



## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**By:**

**THE HON. JASON P HAYWARD JP MP  
MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND LABOUR**

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### **WORK PERMIT POLICY 2025**

**Friday, 26 September 2025**

**Mr Speaker,**

I rise today to inform Honourable Members of this House of the Department of Immigration's Work Permit Policy 2025 which is laid in the House today and which will take effect 1 November 2025.

The Government's goal is to ensure the proper balance between employment and immigration in Bermuda. There is a need to have in place realistic conditions that enable Bermudians to find work and pursue career opportunities while ensuring that suitably qualified non-Bermudians in specific job categories are able to work in Bermuda.

Honourable Members will recall the draft Work Permit Policy was available for public feedback for approximately a month, between 5 June 2025 and 4 July 2025. 137 responses were received from members of the public and the business community. The volume of feedback received from both business associations and the public was extensive, indicating that the impact of immigration decisions are keenly felt across the community.

**Mr Speaker,**

The purpose of the Work Permit Policy is to provide detailed guidance to employers, work permit holders, and agents who submit work permit applications. It also helps Bermudians understand what is expected of employers, i.e. for job promotions, job title changes, and advertisements. The current Work Permit Policy dates back to 2017 and this update, in 2025, is both necessary and overdue.

**Mr Speaker,**

The review of the Work Permit Policy sought to: clarify areas where interpretation was too wide and varied, introduce new policies to address emerging needs, ensure transparency and fairness, and support Bermuda's efforts to attract new business and stimulate economic growth.

The following new policies have been included in the Work Permit Policy and can be found at the corresponding policy numbers:

- 1.19 Guidelines for Submitting Photos
- 1.20 Guidelines for Submitting Police Certificates
- 3.7 Family Office Permit
- 4.8 Guidelines for Amending the Dates of a Work Permit
- 5.1 Sponsored Dependents Residing and Working in Bermuda
- 6.4 Applications to Reside
- 7.15 Secondments
- 7.16 Layoffs

**Mr Speaker,**

The Department of Immigration is prioritizing digitalization to improve service efficiency. In response to public feedback, the Department is investing in a modern IT system to replace outdated processes, ensuring that the entire application process moves beyond just fillable forms to true digital workflow. The implementation of these upgrades will enable the Department to act on valuable suggestions received during consultation once procurement is complete.

**Mr Speaker,**

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the policies in the 2025 Work Permit Policy which are now finalised.

1. The processing time for Standard, Seasonal and Occasional Work Permits, as well as Job Title Changes and Promotions will remain at 20 days, instead of increasing to 30 days. Additionally, the printing of documents will be within 10 days of the approval.
2. The requirement for persons to be proficient in the English language will apply, generally, to persons seeking a new Standard Work Permit. The exceptions will be persons who are nationals of countries where English is the native language, and the Policy identifies those countries. Also, those persons possessing a certificate, diploma or degree from an English language university or college will not be required to provide proof of English language proficiency.
3. For those people required to settle their affairs and leave Bermuda, the grace period for doing so will remain 90 days and not be reduced to 60 days. Further, if more time beyond 90 days

is required to accommodate school commitments, for example, written justification can be submitted for consideration.

4. To ensure the continued security and safety of our community, police certificates will be required for work permit applicants coming to Bermuda for the first time. The police certificates are required from the applicant's home country, plus any country of residence for the two (2) years immediately preceding the work permit application.
5. The type of work permits now includes the Family Office Work Permit, where 'Family Office' means a company, limited liability company, partnership or other legal entity incorporated, registered or established on behalf of, or for the benefit of, a single family (the family clients) for the purpose of managing the affairs of that family. The Family Office Work Permit is the latest in the suite options that includes the Standard, New Business, Global Entrepreneur, Fintech and Intra-company (formerly, Global) Work Permits.
6. In recognition of the need to progress the digitalisation of the Department of Immigration, the Short Term Work Permit will continue to be available as a 'bridge' to a Standard Work Permit. This was a key concern of employers and is being retained.
7. In response to employers' concerns regarding employees leaving shortly after they have made a significant investment in recruiting and onboarding an employee and to prevent work permit holders from obtaining multiple permits from different employers simultaneously, work permit holders will be required to complete two (2) years of employment with their initial employer. In addition, for new work permits, job changes

will not be approved in the first year after issuance. For renewed work permits, job changes will not be approved within the first six (6) months after issuance.

8. I would also like to note that the policy regulating business visitors has been expanded at Policy 2.1 iii. w) to include utilizing someone for a non-profit organization, a registered charity or a religious institution, such as a coach or teacher of sports, clergy or a speaker.

**Mr Speaker,**

The 2025 Work Permit Policy provides the balance required to ensure that Bermuda remains an attractive and competitive jurisdiction for business, investment, and job creation, while safeguarding and promoting the legitimate aspirations of Bermudians to participate fully in our labour market.

**Mr Speaker,**

I would like to thank all of those who took the time to read and respond to the draft Work Permit Policy. Your input was very much valued and it impacted the final version of the 2025 Work Permit Policy.

The 2025 Work Permit Policy will come into effect on November 1, 2025 and can be found online at [gov.bm](https://gov.bm).

Thank you, **Mr Speaker.**