

**Chandrawat
& Partners**



Immigration to Bahrain



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Introduction



Bahrain is a small island nation in the Persian Gulf with a population of approximately 1.4 million people. It has a rich history and culture, and its economy is driven by the oil industry and financial services. In recent years, Bahrain has become an appealing destination for immigrants, both skilled and unskilled, due to its relatively high standard of living and opportunities for employment.

Skilled immigrants, particularly those with experience in the oil and financial services industries, are in high demand in Bahrain. The Bahraini government has implemented several initiatives to attract such individuals, including offering fast-track visas and residency permits. Additionally, Bahrain has several free zones that are designed to encourage foreign investment and entrepreneurship. These zones offer tax breaks, streamlined administrative processes, and other incentives to businesses that set up operations in Bahrain.

Immigration can help to improve international relations between Bahrain and other countries. By welcoming immigrants from around the world, Bahrain can build stronger ties with other countries and increase its influence on the global stage.

It can also create investment opportunities, as some immigrants may choose to invest in businesses or real estate in Bahrain. This can lead to an increase in foreign investment and further economic growth. In addition to skilled workers, Bahrain also has a large population of low-skilled immigrant workers, particularly from South Asia. These workers are typically employed in construction, hospitality, and domestic services.

Purpose of visit

The purpose of immigration to Bahrain can vary depending on the individual. Some common reasons people immigrate to Bahrain include:

Economic opportunities

A significant driving force behind immigration to Bahrain is the pursuit of economic prosperity. The nation's rising sectors, such as finance, construction, and hospitality, have consistently offered attractive job prospects and higher income potential. Skilled professionals and laborers from countries with fewer opportunities often seek employment in Bahrain to improve their financial interests.

Employment

Immigrants are drawn to Bahrain's thriving job market, which offers a range of employment opportunities. The availability of jobs in various sectors, both skilled and unskilled, makes Bahrain an appealing destination for individuals seeking to contribute to their host nation's economy while advancing their careers.

Education

Bahrain's educational institutions, with their quality education and diverse academic programs, attract students from around the world. Immigrants, particularly the applicant adults, move to Bahrain to pursue higher education and gain valuable skills that can be applied in their home countries or globally.

Social and economic development

Immigrants play a crucial role in the development of Bahrain's economy and society. Their contributions through labor, entrepreneurship, and innovation enhance the nation's productivity and competitiveness on the global stage—the resulting economic growth benefits both the immigrants and the host country.

Types of visas

Tourist visa

A Bahrain tourist visa is a document issued by the government of Bahrain that allows a foreign national to enter the country for tourism. The Tourist Visa is a visa that can be obtained through both an online application process and a physical stamp or label in the passport. This type of visa is valid for 30 days and can be extended for an additional 30 days.

Domestic visa

There are mainly six categories of domestic visas available in the Kingdom of Bahrain. They are Maids, Driver, Cook, Gardner, House Security, and Babysitter. A domestic visa is issued based on the supporting documents, and the fulfillment of requirements.

Employment visa

An employment visa includes the process of preparing a work agreement, visa application, payment, printing, issuing and updating of Central Population Registry (“CPR”) address, renewal of work permit, RP stamping, and cancellation. An expired employment visa in Bahrain is extendable.



