



Free Trade Zone - Kuwait

Kuwait possesses a distinguished strategic location as it sits in the North West corner of the Arabian Gulf. From the west, it is bordered by a vast desert and from the east it is bordered by the Arabian coast. Since that Kuwait Bay is considered an ideal seaport in terms of its nature and geography, the people who Kuwait have been filled with enthusiasm to communicate and trade with nations of the world. This also makes Kuwait as a link between trading nation such as India, southern Arabian Peninsula and people living in the deserts. Therefore, Kuwait has emerged and thrived as a marine trading nation in spite of its scarce natural resources before the discovery of oil in its land in 1930s.

Shuwaikh Port

ShuwaikhPort is the headquarters of the Free Trade Zone – Kuwait and is owned by Kuwait Ports Authority. ShuwaikhPort is considered the main commercial port in the country. It has 21 berths of which 14 berths with 10 meters depth (Berth No. 1 to 14) and four berths with 8.5 meters depth which is berths No. 18-21 and three berths with 6.7 meters depth (Berths No. 15, 16 and 17). Total length of the berths is 4055 meters. Depth in the main basin of the port range from 6.7 meters, 8.5 meters to 10 meters. The EastBasin has a depth of 3 meters and the WestBasin has a depth of 3.35 meters and the NorthBasin has a depth of 6.7 meters. Inside the North Basin 10 small piers are located to berth Tugs, Pilot Boats and other Port Service Crafts. Total Piers length is 1190 meters.

Free Trade Zone – Kuwait

The National Real Estate Company (NREC) was awarded the contract of Free Trade Zone – Kuwait in 1997 by virtue of law No. 26 of 1995 regarding free trade zones.

The official inauguration date of the Free Trade Zone – Kuwait is 22nd of Nov, 1999

Skip barriers ... work without restrictions

- Free tax on all types of income including corporate and individual income.
- Full freedom of money and profit transfer without submission to any foreign currency exchange restrictions.
- Encouraging freedom of ownership (100%) by foreign companies.
- Activating and implementing flexible policies for free trade.

Privileges of investment in the Free Trade Zone – Kuwait

- Shuwaikh Port where the Free Trade Zone – Kuwait is located is the nearest seaport to Kuwait International Airport.
- The nearest port to the capital (location of the Free Trade Zone within the capital of Kuwait).
- The nearest port to Iran
- Under the management of the private sector represented by the National Real Estate Company SAK.
- Excellent land, sea and air transport systems.

Licenses of Free Trade Zone – Kuwait

The Free Trade Zone – Kuwait offers various types of licenses which are suitable to the investors' requirements and activities and in accordance with the list of activities approved by the supervising body:

- Commercial license (e.g. import, export)
- Service license (e.g. computer and internet services, provisions, transport, warehousing, economic and administrative services, engineering services etc.)
- Industrial license (filling and packing, repacking, assembling, etc.).

Services of the Free Trade Zone – Kuwait

Prefabricated Units

- Readymade warehouses (KD 2 per square meters per month)
- Office units (KD 5 per square meters per month)

Open areas

- Open areas which give the investor an opportunity to build according to its needs and under the supervision of the Free Trade Zone – Kuwait (fils 600 per square meter per month).

Area of Free Trade Zone – Kuwait and phases

Phase	Area (sq. m)
First Phase	735058.36
Second Phase – First Section	356835.38
Second Phase – Second Section	406482.15
Third Phase	458599.87
Total area of the free zone	1956975.76

Some discrepancies between first and second phases in Free Trade Zone – Kuwait

First Phase	Second Phase
Fenced area	Open area
Non customs area	Customs area
Entrance through gate	Easy access from and to the area
Industrial activity allowed	Industrial activity not allowed
Allocated area for warehousing	Warehousing not allowed

Departments of Free Trade Zone – Kuwait

The administration of the Free Trade Zone is represented by several departments that facilitate the matters of investors in the Free Trade Zone and their dealings with government ministries and the Zone itself. These departments include Department of Government Relations, Department of Investors Relations, Department of Auditing and Follow up, Department of Maintenance and Technical Services, Finance Department, Personnel Department and Legal Department.

