

GUIDELINES ON ISSUANCE OF VISA RECOMMENDATION LETTER

It is felt that there should be prescribed guidelines for issuing of VISA recommendation letter to the participants taking part in the exhibitions held abroad, representatives of member organisations visiting foreign countries in connection with their line of activity/ business and for business delegates/ buyers of our members, subject to fulfillment of the rules and stipulations prescribed herein.

Further to the earlier instruction issued by the Working Committee in this matter whereby only an officer of at least the rank of a Regional Director had been authorized to issue such letter and also normally not to issue more than two VISA recommendations for a participant taking a stall in Overseas Exhibitions, the following additional guidelines have been further approved for implementation with immediate effect:

1. The VISA recommendation letter should only be issued after a participating organisation has expressed its interest in writing/ filled-up and submitted the participation form duly completed in all respects and in cases when a member organisation requests in writing that such VISA recommendation letter is required for their representatives going to a foreign country for development of their line of business / activity.
2. The request for issuing Visa recommendation letter should be made to the Regional Director of the respective region at least 4(four) weeks before the starting date of the proposed travel.
3. For taking part in overseas exhibitions, if the participating organisation does not make 75% payment of the participation charges and other dues to EEPC India Visa recommendation letter shall NOT be issued in those cases.

4. Before issuing such letter the concerned EEPC India regional office should check the veracity of an employee/staff who is being nominated by the participating organisation to attend the exhibition abroad or who is going abroad for their business essentially check the TDS Form-16A; Salary Slip along with Appointment letter of the employee/staff or any other statutory records like PF or ESIC slips, as applicable.
5. Before issuing such letter the concerned EEPC India regional office should also request the company/ firm to submit a written Undertaking to EEPC India signed by their Managing Director, Partner, Designated Partner or Proprietor, as the case may be, to the effect that their organization shall be solely liable for the conduct and acts of their employees/staff who is being nominated to attend the exhibition abroad or who is going abroad for their business.
6. Such employee/ staff should be in regular employment of the participating organisation and necessary checks are to be done thereof and the employer/ owner of the organisation will be solely responsible to ensure return of the employee/ staff back to India.
7. In cases where a member organization requests for issuance of Visa recommendation letters for their delegates/ buyers visiting India, the member has to make an application in writing to the Regional Director of his region by giving a brief description of the delegates/ buyers who is planning to visit India and the purpose connected therewith. Such application should be submitted along with the following documents :
 - (a) Legal registration document of the concerned buyer organization duly notarised/ attested by the local authorities of that country;
 - (b) A recommendation letter or a membership document of a leading Chamber of Commerce/ Trade Promotion Organisation of that country;

- (c) An written Undertaking from the concerned member signed by their Managing Director, Partner, Designated Partner or Proprietor, as the case may be, to the effect that their organization shall be solely liable for the conduct and acts of their delegates/ buyers visiting India; and
 - (d) Any other documents of relevance like local tax registration of the buyer or alike.
8. The VISA recommendation letters are mere recommendations made by EEPC India and every such letter issued should *inter alia* contain a disclaimer that EEPC India only recommends for issuance of the VISA and certifying to the extent that the concerned person is a participant at the exhibition or that the person in question has been certified by the organisation to be an employee of a member organisation or their delegate/ buyer and the Foreign Embassy / Consulate / Embassy of India / Indian High Commission where the VISA application has been preferred are to do their procedural checks before granting the VISA in question;
 9. It should be made clear to all the person(s) that EEPC India will ONLY recommend for VISA but in no circumstances will be responsible for it's issuance and the participant remains liable to pay the dues to EEPC India even if Visa is not obtained by them for any reason whatsoever;
 10. Any organisation / person misusing EEPC India VISA recommendation letter in any manner whatsoever will be precluded from participating in future events/ exhibitions of EEPC India and such information will also be communicated to Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, MOC&I and also to major Foreign Embassies in India;
 11. The guidelines for issuing of VISA recommendation letter are to be published in the event Website, Circular for information of all the participants;

12. Regional Offices are also to send copies of the VISA recommendation letters to Head Office in Kolkata and to H.O. (Cell) in New Delhi for information;

13. More than two VISA recommendations could be issued by EEPC India in certain cases, if the participating organisation takes a large booth of bigger area wherein it is necessary for presence of more than two representatives for manning the booth efficiently. The same may also be done if the organisation can provide sufficient reason for the requirement of the number of persons recommended. However, this will depend on case to case basis and decision of EEPC India in this matter shall be absolute.

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