Visit visa

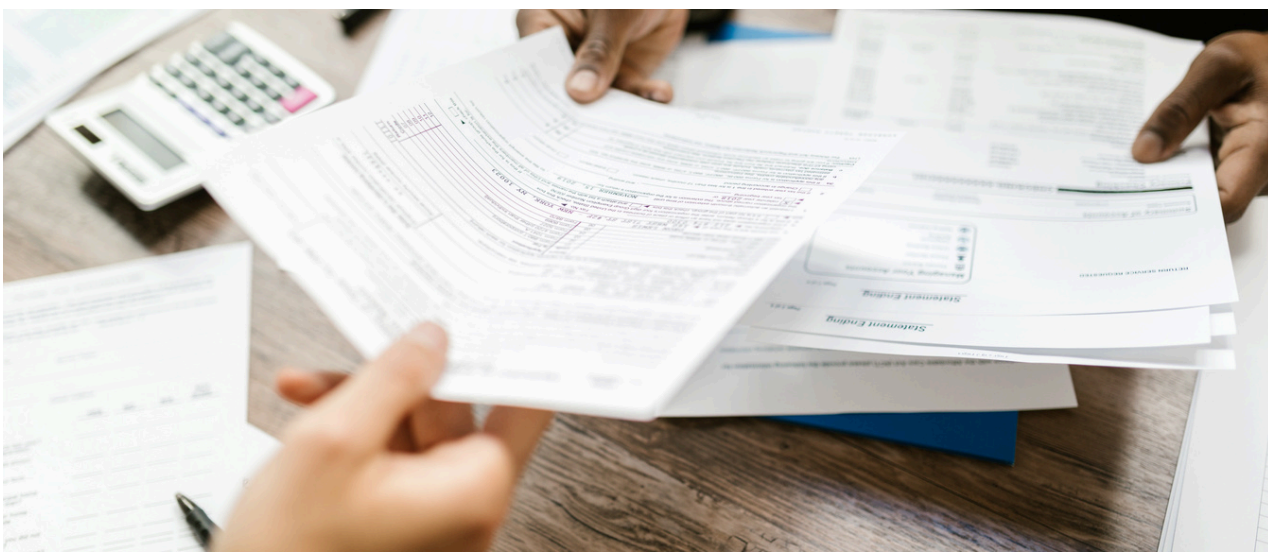
A Bahrain visit visa is issued to people who want to visit their family and/or friends in Bahrain or spend holidays here. Depending on the eligibility of the applicant, a visit visa is provided for 7 days, 14 days, 30 days, and 90 days. Bahrain has the most flexible visa policy due to which there are both transferable and non-transferable visas available. In case of emergency, one can apply for an e-visa in Bahrain. The Bahrain visit visa processing time depends on the number of documents and the authenticity of the same.

Business visa

Bahrain continues to be an ideal location for businessmen to set up their company in. It has maintained its position in the Gulf nation due to the government's liberal business initiatives. Bahrain Business visas or Bahrain work visas are like visit visas, but here the purpose of the visit is business. The business visa policies of Bahrain are supportive providing easy access to the rest of the Middle East. The business visa validity is 2 weeks and extendable for another 14 days.

Student visa

A student visa in Bahrain allows a foreign national to visit Bahrain temporarily to pursue a course of study. An increasingly common choice for undergraduates from around the world is to study in Bahrain. Bahrain has a long history of educational success and has numerous academic institutions.



Eligibility criteria

Tourist visa

- One must have a valid passport with a validity for at least 6 months (The passport must be signed)
- One must possess one completed visa application form / e-visa application form.
- One must have a copy of the travel ticket or round-trip travel itinerary.
- One must have one passport-size photo taken within the last six months.
- One must have proof of financial resources required to pay for the expenses in Bahrain (such as a recent bank statement, traveler's cheque, etc.)
- The plan to remain in Bahrain for a specific and limited period.
- The intend to leave Bahrain at the end of the visit.
- One has no intention to seek or undertake employment while in Bahrain.
- One must possess a letter explaining the reason for the visit and the duration of the stay.
- One must possess a letter from the sponsor.

Domestic visa

- One must have a sponsor who is a Bahraini citizen or resident, and who is willing to sponsor the visa application.
- One must be at least 21 to be eligible for a domestic visa.
- One must be employed as a domestic worker in Bahrain, with a valid employment contract from the sponsor.
- One must have the necessary qualifications and experience for the job one is applying for.
- One must undergo a medical examination and be declared fit to work.
- One must provide a police clearance certificate from the home country, proving that one has no criminal record.
- One must have a valid passport with a minimum of 6 months validity remaining.



