to 3 of the Application for an Extension of Stay (ID 91), Declaration of Sponsor (ID 481A), Declaration of Dependant Applicant (ID 481B) (only for dependant spouse, civil partnership, civil union or "same-sex marriage"), and submit the application together with other supporting documents through the online application system by uploading these forms and other supporting documents.

Important Notice:

1. Notwithstanding that the documents and information required have been furnished, applicants and sponsors may still be required to submit further supporting documents and information in connection with the application(s) when necessary.
2. Where a document is not in Chinese or English, it must be accompanied by a Chinese or English translation certified as a true translation by a sworn translator, court translator, authorised public translator, certified translator, expert translator or official translator.



Addendum

Unless approved by the Director of Immigration under exceptional circumstances, persons subject to a limit of stay must depart Hong Kong before the expiry of their limit of stay, even if they have applied to the Director of Immigration for an extension of stay and the application is under processing. Breach of condition of stay (including overstaying) is a serious criminal offence. Offenders may be liable to prosecution and removal from Hong Kong.

An applicant who makes an application as a dependant under a “Specified Scheme” should submit an application for extension of stay as early as possible within three months before his/her limit of stay expires, and in all circumstances, at least six weeks before his/her limit of stay expires. It normally takes about two to three weeks to finish processing an application upon receipt of all the required documents and the relevant application fee. The actual processing time is subject to the specific circumstances of individual applications and the number of applications received at the time. Please note that not all applications for extension of stay will necessarily be approved. Unless approved by the Director of Immigration under exceptional circumstances, applicants for an extension of stay must still depart Hong Kong before the expiry of their limit of stay while awaiting the application result.

Immigration Department
The Government of the Hong Kong
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