Department of Government Relations

The Department of Government Relations is considered one of the important departments that belong to the Department of the Free Trade Zone – one of the projects of the National Real Estate Company. The Department of Government Relations achieves all required transactions with government bodies in addition to coordinating meetings with all these bodies. Further, one of the tasks of the Department of Government Relations is to identify all data, information and procedures required by the government bodies and relay them to the company. Furthermore, the department monitors companies' managements and implementation of all conditions and duties that should be observed including monitoring of contractual commitments between the company and the government bodies.

The Department also works out and solves all problems and violations committed by the company against the government bodies. This Department is considered the official representative of the company before government bodies in order to facilitate the procedures and increase incentives to these bodies.

Department of Maintenance and Technical Services

Undoubtedly, the Department of Maintenance and Technical Services is one of the important departments at the National Real Estate Company including the Free Trade Zone. This importance is obvious through the technical support provided by this department to the company's installations in terms of execution and follow up of projects and carrying out emergency, regular and preventive maintenance in addition to the provision of the best services to clients and investors.

The nature of this department particularly the various tasks carried out by it has imposed on it a different kind of cooperation with the remaining departments of the company. The department is considered a link with other departments. It plays a vital role in providing all types of various supports to all departments of the company. This grants the department a special characteristic when dealing with the remaining departments. It practically underpins the principles of cooperation and communication between all departments of the company thus it embodies such a base upon which the company stands. This has become the work pattern of this department.

Whereas the "provision of the best service" and "customer satisfaction" are considered the most important objectives the company aims to realize, the departments

vehemently works to achieve such specific objectives. The department further seeks to achieve other goals which it deems essential namely, realization of the maximum financial return and maintenance of this economic growth.

Personnel Department

The Department of Administrative Affairs undertakes all administrative and personnel work for NREC including the Department of the Free Trade Zone along with the affairs of HRD International Company and KuwaitMaastrichtBusinessSchool. Its scope of work also covers the procedures for employee appointment, termination, leaves, social security, life insurance and work casualties. The department also follows up the company affairs such as insurance of its properties and meets the company needs such as purchase of stationery, printing and advertisements.

One of the main tasks of the Personnel Department is to issue entry permits to the Free Trade Zone and to obtain approval from the Ministry of Interior to all company's employees and investors operating in the Free Trade Zone. The department also represents the master file of the company and its outgoing and incoming post to and from investors and non investors through dispatching the post to the all departments and investors.

Business Development Department

Business Development is developing the infrastructure investments of NREC with spin and grows of economics. Our mission is to identify business partners in the segment of Real Estate, Industrial and general services within the local and global market. We are aiming toward positive investment opportunities to achieve our vision successfully.

Department of Investors Relations

The Department of Investors Relations upgrades the level of customers' service and achieves a proportion of satisfaction over the Free Trade Zone. The most important task of the investors' relations is to manage the relations between the Free Trade Zone and its investors as it represents a link between investors and the departments of the Free Trade Zone. The department of investors' relations is divided into two sections:

- * Customer Service
- * Administrative Service

The tasks of the department generally include:

1. Managing contractual relations with investors and following up full implementation of the contract articles in terms of providing contracted service and collecting amounts payable by the investors.
2. Following up and coordinating all service requests submitted by investors at the concerned departments to ensure the execution of the service in full and on time.
3. Following up and coordinating investors' complaints with the concerned departments to ensure that they are solved in a suitable way and on time bearing in mind that this department is the one which shoulders the main responsibility for solving these problems.
4. Maintaining a master file for all that relate to investors including contracts, licenses, registration, services, correspondence, etc.
5. Following up and renewing licenses, registration and contracts of investors.
6. Developing services as needed.

7. Responsible for meeting the set targets related to income, expenses and net income generated from the rendered services.
8. Preparing monthly routine reports regarding the status of licenses and registration certificates.
9. Conducting routine visits to investors and preparing questionnaires to measure the level of provided service.
10. Managing the affairs of the investors' laborers through processing their transactions at the ministries and government departments.

Customer Service

1. The Customer Service employee is considered the link between the department and the investor. This employee carries out several tasks to facilitate the investors' transactions with the various departments of the Free Trade Zone.
2. Receiving investors requests regarding licenses in case of issuing license for the first time or license renewal. Receiving investors' communications whether through telephone, post or emails.
3. Receiving general requests and transferring them to concerned departments.
4. Receiving complaints and attempting to solve them in coordination with other departments.
5. Updating investors' files and providing copies of all correspondence between investors and the Department of the Free Trade Zone.
6. Preparing monthly routine reports regarding licenses to the department manager.
7. Preparing a weekly report about complaints and applied procedures for solving them.
8. Conducting routine visits to investors and making questionnaires to measure customers' satisfaction towards the provided services.
9. Preparing a routine report showing classification and evaluation of investors.
10. Receiving incoming post of the investors through the master registry, official letters and those of the department.

