

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Immigration Law

Adopted by Decision No. 68 of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly
on January 19, 1996

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on January 28, 1999

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Chapter 1: Basics of Immigration Law

Article 1 (Mission of Immigration Law)

The Immigration Law of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea aims to strengthen the immigration system to ensure national security and facilitate the convenience of citizens entering and leaving the country, as well as foreigners entering, staying, residing, and traveling within the country.

Article 2 (Definitions)

The definitions of terms in this law are as follows:

1. A citizen refers to a person who holds the nationality of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.
2. A foreigner refers to a person who holds the nationality of another country.
3. An immigration certificate refers to a passport or a certificate that replaces it, such as a visa.
4. A border crossing point refers to announced border bridges, border railway stations, trade ports, international airports, and designated areas where entry and exit are possible.
5. Means of transportation refers to automobiles, trains, ships, airplanes, etc., that pass through our country's borders.

6. Stay refers to a foreigner staying in our country's territory for a certain period.
7. Residence refers to a foreigner registering residence and living in our country's territory.
8. Travel refers to a foreigner moving from one area to another within our country's territory, outside the place of stay or residence.

Article 3 (Establishment of Border Crossing Points and Inspection Agencies)

Entry and exit shall be through border crossing points or other points approved by the state. The state shall establish border crossing points and inspection agencies in accordance with the needs of developing foreign relations.

Article 4 (Obligation to Carry Immigration Certificates)

Citizens and foreigners entering, staying, residing, or traveling within our country's territory are obligated to carry the prescribed immigration certificates.

Article 5 (Parties to Immigration Procedures)

Procedures related to departure, entry, stay, residence, and travel shall be conducted by the individual. However, high-level delegations from the party, state, military, government, and parliament, and other specified personnel, those staying or traveling for official duties, minors or disabled persons requiring assistance from guardians, and seriously ill persons may have procedures conducted by guides or guardians.

Article 6 (Immigration Fees)

The state shall impose prescribed fees related to immigration on citizens and foreigners. However, visa fees for foreigners shall be imposed based on the principle of reciprocity.

Article 7 (Agencies Responsible for Immigration Affairs)

Immigration affairs shall be handled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and immigration agencies. Our country's diplomatic and consular representative agencies stationed in other countries and relevant agencies shall also handle immigration affairs.

Article 8 (Exchange and Cooperation in the Field of Immigration Affairs)

The state shall develop exchange and cooperation in the field of immigration affairs with other countries based on the principle of reciprocity.

Article 9 (Order of Entry in Special Economic Zones)

The order of entry in special economic zones shall be governed by relevant regulations.

Chapter 2: Entry and Exit of Citizens

Article 10 (Reasons for Citizens' Entry and Exit)

Citizens may enter and exit the country for official or personal purposes. Citizens intending to enter or exit the country must obtain an immigration certificate through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, immigration agencies, or relevant institutions.

Article 11 (Application for Passport and Visa Issuance)

Applications for passports and visas for citizens entering or exiting the country for official purposes shall be made by the dispatching institution to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Applications for passports and visas for citizens entering or exiting the country for personal purposes shall be made by the individual to the immigration agency at their place of residence.

Article 12 (Validity of Border Area Immigration Certificates)

Citizens holding border area immigration certificates issued by immigration agencies or relevant institutions may enter and exit the border areas of the respective country. Border area immigration certificates are only valid in the designated border areas.

Article 13 (Application for Issuance of Border Area Immigration Certificates)

Applications for border area immigration certificates for citizens entering or exiting the country for official purposes shall be made by the dispatching institution to the immigration agency or relevant institution. Applications for border area immigration certificates for citizens entering or exiting the country for personal purposes shall be made by the individual to the immigration agency at their place of residence.

Article 14 (Reissuance of Border Area Immigration Certificates)

Citizens must obtain a new border area immigration certificate if the validity period of the existing certificate has expired.

Article 15 (Entry and Exit with Seaman's Certificate)

Citizens holding a seaman's certificate issued by the central maritime supervisory agency may enter and exit through trade ports. Citizens holding a seaman's certificate must obtain a visa if they intend to exit through border crossing points other than trade ports.

