

Visas for the family

While job opportunities in the UAE often make it worth your while to suffer the hardship of separation from your family, you're more likely to stay longer if you're not living with the misery of being apart from loved ones. If you want to bring your spouse and children to live with you, and if you're an expatriate working in the UAE, you can get a Family Visa provided you meet one or more of these conditions:

- You earn at least AED 3,000 per month and your employer provides your accommodation
- You earn at least AED 4,000 per month and your employer does not provide your accommodation
- You are a teacher, a mosque imam, or a driver for a university, college, institution, or school bus
- You are a foreign female who works in a vocational specialisation such as medicine, engineering, or education (check the qualifying occupations with a local UAE embassy or the Department of Naturalization and Residency)
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The Residence Entry Permit

Before your family arrives, you'll need to obtain a Residence Entry Permit for each dependent from the Department of Naturalization and Residency on 19th Street (Al Saada Street) between 2nd St (Airport Road) and 24th St (Al Karamah Road).

The Residence Entry Permit entitles the holder to one entry into the UAE within a period of two months from the date of issue and to a stay of no more than 30 days from the date of entry.

You can either send the permit to your spouse/child and let them bring it into the country when they come, or you can submit it to the airport at which they will arrive. Take the permit plus AED 25 and the flight details to the receiving counter in the main terminal at least three hours before the flight arrives.



To get the permit, you need the following documents:

- A Residence Entry Permit application form, signed by you
- A copy of your marriage license, duly certified from the country of origin (the original certificate is not usually good enough: it needs to be separately validated by the issuing authority), authenticated from the consulate representing the country abroad or from the UAE-based embassy of the country which issued it (usually a formality with a smallish fee), and finally certified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry is located in the building next to Carrefour on Airport Road; hand over the attested version of the marriage licence and AED 100; return the next day to pick it up, or pay another AED 150 to get it back the same day
- A salary statement and labour contract
- A copy of each dependent's passport
- AED 100 if you'd like to expedite the process and get the visa the same day

The Residence Visa

Once your family has passed through immigration with their Residence Entry Permits, you're ready to apply for their Residence Visas. Submit the following documents to the Department of Naturalization and Residency:

- An application signed and stamped by your employer (or other sponsor)
- A copy of your own residence visa
- Two passport-sized colour photos for each dependent
- Each dependent's original passport, which must be valid for at least three months
- A Medical Certificate for each dependent older than 18 years (this must be no more than three months old)
- The original entry permit for each dependent
- AED 100 AED if you'd like to get the visa the same day (alternatively you can wait two to five working days to receive the visa via Empost).

If you find these instructions have changed or have any useful information to add, let us know via editor@AbuDhabiWeek.com and we'll post an update

[Originally published in Abu Dhabi Week vol 2 issue23]