

# **EMPLOYMENT IN THE BAHAMAS** **FOR NON-BAHAMIAN CITIZENS**

- I. Requirements for renewal applications***
- II. Additional requirements where the Employer is a newly incorporated Company:***
- III. Requirements relating to initial applications***
- IV. General Information***

## ***General Information***

The granting of work permits is controlled to a large extent by Government policy and the desirability of protecting and promoting the Bahamian labour force. Consequently, a non-Bahamian is not permitted to engage in any gainful occupation in The Bahamas unless he is in possession of a valid work permit in respect of such occupation. It should be noted also that as a matter of Government policy, no expatriate may be offered employment in a post for which a suitably qualified Bahamian is available.

Application is made under the Immigration Act, 1967 to the Director of Immigration. The permit that will be granted can be expected, on initial application, to be limited in duration to a period of up to three years and in most cases to a period of one year. Employers may obtain permits for longer periods than the standard one-year period in respect to certain key personnel on contract (businesses requiring permits for persons other than key personnel are encouraged to discuss these requests with the Bahamas Investment Authority in advance). Applications can subsequently be made for one or more renewal (usually for a one year term), depending upon the needs of the employer. Such renewals are subject to obtaining the necessary Immigration permission, and they may be endorsed to the effect that the employee is expected to train or be replaced by a suitably qualified Bahamian within a stipulated period.

The renewal of a permit on expiration is not automatic, and no expatriate may be continually employed in the country in any capacity for more than five years.

Fees for work permits to range between B\$650.00 to B\$10,000 depending on the seniority of the employee.

Notwithstanding its policy to safeguard the employment interests of Bahamians, the Government of The Bahamas welcomes expatriate employees with specialist qualifications and skills not immediately available, especially when employment of such persons would increase the employment prospects of Bahamians.

Where an applicant (the Primary applicant) wishes to have a spouse and dependent children or any of them reside with the Primary applicant then an annual residence application must be separately submitted in respect of each of the dependents so involved. On a renewal of a work permit, the dependent's residence permit may similarly be renewed.

We are available to assist our clients in the application process. To expedite our submission of the application, we recommend you send the advance we require by way of [Bank wire transfer](#).

## ***Requirements relating to initial applications***

1. Application Form I (see attached) duly completed, signed, stamped and notarised in duplicate.
2. \$4.00 stamp affixed to one of the applications.
3. 2 x black and white passport-size photographs.

4. Police certificate as to clear record or Affidavit in lieu where such certificates are unavailable.
5. Medical certificate -(This must be given no earlier than one month prior to lodgement of the application. It should state that the applicant is free from contagious disease.)
6. Financial reference. (See model attached).
7. Two character references from persons knowing the applicant two or more years.
8. Letter from the Employer giving full details of the position which the applicant is to fill, stating duties, required qualifications, etc.
9. Certificate from the Labour Department. A separate application is made for this locally after the description of duties is supplied. There is a fee of \$25.00 for the Certificate.
10. Position of the applicant has to be advertised in the local newspaper for two runnings. Application for this is made locally after the description of duties is supplied. Advertisement range upwards from \$33.00.
11. \$25.00 processing fee.

**NOTE**

A request can be made to the Director of Immigration for Items 9 and 10 to be waived in certain cases where the position is a top one and involves special skills or responsibility not expected to be available in The Bahamas.

- Correspondence in numbers 6, 7 and 8 above should be addressed to the Director of Immigration, Immigration Department, Hawkins Hill, Nassau, Bahamas.
- Government fees vary from \$650.00 (e.g. gardener category) up to \$10,000.00 (e.g. Company Director) per annum.
- H & J's fee for the Initial application for the Primary Applicant is \$1,800.00 and per dependent \$150.00 subject to increase in complex or lengthy case and payment on account of \$1,000.00 should be made upon our being instructed.

***Additional requirements where the Employer is a newly incorporated Company:***

1. Copy of the Certificate of Incorporation.
2. Letter of verification as to the identity of the Beneficial Owner; their status as Bahamian or Non-Bahamian; the Directors and the issued share capital.

***Requirements for renewal applications***

1. Letter to the Director of Immigration requesting a renewal of the permit upon its expiration. We recommend that this is done at least three months prior to the expiration of the present permit.
2. Certificate from the Labour Department. This is necessary if one was submitted on the initial application. There is a fee of \$25.00 for the Certificate.
3. Position of applicant has to be advertised in the local newspaper for two runnings. This is necessary if it was submitted on the initial application.
4. 2 x black and white passport-size photographs.
5. Police Certificate.
6. Medical Certificate.
7. \$25.00 processing fee.

**NOTE:**

Government fees for the renewal period are charged at the same rate as for the initial application.

H & J's fee for the renewal application for the Primary Applicant is \$400.00 and per dependent \$50.00 subject to increase as aforesaid and payment on account of \$400.00 should be made upon our being instructed.