

## Law No. (21) of 2015

### On the Entry, Exit, and Residency of Foreign Nationals

**We, Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani,**

**Emir of the State of Qatar**

After reviewing the Constitution,

The Labor Law promulgated by Law No. (14) of 2004, as amended,

Law No. (4) of 2009 regulating the Entry, Exit, Residency, and Sponsorship of Foreign Nationals,

The proposal of the Minister of the Interior,

The draft law proposed by the Cabinet,

And after consulting the Consultative Assembly,

**Have decreed the following:**

#### **Chapter (1)**

#### **Definitions**

#### **Article (1)**

For the purposes of this law's implementation, the following words and terms shall each carry its corresponding definition, unless the context requires otherwise:

Ministry: The Ministry of the Interior

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Competent Authorities: The relevant administrative unit of the Ministry.

Recruiter: The party, employer, head of household, or host who recruits the Foreign National, or who receives transfer of his Residency in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Foreign National: Any non-Qatari who enters the country to work, reside, visit, or for any other purpose.

Visa: Permission for the Foreign National to enter the country.

Travel Document: A document issued by a relevant authority from the document bearer's country, or any other recognized authority, that serves as a Passport and entitles its bearer to return to the country from which he came.

Residency Permit:	A permit that establishes the identity of the Foreign National and permits him to reside within the country in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in this law, its implementing regulations, and bylaws.
Entry/Exit Stamp:	A stamp that establishes the Foreign National's entry or exit via official channels in accordance with the provisions of this law.
Departure:	The exit of the Foreign National from the country after completing the purpose of his visit as was permitted him during his entry or residency.
Deportation:	The Foreign National's compulsory exit from the country if an order was issued for his deportation.

## **Chapter (2)**

### **The Entry and Exit of Foreign Nationals**

#### **Article (2)**

A Foreign National is not permitted to enter or exit the country unless he bears a valid Travel Document or Passport.

The preceding paragraph does not apply in the event of Departure.

#### **Article (3)**

A Foreign National shall not enter or exit the country except via channels determined by the Minister, and only after receiving an Entry/Exit Stamp on his Passport or Travel Document or any other mechanism established by the Minister.

#### **Article (4)**

The Competent Authority, or any other body determined by the Minister, shall issue Entry Visas in accordance with the provisions of this law. These Visas may be terminated after their issuance for reasons related to the general welfare.

The Entry Visa does not permit the Foreign National seeking work anything except for what is stipulated in his agreed-upon labor contract in accordance with the legal conditions and regulations.

It is not permitted to transfer a Visa, nor its right of disposal, to another person or party, nor to exchange a Visa with another person or party, regardless of the whether transfer, right of disposal, or exchange was met with compensation or not.

The implementing regulation for this law specifies the terms and conditions afforded those Visas, and their specific durations.

#### **Article (5)**

Pilots/Captains of marine vessels, aircrafts, vehicles, or any other form of transportation shall, immediately upon arrival to the country and before departing, report to the Competent Authority and provide the names and personal information of the marine vessel, aircraft, or vehicle's crew. They must inform the Competent Authorities of any passengers not carrying valid Passports, Travel Documents, or Visas, and prevent them from departing on the marine vessel or aircraft, depending on the situation.

In all cases, the transporter must, at his own expense, return any passenger not carrying a valid Passport, Travel Document, or Visa to the country from which he came or his country of citizenship.

#### **Article (6)**

Administrators of tourism or hotel facilities, and those acting on their behalf, must provide information to the Competent Authority regarding any individual who has been allowed entry into the country through their auspices. They must house them in the place specified by their Visas, unless necessity requires otherwise. In the event that any one of them is not present in their specified place of residency for a period of time greater than 48 hours without giving proper notification to the hotel or tourism facility, then the Competent Authorities must be alerted to this fact within the following 24 hours. The hotel or tourism facility carries all of the Recruiter's responsibilities and obligations towards the Foreign National.

