

GCC Employment Visa Guide for DESI Region Nationals (2026)

Country	Do DESI Region Nationals Need a Work Visa?	Who Applies?	Typical Processing Time	Key Requirements	Notes
UAE	✓ Yes	Employer	2-6 weeks	Valid passport, signed job offer, medical examination, Emirates ID registration, residence visa, educational certificates (for skilled jobs).	Work visas are employer-sponsored. Degree certificates often require attestation.
Saudi Arabia	✓ Yes	Employer	2-8 weeks	Employment contract, passport, medical examination, police clearance (where required), professional qualifications, work visa approval.	Some professions require professional registration and qualification verification. Certain occupations are reserved for Saudi nationals under Saudi policies.
Qatar	✓ Yes	Employer	2-6 weeks	Job offer, passport, medical examination, fingerprints, Qatar ID (QID) after arrival	Employer arranges residence permit and work authorisation after entry.
Oman	✓ Yes	Employer	2-6 weeks	Passport, employment contract, medical examination, employer sponsorship.	Certain occupations are reserved for Omani nationals under Omanisation policies.
Kuwait	✓ Yes	Employer	2-8 weeks	Passport, medical examination, police clearance (if required), work permit approval.	Residence permit is issued after arrival once work permit is approved.
Bahrain	✓ Yes	Employer	2-4 weeks	Passport, employment contract, medical examination, employer sponsorship.	Employer applies for Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) work permit.

The above table provides a quick reference rather than legal advice, as immigration rules can change.

Documents You Should Prepare Before Applying for Jobs

Every job seeker should have:

- Valid passport (minimum 6 months validity)
- Updated CV - relevant to the position offered
- Passport-size photographs
- Educational certificates (attested to speed up the process)
- Professional certificates or licences (if applicable)
- Police Clearance Certificate (if requested)
- Medical fitness certificate (completed after visa approval in most countries)
- Marriage and birth certificates (if bringing family later)

Important Things to Know

Never travel on a tourist visa to start work - Working on a tourist or visit visa is illegal throughout the GCC. Your employer should arrange the correct work visa before employment begins.

Never pay large recruitment fees - Legitimate employers usually pay visa and recruitment costs. Be cautious if anyone asks for substantial payments in exchange for a guaranteed job.

Verify your job offer - Always confirm:

- The company is genuine.
- The salary matches your offer letter.
- Benefits are clearly stated.
- Your visa is sponsored by the actual employee

Certificate Attestation - Professional and graduate positions often require educational certificates to be attested before they are accepted in the GCC. Requirements vary by country and occupation. Having your certificates attested on application will speed-up the job offer and onboarding process.

Family Sponsorship - After obtaining your work residence permit, many GCC countries allow you to sponsor your spouse and children if you meet the minimum salary requirements. The salary threshold and eligibility differ by country.

Before You Accept Any Job Offer

Make sure you know:

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| ▪  Monthly salary | ▪  Medical insurance included? |
| ▪  Working hours | ▪  Annual leave entitlement |
| ▪  Overtime policy | ▪  End-of-service benefits |
| ▪  Accommodation provided? | ▪  Contract duration |
| ▪  Transport provided? | ▪  Return flight policy |

DESIwork Tip

Before accepting a job offer, compare the salary with the local cost of living. A higher salary does not always mean better savings if accommodation, transport, or healthcare are not included.