



DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES (DIAP) CIRCULAR NO 08 OF 2026

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa presents its compliments to Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations accredited to the Republic of South Africa and as the honour to refer to Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges (DIAP) Circular No. 4 of 2025 dated 24 February 2025 informing Foreign Missions of administrative clarifications regarding the definition of dependent family members of accredited diplomatic, consular and international organisations officials.

In terms of the Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, No 37 of 2001, the following is stated:

A family member means:

- the spouse
- any dependent child under the age of 18 years of age; and
- any other dependent family member, officially recognised as such by the sending State or the United Nations, a specialised agency, or an international organisation
- the life partner, officially recognised as such by the sending State or the United Nations, a specialised agency of an international organisation

The Department wishes to again inform of the following administrative arrangements:

- Any dependent child over the age of 18 years up to the age of 23 will be accredited provided that the dependent child is residing full time with the parent(s) in South Africa and studying at a South African educational institution, or studying online while resident in South Africa, on condition that proof of study has been submitted. In case of online study, the educational institution will have to confirm that it is online study. The dependent child will only be registered and issued with a Temporary Residence Visa (TRV) valid for 12 months or less depending on the dates of study, and a new application must be submitted for each academic year with proof of registration. Missions are therefore requested to submit under cover of a Note Verbale proof of study (a letter from the relevant tertiary institution confirming enrolment and the method of study).
- Foreign Missions are further informed that all children of diplomats above the age of 23 will be de-registered and their TRVs cancelled.
- If a dependent child over the age of 18 years is not studying, reasons why the child must be considered as a dependent, must be given. For example, due consideration for older dependent children will be given in cases where a qualified medical practitioner confirms disability or special needs (without disclosing the extent of the disability), which may qualify as financially dependent.

- The Department wishes to further clarify that a dependent child may not perform remunerative work in the Republic. If a child wishes to work, they must apply for a work permit through the relevant South African Mission.
- Kindly note that only dependent parents and parents-in-law will qualify to be registered based on a letter of recognition by the sending State; dependent parents and parents-in-law may not perform remunerative work in the Republic. If they wish to work, they must apply for a work permit through the relevant South African Mission; Dependant parents and parents-in-law will not be conferred with any immunities or privileges but a TRV will be issued.
- Only immediate family members, within the first step of kinship, residing full time in the Republic with the diplomat will be registered and accredited. No other family members , e.g. uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, cousins, brothers, sisters, etc. will be registered and accredited. Other family members must apply for visas at the relevant South African Mission. It should be noted that a visa status may not be amended within South Africa.
- Upon accreditation of qualifying family members, the required Temporary Residence Visa will be issued by DIRCO;
- No diplomatic ID cards will be issued to dependent parents.
- Diplomatic ID cards are only issued to spouses, registered life partners and registered dependent children from the age of 16 up to the age of 23 years, provided they are studying full time and on condition that proof of enrolment at a learning institution can be provided. Provisional registration alone does not constitute proof of enrolment.
- No diplomatic ID cards will be issued to spouses / life partners of international organisations, except spouses / life partners of senior officials on levels P5, D1 and D2.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa avails itself of the opportunity to renew to Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations accredited to the Republic of South Africa the assurance of its highest consideration.



PRETORIA
20 February 2026

**Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations
accredited to the Republic of South Africa
PRETORIA**