In all cases, anyone who houses a Foreign National must notify the Competent Authorities that oversees the area in which the hotel, tourism facility, or boarding house is located regarding the name and address of the Foreign National within 24 hours of his arrival.

#### **Article (7)**

The Foreign National laborer or the Recruiter must notify the Competent Authorities each time the Foreign National leaves the country, prior to his leaving by at least three days.

In the event that the Recruiter or the Competent Authorities obstruct the Foreign National laborer's departure, the Foreign National may seek recourse at the Foreign Nationals Exit Grievances Council, whose formation, purview, organizational structure, and official proceedings shall follow in accordance with a decree from the Minister.

Barring this occurrence, a Foreign National laborer is permitted to leave the country immediately after the Recruiter has notified the Competent Authorities of his agreement that the Foreign National take a vacation.

In the event of an emergency situation facing the Foreign National laborer, the Council must take action on the request within three working days of the request's submission.

### **Chapter (3)**

#### **Residency of Foreign Nationals in the Country**

##### **Article (8)**

Foreign Nationals residing in the country for whatever purpose must obtain a Residency Permit from the Competent Authorities.

The Recruiter must undertake the licensing procedures and renew the permit within 90 days of its expiration.

The employer must give the Passport or Travel Document to the Foreign National after completing the licensing or renewal procedures, unless the Foreign National has requested in writing that the employer retain the Passport or Travel Document. However the employer must give the Foreign National his Passport or Travel Document upon request.

##### **Article (9)**

The Competent Authorities shall issue the Residency Permit for the Foreign National in accordance with this law. It will contain the Foreign National's name, image, signature, and personal information as specified in a decree issued by the Minister.

##### **Article (10)**

The Recruiter must enable the Foreign National to consult with the Competent Authorities within 30 days of the Foreign National's entry into the country to complete the licensing procedures regarding residency or visitation. It is incumbent upon the Foreign National to complete these procedures.

The Competent Authorities may authorize the Recruiter or the Foreign National to appoint a representative to undertake some of the procedures mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

##### **Article (11)**

The Foreign National who enters the country for visitation or any other purpose for a period less than 30 days is exempt from the stipulations of the preceding article.

The Foreign National shall not remain in the country after the specified time period has expired, unless the permit was renewed or residency status was obtained.

##### **Article (12)**

The Competent Authorities may issue Residency Permits to the spouse of the Foreign National who has received a Residency Permit, and to his male children who have not completed university-level studies and are under 25 years old, and to his female children who are not married.

The Minister or his representative may authorize exceptions to the preceding paragraph. With the authorization from the Minister or his representative, the Foreign National's parents may be issued Residency Permits if there is reason to do so.

The Competent Authorities may issue Residency Permits to the non-Qatari spouse and children of a Qatari national in accordance with the law. Non-Qatari parents may also receive Residency Permits in the same manner.

The specifications for the conditions of issuing Residency Permits, as stipulated in this Article, are contained in a decree issued by the Minister.

### **Article (13)**

The Foreign National who has obtained Residency Permits for his family shall submit a request for a Residency Permit for any newborn child of his within 90 days of the child's birth or entry into the country.

In the event that the birth took place outside the borders of the country while the parent of the newborn child held a valid Residency Permit, then the newborn shall be permitted entry the country within six months of the date of birth. The Competent Authorities may extend this time limit.

Recruiters of any female Foreign National who entered for visitation purposes must resolve the status of any of the Foreign National's children born within the country within 60 days of the date of birth.

Children who were born within the country to Foreign Nationals may be given Residency Permits in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the decree issued by the Minister.

### **Article (14)**

The Foreign National who obtained a Residency Permit shall not reside outside of the country for a period that exceeds six continuous months, unless prior to his travels or one year since his departure he had obtained permission to reenter the country from the Competent Authorities, after paying the stipulated fees, unless more than 60 days had passed since the expiration of his Residency Permit.

The Minister or his representative may extend the time limitations mentioned in the preceding Paragraph.