Article 16 (Entry and Exit of Overseas Citizens)

Citizens residing in other countries must obtain a passport or visa through our country's diplomatic and consular representative agencies or relevant institutions and enter and exit the country.

Article 17 (Reissuance of Immigration Certificates)

Citizens who have damaged or lost their immigration certificates must obtain a new one.

Article 18 (Citizens Who Cannot Exit)

Citizens without an immigration certificate, with an invalid immigration certificate, or deemed by legal institutions as unable to exit the country cannot exit.

Chapter 3: Entry and Exit of Foreigners

Article 19 (Entry and Exit of Foreigners with Visas)

Foreigners must obtain a visa through our country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, immigration agencies, or our country's diplomatic and consular representative agencies stationed in other countries and enter and exit the country. If there is an agreement between our country and the respective country to implement a visa-free system, foreigners may enter and exit with a passport or a certificate that replaces it without a visa.

Article 20 (Application for Visa Issuance for Foreigners)

Foreigners intending to enter the country must apply for a visa at our country's diplomatic and consular representative agencies stationed in the respective country. In certain cases, the inviting institution in our country or the respective country's diplomatic and consular representative agencies or international organization representative agencies stationed in our country may be requested to apply for a visa. Foreigners intending to enter for personal purposes must attach a travel consent document from the immigration agency to the visa application documents.

Article 21 (Entry and Exit of Foreigners with Seaman's Certificate)

Foreigners holding a seaman's certificate may enter and exit through designated trade ports without a visa. Foreigners holding a seaman's certificate intending to enter and exit using means of transportation such as airplanes, trains, or automobiles must follow the prescribed procedures.

Article 22 (Entry and Exit of Foreigners with Border Area Immigration Certificates)

Foreigners holding border area immigration certificates must enter through the designated border areas. Foreigners who have entered the border area and intend to travel to other regions of our country must obtain approval from the relevant immigration agency.

Foreigners residing in the border area may enter and exit for personal purposes with a border area immigration certificate issued by the relevant immigration agency.

Article 23 (Entry and Exit of Foreigners with Tourist Certificates)

Foreigners holding our country's tourist certificates may enter and exit without a visa.

Article 24 (Foreigners Who Cannot Enter)

The following foreigners cannot enter the country:

1. Those who have infringed on our country's sovereignty
2. International terrorists
3. Drug addicts, mentally ill persons
4. Persons with infectious diseases or coming from areas where infectious diseases have occurred
5. Those holding forged or severely damaged certificates that cannot be verified
6. Those prohibited from entering by the relevant institutions

Article 25 (Extension of Validity Period of Foreigners' Immigration Certificates)

Foreigners must enter and exit within the validity period of the relevant immigration certificate. If the validity period has expired, it must be extended.

Article 26 (Deletion of Foreigners' Stay and Residence Registration)

Foreigners returning to their home country after staying or residing must delete their stay or residence registration at the relevant immigration agency. In this case, they must submit their long-term stay certificate or residence registration certificate.

Article 27 (Entry and Exit of Long-term Stay or Resident Foreigners)

Foreigners intending to exit for a certain period while staying or residing long-term must submit their long-term stay certificate or residence registration certificate to the relevant immigration agency. The long-term stay certificate or residence registration certificate submitted to the immigration agency will be returned upon re-entry.

Article 28 (Use of Automobiles by Foreigners for Entry and Exit)

Foreigners staying long-term in our country may enter and exit using approved automobiles. In this case, they must obtain a border crossing certificate for the automobile.

Article 29 (Foreigners Who Cannot Exit)

Foreigners without an immigration certificate, with an invalid immigration certificate, or deemed by legal institutions as unable to exit the country cannot exit.

Chapter 4: Passage Inspection

Article 30 (Obligation to Undergo Passage Inspection)

Citizens, foreigners, and means of transportation entering and exiting the country must undergo passage inspection at border crossing points without exception. Entry and exit are not allowed without undergoing passage inspection.

