

BI extends visa-free entry privilege of aliens from 151 countries to 30 days

23 July 2013

Starting next month, nationals from 151 countries may now enter the country without a visa and stay here for 30 days, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) announced today.

BI OIC Commissioner Siegfred Mison disclosed that the visa-free entry privilege of the said nationals was extended from 21 days to 30 days as part of government efforts to spur foreign tourist arrivals in the country.

Mison said the new visa policy was adopted pursuant to a circular from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) issued last July 1.

He added that pursuant to existing bilateral agreements, nationals from Israel and Brazil shall continue to be admitted for an initial stay of 59 days.

The BI chief, however, stressed that foreigners can only avail of the visa-free privilege if their passports are valid for at least six months beyond their contemplated period of stay.

“They should also present return tickets to their country of origin or onward tickets to their next country of destination,” he said.

It was gathered that the bureau has finished updating its computerized travel control systems in the different ports of entry to implement the new visa scheme.

Earlier, the government announced that it was extending the visa-free entry privileges of foreign visitors to spur tourist arrivals in the country.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) said it aims to attract at least 10 million foreign tourists by 2016.

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONG-STAY VISITOR VISA
EXTENSION (LSVVE)**

MEMORANDUM ORDER No. RADJR-2013-007

Pursuant to Memorandum Circular No. RADJR-2013-002, the following guidelines are hereby issued in connection with the implementation of the LSVVE:

1. Applicability – The LSVVE shall apply to all nationals.
2. Extension of Tourist Visa – Subsequent LSVVEs may be applied for during the last thirty (30) days of the previously issued LSVVE, or upon the expiry of a regular visa extension.
3. Restriction on Extensions – The approval of the Commissioner shall be required for visa extensions when the number of months applied for would exceed the 16-month limit.

Foreign nationals with an accumulated total stay near the 16-month cap from the date of their latest arrival should be informed of the preceding restriction should they apply for additional visa extensions.

No LSVVE shall be issued to visa-required nationals whose stay exceeds twenty-four (24) months and thirty-six (36) months for non visa-required nationals.

4. Payment and Fees – An additional One Hundred Pesos (Php 100.00) as cost of the sticker visa shall accrue for the account of the Bureau of Treasury.

Applicable visa extension fees shall still be collected based on the schedule of fees for the entire six (6) month period.

5. Implementation – The initial implementation on the LSVVE shall be limited to the BI Main Office in Intramuros, Manila until further notice.

(Sgd.) **RICARDO A. DAVID, JR.**
Commissioner