### **Article (15)**

During his residency, the Foreign National shall submit his Passport, Travel Document, or Residency Permit to the Competent Authorities when requested. He shall answer any questions asked of him, and within the appointed time established for him.

In the event that his Passport, Travel Document, or Residency Permit is lost or damaged, the Foreign National shall inform the Competent Authorities immediately after he learns that it has been lost or damaged and obtain a copy of that which was lost or damaged.

#### **Article (16)**

The Foreign National who obtained an Entry Permit or Residency Permit for a specific purpose, or for work with a specific party, shall not violate the stated purpose for which he was granted a permit, nor leave the work provided by his Recruiter, nor work with another party for which he has not received a permit.

It is not in violation of the purpose of the Residency Permit if the Foreign National, in agreement with the Competent Authorities, undertakes some administrative work in an authorized partner organization.

#### **Chapter (4)**

#### **Recruitment of Foreign Nationals**

#### **Article (17)**

The person responsible for the residency of the Foreign National is specified as follows:

- 1- The direct employer of the Foreign National or owner of the business within which the Foreign National works.
- 2- The head of household, as determined by the other individuals of his family residing in the country. A female Foreign National with a Residency Permit may retain the head of household as her Recruiter, even if she finds employment elsewhere.  
If a marriage ends in divorce for whatever reason, any member of the family may transfer to another Recruiter after authorization from the Competent Authorities, in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the decree issued by the Minister.
- 3- A host, as regards a visiting Foreign National.
- 4- Official bodies of the state, as regards Foreign Nationals who have arrived for purposes other than those mentioned.

#### **Article (18)**

The Recruiter, whether a person or a body corporate, must meet the following criteria:

- 1- He must be Qatari or a Foreign National legally residing in the country. If the Recruiter is a body corporate, then its main headquarters or administrative branch must be located in the country.
- 2- He must be qualified to bear the responsibilities, as prescribed in this law, towards the Foreign National.

### **Article (19)**

The Recruiter is obligated to do the following:

- 1- Notify the Competent Authorities within 14 days of the Foreign National leaving his specified work, or his failure to leave the country following the revocation or expiration of his Residency Permit, or exceeding the time limit stipulated in Article (8) Paragraph (2) of this law, or exceeding the visitation period, or the expiration of the stated purpose for which he was issued an Entry Permit.
- 2- Bear the expenses of repatriating the Foreign National to his country when required in accordance with this law. If it were proven that the Foreign National worked for another party in violation of this law, then that party shall bear the expenses of the Foreign National's repatriation. If the identity of this other party cannot be established, the Foreign National shall bear the expenses. In the event that the Foreign National does not possess the resources to bear the expenses, then the Recruiter shall bear those expenses.  
In all cases, whosoever uses a Foreign National for unauthorized labor in violation of this law shall be required to bear the expenses of his repatriation and without prejudice to any aspects of other legally stipulated responsibilities.
- 3- Bear the expenses of preparing and burying a deceased Foreign National, in a designated burial place within the country, regardless of the cause of death.  
In the event that one of the deceased's relatives or any other specified party requested that the remains be transported abroad, the Recruiter shall cover the expenses of transporting the remains to the deceased's country of citizenship or place of permanent residence.

### **Article (20)**

The Ministry may require the Recruiter of a Foreign National laborer, subject to the referenced Labor Law, to make a bank deposit as a security payment to guarantee the fulfillment of the obligations towards the Ministry and the Foreign National, in accordance with the conditions contained in the decree issued by the Minister.

In the event that the Recruiter is a public employee and has violated his obligations towards the Foreign National, the Ministry may garner his wages in order to cover the expenses of the Foreign National's repatriation, in coordination with the employing agency.

## **Chapter (5)**

### **Change of Employer**

#### **Article (21)**

The employer, the Competent Authorities, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs may agree to transfer the Foreign National laborer to another employer before the time limit in the contract has been reached, or after five years of working for the employer if the contract did not specify a time period.

The Foreign National laborer may, with authorization from the Competent Authorities and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, transfer to another employer in the event of the Recruiter's death or dissolution of the body corporate for any reason.

