

France

Business visitors: FAQs



If planning on traveling to France for temporary business, it is important to remain compliant with the immigration laws of France. The purpose of the visitor's intended travel, duration of stay and citizenship will determine if and what type of visa is required. The information in this document is intended to serve as an informational resource about business visitor requirements in France.

Who needs a business visitor visa for France?

A business visa is required for persons who wish to enter France for the purposes of temporary business. Business visitors are not permitted to engage in employment of any kind while in France.

What activities are permitted as a business visitor?

Activities permitted typically include:

- Business meetings/discussions
- Negotiations with clients/prospects
- Meeting customers/prospects to make presentations
- Submitting a proposal or quotation to a client/prospect
- Attending seminars and exhibitions organized by, for example, companies, trade organizations or universities

Activities not permitted typically include:

- Performing productive work
- Signing a contract with the address in France
- Accepting paid or unpaid employment
- Working under the supervision of a host employer
- Attending school or study

- Knowledge transition
- Requirements gathering
- Go-live support
- Attending training provided by the client/training team
- Imparting training to client/users

Answering the question "Will the employee bring a specific skill/expertise during his/her stay in France?" with a "Yes" means that the activity will be qualified as work.

Examples of situations where the employee is considered as working (not permitted):

- A trainer coming to France for a training session (even for one day)
- An IT engineer coming to France during the implementation phase of a new process. Only supervising or checking the process/the team is considered as working

These lists are subject to change and are not all-inclusive.

Who is required to apply for a business visa?

The requirement of applying for a business visa at a Consulate abroad is dependent upon the visitor's nationality. Citizens of certain countries are visa-exempt, and therefore do not require a business visa application to be submitted and approved at a Consulate prior to travel to France.

How long can a visitor stay in France on a business visa?

The maximum allowable stay on a business visa in France is 90 days within a six-month period.

Is there a limit on the number of times a visitor may travel to France on a business visa in any given period?

There is no limit on how many visits a person may make to France during the period of six months. Please note that a business visa is a Schengen visa; therefore the 90 days within a six-month period include stays in the Schengen area.

Can a visitor's spouse and children also come to France?

A business visitor's spouse and children can come to France as visitors. However, they must apply for their own separate visas.

Penalties related to non-compliance for the business visa category?

Engaging in unlawful work in France can result in serious consequences for both the employer and the business visitor, including:

- €15,000 fine (for the employer)
- Five years' imprisonment (for the employer)
- In the case of an over-stay the employee can be refused a new visa by the Consulate

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