

Key Amendments to the RA Law “On Foreigners”

The amendments made to the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Foreigners” have substantially revised the legal framework governing the entry, residence, granting of residence status, and employment of foreigners. The key amendments introduced to the Law are presented below:

1. Elimination of the concept of “permit”

Under the new version of the Law, the concept of “permit” (or “entry permit”) has been removed. Instead, the Law exclusively uses the term “entry visa”.

2. Elimination of the special residence status

The amendments have eliminated the **special residence status** as a separate type of residence status. Henceforth, the Law provides only for the residence statuses established under the new legal framework.

3. Introduction of the concept of “legal residence right”

The Law introduces the concept of “**legal residence right**”. It includes temporary or permanent residence status, as well as statuses confirming legal residence in the Republic of Armenia provided for by the RA Law “On Refugees and Asylum”, international treaties, or other legal acts. This amendment aims to clarify the legal grounds for lawful residence and ensure a unified approach.

4. Introduction of the quota mechanism

The new regulations introduce the concept of a “**quota**”. It is defined as the maximum number of residence statuses approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia for each year, based on the type of residence status, quantity, and grounds for granting such status. This mechanism enables the state to plan and manage migration flows at the governmental level.

5. Clarification of the legal regulation of the work entry visa

The Law now provides a detailed definition of the concept of a **work entry visa** and specifies the purposes of its application. It is issued for the purpose of carrying out employment activities in the Republic of Armenia, including:

- engaging in short-term employment activities;
- submitting an application from the territory of the Republic of Armenia for obtaining a temporary residence status based on a work permit;
- or obtaining a document certifying the temporary residence status granted on the basis of a work permit.

A work entry visa may be issued as a single-entry or multiple-entry visa, grants the right to stay in the

territory of the Republic of Armenia for up to **120 days**, and is not subject to extension.

At the same time, an important new provision is that a **work entry visa may be issued to the same foreigner only once during the same calendar year**.

6. One foreigner – one legal residence status

The new regulations expressly establish that a foreigner may have **only one status confirming legal residence** in the territory of the Republic of Armenia. This provision excludes the possibility of simultaneously holding multiple residence statuses.

7. Digitalization of the residence status application procedure

A significant change has also been introduced in the procedure for granting residence status. Previously, applications could be submitted either electronically or in paper form in person. Under the new regulations, **applications for obtaining residence status shall be submitted exclusively through the online system**. This amendment aims to ensure the digitalization of administrative procedures and improve the efficiency of the process.

8. Restriction of the scope of family members

The amendments revised the scope of family members of a citizen of the Republic of Armenia or a person holding a residence status, on the basis of which a residence status may be obtained. Under the new regulations, only the following persons are considered family members:

- spouse
- parent
- child

Thus, the previously broader scope of family members has been narrowed.

9. Regulation of the term of temporary residence status

The Law provides that temporary residence status shall be granted for **a period of one year**. At the same time, the previous provisions regarding the extension of temporary residence status have been removed from the Law, indicating a change in the legal approach to this process.

10. New requirement for providing biometric data

The new wording of Article 17 of the Law introduces changes to the procedure for obtaining a residence card. Henceforth, when receiving a residence card, a foreigner is required to provide **fingerprints** and an **electronic signature**.

11. Obligation to notify about prolonged absence

The new regulations establish an additional obligation for foreigners holding residence status. If a foreigner is absent from the Republic of Armenia for **183 days or more** during the validity period of their residence status, they shall notify the Migration Service of the Republic of Armenia thereof **within 10 days** after the completion of the 183-day period.

12. New restriction related to employment relations

A new ground for refusal to conclude an employment contract or a service provision agreement has been introduced into the Law. In particular, refusal to grant a work permit or to proceed with the relevant process may be based on the circumstance that the employer with whom the foreigner intends to work has previously violated the legal requirements regarding the employment of foreigners.