In all cases, the employer serving as the Recruiter shall not have his legal rights, nor the contract between him and Foreign National, violated, in accordance with the referenced Labor Law.

#### **Article (22)**

The Minister or his representative may authorize the temporary transfer of a Foreign National laborer to another employer in the event of a legal suit existing between the Foreign National and his Recruiter, on the condition that the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs agrees, as regards the laborer who is subject to the referenced Labor Law.

The Minister or his representative may authorize the transfer of a Foreign National laborer who is not subject to the referenced Labor Law to another employer if proven that the Recruiter was abusive, or if required by the general welfare.

#### **Article (23)**

No Recruiter, person or body corporate, shall permit any Foreign National laborer to be employed by another employer, or use laborers whom he is not authorized to employ.

As an exception, the Competent Authorities may permit the Recruiter to loan his Foreign National laborer to another employer and work for the new employer for a period not in excess of six months, which can be renewed for additional periods of time.

The Competent Authorities may permit the Foreign National to work part-time for another employer during hours which do not conflict with his original work, with the written agreement of the Recruiter to that end.

In all cases, permission must be granted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to all parties subject to the referenced Labor Law.

### **Chapter (6)**

#### **Departure, Repatriation, Deportation, and Reentry**

#### **Article (24)**

If the Foreign National does not obtain a Residency Permit in accordance with this law, then he must leave the country.

The Foreign National must also leave the country within 90 days if his Residency Permit expires or it is revoked for any reason, or if the stated purpose for which he received the Residency Permit has expired.

The Foreign National may, with authorization from the Competent Authorities, reenter the country provided that he has fulfilled the conditions necessary for entry, as prescribed in this law and its implementing regulation.

#### **Article (25)**

As an exception to the provisions of any other law, the Minister may issue a repatriation order for any Foreign National whose presence is proven to imperil the safety or security of the state within the country or abroad, or harm the national economy, public health, or public morals.

#### **Article (26)**

If the laborer is dismissed on disciplinary grounds, in accordance with the referenced Labor Law, or in accordance with the laws of the State Employee Affairs Organization, or any other law, and does not appear in court to contest the charges, or if he appeals and his appeal is refused in a final ruling from a competent court of law, then he shall not be permitted to reenter the country until four years from the day of his departure have elapsed.

For the Foreign National who has been ordered by court ruling to be deported or repatriated may not reenter the country unless decreed otherwise by the Minister.

#### **Article (27)**

The Minister or his representative may afford the Foreign National, who has received a deportation order and has personal business or effects within the country that require his attention before his departure, an amount of time not in excess of 90 days, subject to extensions of varying lengths of time, on the condition that he pledges an accepted security as a guarantee.

#### **Article (28)**

The Minister may consign, when necessary, a Foreign National who has received a deportation order from a court ruling or repatriation order from the state to a place designated for that purpose for a period not in excess of 30 days, subject to extensions of varying lengths of time.

When it is not possible to execute the ruling or order specified in the preceding paragraph, the Minister may impose residency in a designated place for a period of two weeks, subject to extension.

The Foreign National must proceed to the local security branch relative to the designated place within the appointed time in accordance with the issued order. He will remain there until his deportation or repatriation.

#### **Chapter (7)**

## **Entry, Exit, and Residency of Certain Groups**

### **Article (29)**

The entry, exit, and residency of groups is stipulated in this Chapter, in accordance with the provisions contained therein.

### **Article (30)**

The Minister may issue Visas and Residency Permits without need of a Recruiter, for the following groups:

- 1- Investors subject to the provisions of the law regulating foreign capital investment in economic activity.
- 2- Real estate or housing unit owners or beneficiaries, in accordance with the law regulating foreign ownership and entitlement of real estate and housing units.
- 3- Any other group specified by a decree issued by the Cabinet.

### **Article (31)**

Residency Permits to the groups specified in the preceding Article shall be issued in accordance with following conditions:

- 1- The applicant submits the supporting documentation for his application.
- 2- The applicant is of good conduct and sound reputation.