Visit visa

- The applicant must have a valid passport with a minimum validity of 6 months from entry into Bahrain.
- The applicant must fill out an application form for a visit visa, which can be obtained from the Bahrain Embassy or Consulate in their country.
- The applicant must have sufficient funds to cover their stay in Bahrain and return travel expenses.
- The applicant must provide proof of accommodation arrangements in Bahrain, such as hotel reservations or an invitation letter from a sponsor.
- The applicant may be required to provide a health certificate showing that they are free from contagious diseases.
- The applicant must provide a travel itinerary, including flight details and travel dates.
- The applicant may be subject to a security clearance process by Bahraini authorities.

Business visa

- One must be mentally and physically stable.
- One should be eighteen years or above.
- One must be a holder of a traveling passport in the home country or country of residence.
- One is not to have any criminal charges against the that violate the security of Bahrain.
- The onward travel ticket to depart Bahrain must be readily available.
- One must be ready and fit to take care of the financial obligations throughout the stay in Bahrain. It also includes dependence if one has any.
- One must be vaccinated if the region is known to have an infectious disease.

Employment visa

- The applicant must have a valid job offer from a Bahraini employer who is authorized to hire foreign workers.
- The employer must obtain a work permit from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development (“MOLSD”) before applying for the employment visa.
- The applicant must have the necessary qualifications, skills, and experience required for the job.
- The applicant must undergo a medical examination at a designated health center in Bahrain and obtain a certificate of good health.
- The applicant must obtain a security clearance from the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science (“CID”).
- The applicant's passport must be valid for at least six months from the date of entry into Bahrain.
- The applicant must pay the required visa fees and any other applicable fees.

Student visa

- A letter of acceptance must be provided demonstrating that an applicant has been offered a place on a full-time course of study at a recognized educational institution.
- Candidates must be able to demonstrate evidence of enough funds to support themselves in the country.
- It must be shown that the course fees have been paid in full.
- Private medical insurance must be arranged and documentary evidence of this must be provided.
- It must be the candidate's demonstrable intention to return to their own country at the end of their period of study.



Procedure for obtaining the visas

Tourist visa

- Fill out the tourist visa application form
- Gather the required documents
- Assemble the required documents and a recent passport-size photograph, as required in the application form.
- Submit a letter detailing the reason for the visit
- Submit a letter to the Head of Mission explaining the reasons for getting the visa.
- Submit the application form and required documents
- Submit or send the application form along with the required documents and passport-size photographs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bahrain for approval.

Domestic visa

- **Find a sponsor:** One will need a sponsor who is a Bahraini citizen or a resident with a Central Population Registry (“CPR”) card.
- Prepare the necessary documents.
- **Apply:** The sponsor will need to submit the application for a domestic visa to the General Directorate of Nationality, Passports & Residence (“NPRA”) in Bahrain. The application can be submitted online through the eVisa portal or in person at the NPRA office.
- **Pay the fees:** The sponsor will have to pay the visa fees, which can be done online through the eVisa portal or in person at the NPRA office.
- **Wait for approval:** The processing time for a domestic visa can vary, but it usually takes around one to two weeks.
- **Collect the visa:** The sponsor will need to collect the visa from the NPRA office and give it to the applicant.

Visit visa

- Check if the applicant needs a visa.
- Gather the required documents.
- Apply.
- Pay fees. One will be required to pay the visa fees online using a credit card.
- Wait for processing.
- Collect visa.
- Entry into Bahrain.

Business visa

- **Determine the eligibility:** Bahrain has certain eligibility requirements for obtaining a business visa, including having a valid passport, having a sponsor in Bahrain, and meeting certain health requirements.
- **Find a sponsor:** In Bahrain, one will need to have a local sponsor to apply for a business visa. The sponsor can be an individual or a company, and they will be responsible for submitting the visa application and supporting documents on the applicant's behalf.
- **Collect necessary documents:** One will need to provide several documents to the sponsor to support the visa application. These may include the passport, a letter of invitation from the Bahraini sponsor, proof of business activities, and the travel itinerary.
- **Apply:** Once the applicant has all the documents in order, the sponsor will submit the visa application to the Bahraini authorities. The application process typically takes several days to several weeks, depending on the complexity of the case.
- **Attend an interview:** In some cases, one may be required to attend an interview at the Bahraini embassy or consulate in the home country as part of the visa application process.
- **Wait for the visa to be processed:** Once the application has been submitted, one will need to wait for the Bahraini authorities to process the visa. This can take anywhere from a few days to several weeks, depending on the volume of applications and the complexity of the case.
- **Collect the visa:** Once the visa has been approved, one will need to collect it from the Bahraini embassy or consulate in the home country.