Article 31 (Duties and Authority of Passage Inspection Agencies)

The duties and authority of passage inspection agencies are as follows:

1. Inspect the immigration certificates of citizens and foreigners entering and exiting the country.
2. Conduct passage inspections on means of transportation entering and exiting the country.
3. Ensure the safety and maintain order at border crossing points.
4. Conduct safety inspections on citizens and foreigners entering and exiting the country using equipment.
5. Clarify and handle prohibited items, confidential documents, and materials.
6. Request necessary documents and materials for passage inspection from relevant institutions or citizens and foreigners entering and exiting the country.
7. Detain, investigate, and search individuals and means of transportation suspected of violating border crossing order or endangering national security.
8. Suspend the passage of citizens, foreigners, and means of transportation violating border crossing order.
9. Perform other tasks entrusted by the state.

Article 32 (Inspection and Confirmation of Immigration Certificates)

Citizens and foreigners entering and exiting the country must present their immigration certificates and entry/exit procedure forms to the passage inspection agency at the relevant border crossing point and receive an entry or exit confirmation stamp on the confirmation section of the immigration certificate after inspection.

Article 33 (Compliance with Border Crossing Points)

Citizens and foreigners must enter and exit through the border crossing points specified in their immigration certificates. In unavoidable circumstances, if they need to enter or exit through a non-border crossing point or undergo passage inspection outside the border crossing point, they must notify the relevant passage inspection agency.

Article 34 (Prohibited Items)

Citizens and foreigners entering and exiting the country must not carry prohibited items or confidential documents and materials that may endanger national security and social order.

Article 35 (Notification of Entry and Exit Information for Means of Transportation)

Transportation agencies and relevant institutions must notify the relevant passage inspection agency of the departure and arrival times, locations, and passenger and cargo information of trains, airplanes, and ships entering and exiting the country before their arrival or departure. The person in charge of the airplane or ship, or their representative, must submit the crew list and passenger list to the passage inspection agency immediately upon arrival at or before departure from the international airport or trade port.

Article 36 (Obligations of the Person in Charge of Means of Transportation)

The person in charge of the means of transportation must not allow people to board or disembark or load or unload cargo without the approval of the passage inspection agency until the departure inspection is completed and before the entry inspection is conducted. They must not carry individuals prohibited from entering or exiting the country and must immediately notify the passage inspection agency if they become aware that such individuals have boarded the means of transportation.

Article 37 (Inspection of Automobile Passage Certificates and Compliance with Border Crossing Times)

Citizens and foreigners driving their own automobiles across the border must have their automobile border crossing certificates issued by the immigration agency or relevant institutions of other countries inspected. Citizens and foreigners crossing the border bridge by automobile or on foot must comply with the designated border crossing times.

Article 38 (Obligation of Other Countries' Ships to Undergo Passage Inspection and Navigation Order)

Ships from other countries must undergo passage inspection by the passage inspection agency at the pilot waiting point before entering the trade port. Ships from other countries must not deviate from the designated route while navigating in our country's waters.

Article 39 (Disembarkation of Other Countries' Seamen) Seamen of ships from other countries entering the trade port must apply for disembarkation to the passage inspection agency and obtain approval from the captain or their representative. Seamen who have received disembarkation approval must return to their ship within the designated time.

Article 40 (Order of Boarding and Docking)

Citizens and foreigners must present their immigration certificates or relevant approval documents to the passage inspection agency when boarding or disembarking from ships. When ships from other countries and our country dock together, they must submit docking or boarding application documents to the passage inspection agency and obtain approval.

Article 41 (Responsibility for Returning Prohibited Individuals)

The person in charge of the means of transportation or the institution to which the means of transportation belongs must bear the responsibility and costs for returning individuals prohibited from entering the country who have been brought into our country.

Chapter 5: Stay, Residence, and Travel of Foreigners

Article 42 (Registration and Procedures Related to Foreigners' Stay, Residence, and Travel)

Foreigners may stay, reside, and travel within our country's territory according to their entry purpose. In this case, they must complete the relevant registration and procedures in a timely manner.

Article 43 (Classification of Foreigners' Stay)

Foreigners' stay is classified into short-term stay and long-term stay. Short-term stay is up to 90 days from the date of entry, and long-term stay is 91 days or more.