### **Article (32)**

The period of residency shall be five years, subject to extensions of varying lengths of time.

### **Article (33)**

Residency Permits may be issued with no requirement for work, for the spouse, children, or parents of the person holding the Residency Permit, in accordance with Article (30) of this law.

### **Article (34)**

The person holding a valid Residency Permit may leave the country without obtaining permission or authorization.

### **Article (35)**

The person holding a valid Residency Permit shall not violate the purpose of his stay as stated on his Residency Permit, unless he has obtained permission to do so from the Competent Authorities.

### **Article (36)**

In the event of the expiration or denied renewal of the Residency Permit, the Minister or his representative may give the person holding the Residency Permit and his family members a period not in excess of 90 days to leave the country from the day his Residency expired or renewal was denied. This period may be extended as required.

### **Article (37)**

The Residency Permit will be revoked in the following cases:

- 1- If it is proven that the applicant obtained the Residency Permit by submitting false documents.
- 2- If the continuation of the residency would imperil the safety or security of the state within the country or abroad, or harm the national economy, public health, or public morals.
- 3- If the purpose of the stay as stated on the Residency Permit is violated or expires, without receiving permission to that end from the Competent Authorities.

## **Chapter (8)**

### **Penalties**

### **Article (38)**

Without prejudice to any other law carrying a more severe penalty, it is punishable by incarceration for a period not in excess of three years and a fine not in excess of fifty-thousand (50,000) Riyals, or by either of those two penalties, for anyone who violates any of the provisions from Article (2) Paragraph (1); Article (3); Article (4) Paragraph (3); Article (11) Paragraph (2); Article (16) Paragraph (1); Article (23) Paragraph (1); Article (24) Paragraphs (1) and (2); Article (28) Paragraph (3); and Article (35) of this law.

The penalty for a recurring infraction is incarceration for a period no less than 30 days and not in excess of three years and a fine no less than twenty-thousand (20,000) Riyals and not in excess of one hundred-thousand (100,000) Riyals, or either of those two penalties.

### **Article (39)**

Without prejudice to any other law carrying a more severe penalty:

- 1- Anyone who violates the provisions of Article (8) Paragraph (3) of this law shall be subject to a fine not in excess of twenty-five-thousand (25,000) Riyals.
- 2- Anyone who violates the provisions of Article (19) Item (1) of this law shall be subject to a fine not in excess of fifty-thousand (50,000) Riyals.

#### **Article (40)**

Without prejudice to any other law carrying a more severe penalty:

- 1- Anyone who violates the provision of Article (6) shall be subject to a fine not in excess of twenty-thousand (20,000) Riyals.
- 2- Anyone who violates any of the provisions contained in Article (5) Paragraph (1); Article (8) Paragraphs (1) and (2); Article (10) Paragraph (1); Article (13) Paragraphs (1) and (3); or Article (15) of this law shall be subject to a fine not in excess of ten-thousand (10,000) Riyals

#### **Article (41)**

Extraction of a court ordered fine issued as a penalty for one of the crimes stipulated in this law shall not be halted.

### **Chapter (9)**

#### **Settlement**

#### **Article (42)**

The Minister or his representative may authorize a settlement for crimes specified in the Conciliation Table appended to this law prior to the issuance of a final court ruling in the criminal case, in exchange for the accused paying the sum associated with the crime as specified in the Table within the time period set by the Competent Authorities.

If the accused refuses the settlement or does not fulfill his part or the agreement, then criminal court case shall proceed.

#### **Article (43)**

Employees of the Competent Authorities shall oversee the settlement procedures for the crimes stipulated in this law. The settlement offer must be presented to the accused and official record made of its occurrence. The accused who agrees to the settlement must pay the sum specified in the Table appended to this law, and as such the accused forfeits his recourse to the criminal courts. He shall deposit the sum in the Ministry's accounts.