Employment visa

- Log in to the LMRA EMS system and start the process of applying for a new work permit.
- Print the application confirmation.
- Check the application status by
- After receiving the approval on the new work permit, pay the fees through the EMS system or visit one of the accredited banks.
- Print the work permit from the EMS system.
- Take the print to the immigration office to get the work permit mark.

Student visa

- **Contact the Bahrain embassy in the country of origin:** The applicant must contact the Bahrain embassy or consulate in the country of origin to know the visa requirements.
- **Gather all the documents the applicant needs for Bahrain Student Visa:** Gather all the documents the applicant needs for the study visa in Bahrain.
- **Complete an online application form for Bahrain Student Visa:** The applicant can now complete an online application form. The applicant must provide the correct information in each space on the application.
- **Submit the application and documents to the Bahrain embassy in the country:** Once the applicant has completed the application, the applicant can submit it with other documents to the Bahrain embassy near the applicant.
- **Make payment for the Bahrain Student Visa:** The applicant can pay the entry permit fee online.
- **Wait for processing:** Once the applicant has made the visa payment, the applicant must wait for the Bahrain embassy to process the entry permit.



Licenses and documentation



Tourist visa

- Valid and original Passport with at least 6 months of validity
- Clear-colored passport-size photograph
- Round-trip flight tickets
- Valid ID proofs such as an original copy of Adhar Card
- Employment certificates and ownership documents
- Bank statements for the last 6 months
- Confirmed hotel bookings and other mandatory documents asked by Bahrain Immigration.

Domestic visa

- **Passport:** A valid passport with at least six months validity remaining.
- **Visa application form:** The completed visa application form, which can be obtained from the Bahrain Embassy or consulate.
- **Passport photos:** Two passport-size photographs with a white background.
- **Sponsorship letter:** A sponsorship letter from the sponsoring employer or sponsor in Bahrain.
- **Employment contract:** A copy of the employment contract or letter of appointment from the sponsoring employer.
- **Medical certificate:** A medical certificate showing that the applicant is in good health.
- **Police clearance certificate:** A police clearance certificate or background check issued by the applicant's home country.
- **Bank statement:** A recent bank statement showing sufficient funds to cover the applicant's expenses while in Bahrain.
- **Flight itinerary:** A copy of the flight itinerary or confirmed booking.



Visit visa

- **Passport:** The passport should be valid for at least six months from the date of entry into Bahrain.
- **Visa application form:** The applicant will need to fill out a visa application form, which can typically be obtained online or from the Bahraini embassy or consulate in the country.
- **Photographs:** The applicant will need to provide passport-sized photographs.
- **Flight tickets:** The applicant may be required to show proof of the return or onward travel.
- **Accommodation booking:** The applicant may also be required to provide proof of the accommodation arrangements in Bahrain.
- **Proof of financial means:** The applicant may need to provide evidence of the financial means to support himself during his stay in Bahrain.
- **Invitation letter:** If the applicant is visiting friends or relatives in Bahrain, the applicant may need to provide an invitation letter from them.
- **Medical certificate:** Depending on the nationality and the length of the stay, the applicant may need to provide a medical certificate showing that the applicant is in good health.

Business visa

- Application Form
- Copy of the visitor's passport
- Copy of the Commercial Registration
- Official letter from the applicant stating the reasons for the visit.
- Documented proof stating the visitor's occupation from the parent company.