Route for provision of service at the Department of Customers Relations

1. The investor requests a service from the concerned employee at the department.
2. The employee takes the right action either through direct contact with the concerned department or asking the investor to fill in an application form for providing the service.
3. The investor signs the request then it is transferred to the concerned department in the Free Trade Zone.
4. The employee completes the procedures with the concerned departments.
5. The investor is familiarized with the completed procedures and notified of the finish date for executing his request.
6. After completing the execution of the request the investor is notified.
7. All forms and correspondences are maintained in the investor's file.

Administrative Services

1. Issuing work visa and residency
2. Procedures for issuing work permit
3. Procedures for stamping residency
4. Procedures for issuing civil ID card
5. Procedures for transferring the residency from Kuwait to the Free Trade Zone
6. Procedures for transferring the residency from the Free Trade Zone to Kuwait
7. Procedures for transferring the data from an old passport to a new passport.
8. Procedures for renewing residence.
9. Procedures for canceling residence.
10. Procedures for canceling visa request for persons who have not entered the country.
11. Procedures for canceling visa business visa for persons who have entered the country.
12. Procedures for loss of visa
13. Procedures for issuing a business visa in lieu of a destroyed one.
14. Procedures for refunding fees of business visa when a transaction is rejected by the concerned bodies (state ministries).
15. Issuing entry permit to the Free Trade Zone.

First: Issuing work visas and residency

The investor can submit a request to the Free Trade Zone to obtain a work visa for him and his employees in accordance with the following rules:

General conditions for issuing work visa (entry visa) to the Free Trade Zone.

1. Ensuring that the person submitting the request has an authorization from the investor by virtue of an official letter.
2. The legal age of the employee who is sought to enter the country should be 21 years for males and 30 years for females.
3. The requested nationality must be allowed by the Ministry of Interior.

Procedures for entry visa for work in the private sector (new):

1. Required documents by the investor:
 - 1) Filling in a visa application form by the investor or his representative and signing an acknowledgement and an undertaking.
 - 2) Copy of the passport clearly showing the following data:
 - a. Full name (in Arabic and English)
 - b. Passport No.
 - c. Date and place of birth
 - d. Date of issue and expiry of the passport
 - e. The passport should be valid for 6 months at least.
 - 3) The prescribed fees for issuing the visa must be paid to the accounts officer and the receipt must be maintained.

2. Documents required by the Department of the Free Trade Zone for issuance of work permit and work visa (No Rejection):
 - a) Issuing work permit
 - a. Filling in the application form of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor to issue the permit
 - b. Clear copy of the passport
 - c. Copy of authorized signature of the authorized signatory for the Free Trade Zone.
 - b) Issuing work visa (no rejection):
 - a. Filling in forms of the Interior Ministry for issuance of visa (three copies).
 - b. Original work permit issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
 - c. Clear copy of the passport.
 - d. Copy of the authorized signature for the authorized signatory for the Free Trade Zone.
 - c) Procedures by the investor after issuance of visa:
 The investor sends the original visa to the concerned person. Upon receipt of the visa by the concerned person, he/she must complete the following procedures:
 - Conducting medical exams in his/her country
 - Stamping and attesting the visa by the Kuwait embassy in his country to grant him entry permit to Kuwait.

Second: Fees for issuing work and residency visa

1. Fee for entry visa for work in private sector (new):
 - a. KD 100 fee for work visa per year including the following:
 - typing all forms of the visa and residency
 - undergoing medical test
 - Giving fingerprint
 - issuing the residency
 - issuing civil ID card

Third: period for issuance of work visa

The period required for issuing the visa is 15 work days at the ministry and investor is given a waiting period of 21 days at maximum until the visa is issued.