If settlement is reached, then the criminal case is dropped. Agreeing to the settlement does not nullify the required payment of fines.

#### **Article (44)**

Anyone accused of the crimes stipulated in this law is not permitted to leave the country before paying the sum specified in the Conciliation Table, or the issuance of a final court ruling of not-guilty in the suit, or completion of the sentence issued by the court, depending on the case. However the accused shall be permitted to leave the country if he pledges a security that covers the sum specified in the Conciliation Table or the court ordered fine issued against him.

As an exception to the preceding Paragraph, the Minister may order the revocation of the Residency Permit of the Foreign National accused of any crimes stipulated in this law and order his expulsion from the country if the sum does not cover that which is specified in the Conciliation Table, or if the courts sentenced him to incarceration or ordered him to pay a fine which he did not pay.

#### **Article (45)**

The Minister or his representative, in accordance with the general welfare or humane considerations, may pardon the accused and excuse him from paying the Conciliation sum associated with any crimes stipulated in this law, or reduce the sum as the Minister deems appropriate.

### **Chapter (10)**

#### **General Provisions**

#### **Article (46)**

Without prejudice to the provisions of International Agreements to which the state is a party, the provisions of this law do not apply to the following groups:

- 1- Foreign heads of state, their family members, and their associates.
- 2- Presidents and members of foreign diplomatic missions, consulates, or international bodies recognized by the state, their associates and administrators, their families and dependents, and any official delegations.
- 3- Pilots/Captains and their crew from civilian marine vessels or aircrafts from abroad who carry Passports or Travel Documents from the relevant authorities of their country after having received clearance to alight from the state.
- 4- Citizens of states that are party to the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- 5- Whosoever the Minister determines is deserving of exemption based on considerations of the principle of reciprocity, international courtesy, the general welfare, or humane considerations. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, by decree, regulates the issuance of Entry Visas, Residency Permits, and their exemption regarding the groups mentioned in Items (1) and (2) of this Article.

#### **Article (47)**

Without prejudice to any legally stipulated responsibilities, by decree the Minister or his representative may include the name of the Recruiter or the Foreign National who has violated the provisions of this

law on the list of banned individuals maintained by the Competent Authorities. This shall be done until the violator reaches a settlement or completes the sentence issued against him.

The inclusion on the aforementioned list of banned individuals shall preclude any or all requests submitted by the violator from consideration for the furtherance of the provisions of this law.

#### **Article (48)**

The Minister shall issue the implementing regulations and the necessary decrees in order to apply the provisions of this law. Until their issuance, official proceedings shall continue in accordance with the decrees and regulations currently in use that do not contradict the provisions of this law.

#### **Article (49)**

The referenced Law No. (4) of 2009 is repealed, as is every provision that violates the provisions of this law.

#### **Article (50)**

All Competent Authorities must apply this law in every aspect relevant to their work, and proceed in accordance with its provisions after one year has elapsed after its publication in an official newspaper.

**Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani**

**Emir of the State of Qatar**

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**Table**

**Settlement for some of the crimes stipulated in the law  
regulating the Entry, Exit, and Residency of Foreign Nationals**

<b>Article Number</b>	<b>Conciliation Amount</b>
Article (2) Paragraph (1); Article (3); Article (4) Paragraph (3); Article (8) Paragraph (3); Article (16) Paragraph (1); Article (19) Item (1); Article (23) Paragraph (1); Article (24) Paragraphs (1) and (2); Article (35)	(12,000) Riyal
Article (28) Paragraph (3)	(10,000) Riyal
Article (5) Paragraph (1); Article (15)	(2,000) Riyal
Article (6)	(5,000) Riyal
Article (10) Paragraph (1)	(10) Riyal for each day late, with a maximum limit of (20,000) Riyal
Article (11) Paragraph (2)	(10) Riyal for each day late, with a maximum limit of (12,000) Riyal
Article (8) Paragraph (1) and (2); Article (13) Paragraphs (1) and (3)	(10) Riyal for each day late, with a maximum limit of (20,000) Riyal