

Home Affairs Minister extends validity of Zimbabwean permits

Home Affairs Minister, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, has extended the validity of Zimbabwean Exemption Permits (ZEP) by a further six months.



Image source: Gregory Alekhine – 123RF.com

This after Motsoaledi announced in December 2021 that the ZEP would not be renewed.

The six-month extension period starts on 30 June and ends on 31 December 2023.

According to Motsoaledi, the extension is to allow the holders of ZEPs to apply for other types of visas and waivers provided for in the Immigration Act.

Motsoaledi said during the six-month period, no holder of a valid exemption permit may be arrested, ordered to depart or be detained for purposes of deportation or deported in terms of section 34 of the Immigration Act for any reason related to them not having any valid exemption certificate in their passport.

"The holder of a valid exemption permit may not be dealt with in terms of sections 29, 30 and 32 of the Immigration Act," Motsoaledi said.

He said the holder of a valid exemption permit may be allowed to enter into or depart from the Republic of South Africa, in terms of section 9 of the Act, read together with the Immigration Regulations, 2014, provided they comply with all other requirements for entry into and departure from the Republic.



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Ashraf Hendricks 18 Apr 2023



Motsoaledi recently approved thousands of waiver applications of affected Zimbabwean nationals.

The first Zimbabwean special dispensation started in 2009 and was called the Dispensation for Zimbabwe Permit.

The Zimbabwean Special Dispensation permit (ZSP) is the successor to a permit issued as part of the Home Affairs Department's Dispensation of Zimbabweans Project (DZP), which was implemented in April 2009.

The aim of the DZP was to create a record of Zimbabweans, who had until then been living illegally in South Africa.

"This has resulted in significant increase in the number of visa and waiver applications," the department said.

The Departmental Advisory Committee (DAC), led by Dr Cassius Lubisi, is now dealing with the increased number of visa applications.

The department said it is considering and approving waiver applications on a daily basis.

Since May, the department said VFS Global receives between 1,000 and 1,500 visa and waiver applications from affected Zimbabwean nationals daily and for these reasons, the department's Director-General has deployed more officials to assist in the processing of the applications.

The Minister's Immigration Directive no: 2 of 2023, will be published in the Extraordinary Government Gazette today.

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