Fourth: Medical Test Procedures

Required documents for medical test:

1. Original visa and copy of it
2. Original passport and copy of it
3. Authorized signature of the Free Trade Zone
4. Copy of the civil ID card for the authorized signatory of the Free Trade Zone
5. No. 8 personal photos
6. Typing the form of the medical test

Procedures for Medical Test

1. The person who needs to undergo the test must attend to the Department of the Free Trade Zone.
2. Visiting at the BordersPort Health
3. Visiting the chest hospital

The results should appear within one week.

Fifth: fingerprint procedures

Required documents for fingerprints

1. Original visa and copy of it
2. Original passport and copy of it
3. Copy of work permit issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour
4. Authorized signature of the Free Trade Zone
5. Copy of the civil ID of the authorized signatory for the Free Trade Zone
6. No. 8 personal photos
7. Typing the form of the fingerprint

Procedures for taking fingerprints

The visa holder gives fingerprint at the Criminal Department and he must submit the above mentioned documents. The result of the fingerprint appears after 10 days from the date of giving the fingerprint.

Sixth: Procedures for issuance of work permit

The free trade zone issues work permit Required documents for issuance of work permit

1. Original visa and copy of it
2. Original passport and copy of it
3. No. 3 copies of work contract signed by the investor, employee and Department of the Free Trade Zone.
4. Authorized signature of the Free Trade Zone.
5. Typing the form for issuance of work permit

Note: Employees of Egyptian nationality must submit a work contract attested by the Manpower Ministry of the Arab Republic of Egypt and a copy of the contract.

The work permit is issued within maximum two days unless the ministries cause a delay.

Seventh: Procedures for stamping the residency

Required documents for stamping residency for the first time:

1. Typing the form for the stamping the residency
2. Original works permit
3. Original visa
4. Result of medical test
5. Result of fingerprint
6. Health insurance
7. Original passport and copy of it
8. Copy of authorized signature of the authorized signatory of the Free Trade Zone.
9. No. 2 personal photos The residency is stamped within one day.

Eighth: Procedures for issuing civil ID card:

1. Documents required for issuing civil ID card (first time)
 1. Filling in the papers inside the envelope of the civil ID.
 2. Lease contract of the employee's house
 3. Copy of the passport and residency
 4. Original fingerprint document issued by the Criminal Evidence (only for first time)
 5. No. 4 personal photos.
 6. Copy of the authorized signature for the Free Trade Zone

Employees living with a relative or a friend must submit copy of the civil ID of the tenant owner of the lease contract in addition to a residence acknowledgement signed by the tenant.

2. Procedures for issuing civil ID card:

- The administrative service employee fills in the form.
- The form is signed by the manager of the department of administrative services
- The form is submitted to the Public Authority for Civil Information by the representative of the Free Trade Zone or by the civil ID card applicant.
- The fee for issuance of the civil ID card for first time is included with the fee for issuance of the work visa

Note: The application for the civil ID card should be submitted before one month from the date of stamping the residency on the passport otherwise the investor is subject to a cash fine.

3. Procedures for lost civil ID card

- The location of losing the card is reported to police station.
- A card form is filled in and a fine is paid.
- Copy of the passport + copy of the civil ID + police station letter + No. 2 personal photos.

Ninth: Procedures for transferring a residency from Kuwait to the Free Trade Zone

Documents required to transfer the residency by the investor

- Filling in the form No. 1 related to the Free Trade Zone.
- Signature of the former sponsor on form of assignment of the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- Copy of authorized signature of the former sponsor
- Original work permit of the employee from the former sponsor
- Original passport and copy of it.
- Original civil ID of the employee and copy of it
- Guarantee of three months salaries and health insurance
- The employee must have completed the legal term for transfer according to the regulations of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor which is one year for private sector and five years for government contracts or he should submit copy of university certificate attested by his country's embassy and Kuwait foreign ministry if he has not completed the stipulated period.

Procedures for transferring residency on the part of the Free Trade Zone

1. Form of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor signed by the former sponsor and the new sponsor (Free Trade Zone).
2. Typing No. 3 copies of work contract to be signed by the investor and the Free Trade Zone.
3. Issuing new work permit from the Ministry
4. Typing form for residency request
5. Securing health insurance
6. Issuing civil ID card

The Department of the Free Trade Zone issues a new work permit and stamps residency within maximum 10 working days.

Fee for residency transfer

- Transfer fee per one year is KD 40

Tenth: Procedures for transferring the residency from the Free Trade Zone to Kuwait

This procedure is restricted to employees whose residencies are not sponsored by the Free Trade Zone only.

