



REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLYING FOR A VISA / WAIVER LETTER FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC OR OFFICIAL PASSPORT HOLDER

1. OFFICIAL REQUESTS

- 1.1 All applications for visa facilitation through a Note Verbale and / or the issuing of a Visa Waiver letter must be done under cover of an official letter / memo signed by a Senior Manager indicating the full details of the official visit, place of assignment or visit, travel dates, the various countries travelling through (transit) and travelling to, the reasons for the travel (e.g. giving the details of what conference will be attended) and including the full passport details and designation of the applicant.

- 1.2 Requests to be sent to:

dipnotes_officialtravel@dirco.gov.za

DIAP is responsible for all Notes Verbales / Visa Waiver letters for DIRCO, national, provincial and local government, and all other government entities.

State Visits is responsible for all Notes Verbales and Visa Waiver letters for Presidential visits only.

- 1.3 A **Note Verbale** is issued if a visa is required. A **To Whom It May Concern** letter is issued if there is a visa exemption and thus no visa is required.
- 1,4 The **Visa Requirements List** is available on the DIRCO website - under Services, State Protocol - indicating the various visa agreements and visa exemptions.

2. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

2.1. DIRCO Officials

- Letter / memo signed by a Senior Manager giving full details and reasons for the official visit
- Visa application form and current photos where relevant
- Online application and proof of application where relevant
- Original diplomatic passport

The Note Verbale, diplomatic passport, and relevant supporting documents will be taken to the Foreign Mission by the DIAP driver and the diplomatic passport collected again by the DIAP driver

2.2 Officials going on Posting, including family members

- Transfer Directive and Household Form
- Visa application form and current photos where relevant
- Online application and proof of application where relevant
- Original diplomatic passport

The Note Verbale, diplomatic passport, and relevant supporting documents will be taken to the Foreign Mission by the DIAP driver and the diplomatic passport collected again by the DIAP driver

2.3 Partner Departments / Other

- Letter signed by a Senior Manager providing full details of the official visit
- Copies of the diplomatic / official passport or full details of the passport to be included in the letter
- Partner Departments will take the Note Verbale, diplomatic / official passport and supporting documents to the Foreign Missions themselves
- There must be adherence to the **Guidelines and Measures for the Enhanced Coordination of South Africa's International Engagements**

NB:

South African diplomatic and official passports may only be used for official purposes.

It is only officials and their dependents on posting who are allowed to use diplomatic passports for holiday purposes when travelling with the diplomat. For visa applications whilst on posting, the Corporate Services section is responsible for doing the Notes Verbales including for holiday purposes.

DIRCO (DIAP) is only responsible for facilitating visas for South African diplomatic and official passport holders.

In the case of postings however, DIAP will also arrange visas for the officially recognised spouse / life partner / children who are travelling on foreign passports as per diplomatic practice.

Visas must be applied for timeously and not at the last minute as there can be no guarantee that these requests will be processed in time. It requires planning and a good lead time to apply for visas within a reasonable timeframe. No plane tickets should be purchased until such time a visa has been issued as this can result in fruitless and wasteful expenditure. Short notice applications should be avoided as visas cannot be issued on demand.

Routine queries to be sent to:

bapelam@dirco.gov.za
mketon@dirco.gov.za
mankhoe@dirco.gov.za
segolelai@dirco.gov.za

Policy queries to:

dejongl@dirco.gov.za, 0674155555 and septemberm@dirco.gov.za

**Issued by the Directorate: Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges (DIAP)
on 14 August 2026**