Article 44 (Registration of Foreigners' Stay)

Foreigners entering our country's territory must register their stay within 48 hours of arriving at their destination and receive confirmation on their passport or separately issued visa. Foreigners who have entered without a visa due to unavoidable circumstances must register their stay after obtaining a visa.

Article 45 (Registration of Foreigners' Intermediate Stay)

Foreigners who stay for more than 48 hours in a region other than their destination due to unavoidable circumstances must register their intermediate stay with the relevant immigration agency in that region.

Article 46 (Jurisdiction of Foreigners' Stay Registration)

The stay registration of foreigners entering for official purposes is handled by the central immigration agency or the relevant provincial (directly governed city) immigration agency. In certain cases, the immigration agencies of the relevant border area cities (districts) and counties may also handle it. The stay registration of foreigners entering for personal purposes is handled by the immigration agencies of the relevant cities (districts) and counties.

Article 47 (Issuance of Long-term Stay Certificates for Foreigners)

Foreigners intending to stay long-term must obtain a long-term stay certificate according to their stay purpose. In this case, they must follow the prescribed procedures.

Article 48 (Foreigners Not Required to Register Stay)

The following foreigners are not required to register their stay:

1. Members of high-level delegations such as parliamentary and government delegations
2. Members of diplomatic and consular representative agencies of other countries and international organization representative agencies stationed in our country
3. Foreigners entering and exiting on the same day without staying overnight
4. Seamen, crew members, and flight attendants of ships, airplanes, and trains entering trade ports, airports, and railway stations
5. Foreigners specified by the relevant institutions

Article 49 (Registration of Stay for Seamen, Crew Members, and Flight Attendants of Other Countries)

Seamen, crew members, and flight attendants of ships, airplanes, and trains from other countries who stay for more than 48 hours in regions other than trade ports, airports, and railway stations must register their stay with the relevant immigration agency.

Article 50 (Change of Long-term Stay Registration and Reissuance of Long-term Stay Certificates for Foreigners)

Foreigners staying long-term must register changes with the relevant immigration agency within 7 days if there are changes in the content of their long-term stay registration and obtain a new long-term stay certificate. Foreigners must also obtain a new long-term stay certificate if they lose or severely damage the existing one.

Article 51 (Issuance and Validity Period of Foreigners' Residence Registration Certificates and Birth Certificates)

Foreigners residing in our country must register their residence with the relevant immigration agency and obtain a residence registration certificate. In this case, minors are issued a birth certificate. The validity period of foreigners' residence registration certificates and birth certificates is 3 years.

Article 52 (Procedures for Moving Residence)

Foreigners intending to move their residence must register their new residence with the immigration agency of the new region within 25 days of registering their departure.

Article 53 (Change of Residence Registration and Reissuance of Residence Registration Certificates and Birth Certificates for Foreigners)

Foreigners residing in our country must register changes with the relevant immigration agency within 14 days if there are changes in the content of their residence registration due to birth, death, marriage, divorce, or job changes and obtain new residence registration certificates and birth certificates. Foreigners must also obtain new residence registration certificates and birth certificates if the validity period has expired or if they lose or severely damage the existing ones.

Article 54 (Travel of Foreigners)

Foreigners residing in our country, foreigners staying for personal purposes, and foreigners holding border area immigration certificates must travel with a travel certificate issued by the relevant immigration agency. Foreigners arriving at their destination must receive arrival and departure confirmation from the immigration agency of the relevant region on their travel certificate. Members of diplomatic and consular representative agencies of other countries and international organization representative agencies stationed in our country, and other foreigners staying for official purposes, may travel without obtaining a travel certificate.

Chapter 6: Sanctions

Article 55 (Sanctions for Citizens)

Citizens who violate this law may be fined or prohibited from exiting the country. In severe cases, they may be held criminally responsible.

Article 56 (Sanctions for Foreigners) Foreigners who violate this law may be fined, prohibited from entering or exiting the country, or have their stay or travel approval canceled. In severe cases, they may be expelled from our country's territory or held criminally responsible.

Article 57 (Appeals Related to Sanctions)

Appeals related to sanctions may be made to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the relevant immigration agency or legal institution.