Employment visa

- Latest Passport of the employee
- Old Passport copy of the employee
- Employment Contract (in English and Arabic)
- Intention to Transfer form (if the employee is transferring from one employer to another in Bahrain)
- Electricity Bill
- Employee address (if available)
- Medical Certificate (GAMCA Approved Medical Certificate if the employee is out of Bahrain)

Student visa

- Passport
- Application form for Bahrain Student Visa
- Photo
- Proof of sufficient funds
- Proof of accommodation in Bahrain
- Acceptance letter from a university in Bahrain
- Proof of sponsorship
- Proof of scholarship
- Receipt of payment for tuition fee at a Bahrain university
- Receipt for Bahrain Student Visa fee



Criminality perspective



Having a criminal record can trouble the ability to obtain a visa to Bahrain. The Bahraini government may deny the visa application if the applicant has a criminal record, especially if the criminal history includes offenses related to drugs, violence, or terrorism.

Bahrain has strict immigration laws, and the government reserves the right to deny entry to individuals who pose a security risk or who have a criminal record. The Bahraini authorities may conduct background checks on visa applicants, and if they find evidence of criminal activity, they may deny the visa.

If an applicant has a criminal record, it may be grounds for the Bahraini authorities to deny the visa application. However, the severity and nature of the offense will be considered when making a decision. For example, minor offenses, such as traffic violations, may not impact an individual's visa application, while more serious offenses, such as drug trafficking or terrorism-related charges, will likely result in a denial of the visa.

The Bahraini authorities can deny a visa application if they believe that granting the visa would pose a security risk or if the applicant's criminal history suggests that they may engage in illegal activities while in Bahrain.

It is advisable to be honest about any criminal history when applying for a visa, as providing false information can result in a visa being denied or revoked and can even lead to legal consequences.

Recent changes in immigration policies

The Ministry of Interior in Bahrain launched a Golden Residency Visa program for current Bahraini residents and foreign nationals seeking to live and work in Bahrain long term. Interested foreign nationals can now apply under the program.

The program allows investors, retirees, and highly talented individuals to work upon obtaining work authorization under a 10-year renewable residence permit and guarantees sponsorship of residence permits for immediate family members.

According to the Ministry of Interior for Nationality, Passports, and Residence Affairs, foreign nationals who have resided in the Kingdom for 15 years or longer are eligible to apply for a Platinum Residence Permit, provided they meet the following criteria:

- They must have maintained good conduct and should not have any previous convictions for felonies or misdemeanors that involve a breach of honor or trust, regardless of whether they have undergone rehabilitation.
- They must earn a basic salary of BHD 4,000 or more per month during the last five years of their residency.
- The authorities have not yet provided any information on the Platinum Residence application process, the validity of the permit, or the implementation date.



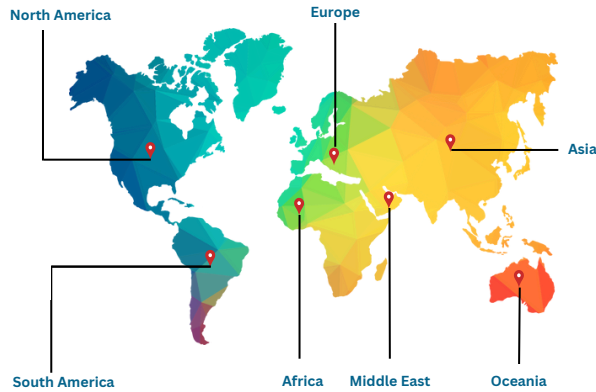
How we can help?

Our firm provides full-service for immigration law including visa applications, sponsorship applications, interview preparation, appeals process, and general counseling. Some of the services provided by our team are as follows:

- Our Team works to help our clients apply for visas across the spectrum like employment, education, entertainment, business, and tourist visas.
- Our Team also works with the internal application processes to ensure full compliance with the law.
- Our Team can assist clients with single or multiple-entry business visas, social visas, visa-on-arrival, and visit visa extensions.
- Our team can assist clients in immigration audits, deportation cases, detention cases, and administrative court cases.



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