Documents required by the investor

1. Final discharge and a quittance statement issued by the employee stating that he/she has received all his/her accruals and must be attested by the Ministry of Justice.
2. Filling in the application form.
3. Signature of the new sponsor on the application of the Ministry of Social Affairs.
4. The application is typed and signed by the former sponsor (Free Trade Zone)
5. The transaction and the original work permit are handed over to the investor to process the transfer from the Free Trade Zone.
6. The original civil ID card of the employee is kept with the Department of Free Trade Zone until copy of the new work permit is submitted.

Required fee to transfer the residency

- Transfer fee KD 40

Eleventh: Procedures for transfer of data

Documents required by the investor

1. Filling in a general request application form
2. Old passport + new passport
3. Copy of the civil ID of the employee
4. No. 2 personal photos

After signing the passport form and signing it by the manager of the Administrative Service Department, a representative of the Free Trade Zone will visit the General Immigration Department in order to stamp the residency on the new passport.

Twelfth: Procedures for renewing residency

Documents required by the investor and the Free Trade Zone

- Filling in the application form (Investor)
- Original passport and copy of it (Investor)
- Original work permit (FTZ)
- A proof for payment of a guarantee worth value of three months salaries (Investor)
(FTZ)
- Work contracts signed by the investor and employee (FTZ)
- Typing and signing the form of Social Affairs Ministry (FTZ)
(Investor)
- Typing and signing the form of passports (Investor)
- Health insurance or fees of health insurance
- Copy of civil ID
- No. 2 personal photos (Investor)

The residency is renewed within a maximum five working days at the ministry.

Thirteenth: Procedures for canceling the residency

Documents required for cancellation

1. The investor fills in the application form
2. A final discharge and financial quittance issued by the employee stating that he/she has received all his accruals and to be attested by the Ministry of Justice.
3. A letter by the investor addressed to the Free Trade Zone indicating its desire not to renew the work permit.
4. Documents are handed over to Department's employ
5. The data are entered to the computer system.
6. Filling in a form for cancellation of residency (form of Affairs Ministry and form of passports).
7. Setting a date for the employee to attend at the Ministry of Social Affairs to sign acceptance for canceling the residency.
8. After finalizing the procedures of the Affairs Ministry, the representative of the Free Trade Zone cancel the residency at the General Immigration Dept.
9. A departure notification for one month is taken to the employee to complement any other matters.

Fourteenth: Procedures for canceling the visa request for persons who have not entered the country.

Documents required for cancellation by the investor and by FTZ

- Submission of application form to the Department of Administrative Services or submission of an official letter by the company (investor)
- Original work visa (investor)
- Submission of a receipt for payment of fee (investor)

Fifteenth: Procedures for canceling visa for persons who entered the country

1. Documents required are the same as in clause No. 14 above.
2. Travel ticket for the employee (investor)
3. Fine payment receipt in case of exceeding two month grace period and terminating the employee's service to be paid by the investor.
4. Addressing a cancellation letter to the finance department (FTZ)
5. Filling in the form for payment of the three months salary guarantee to the benefit of the Finance Department after settlement of the company's dues.

Sixteenth: Procedures for loss of visa

Loss of entry visa

The investor is required to meet the following requirements in order to reissue a work visa in lieu of lost:

1. The investor should notify (in writing) the Free Trade Zone about the loss of the visa.
2. The Administrative Services Dept issues a memo to the Government Relations Dept about the loss of the visa
3. The Government Relations Dept reports the loss of visa to police station
4. The Government Relations Dept addresses a letter to the General Immigration Dept accompanied with loss notification.
5. The General Immigration Dept sends a circular about the visa loss to all border outlets of Kuwait.
6. Following the circular the General Immigration Dept notifies the Free Trade Zone to submit a request for issuing a visa in lieu of lost.

Seventeenth: Procedures for issue of work visa in lieu of destroyed

Procedures for issue of (business visit visa – no rejection visa) in lieu of destroyed

- Filling in application form
- The investor should bring the destroyed visa regardless of its condition
- The Administrative Services Dept addresses a letter to the General Immigration Dept about the destruction of the visa (the letter of the destroyed visa is attached).
- The General Immigration Dept issues a circular to all border outlets of Kuwait regarding the destroyed visa
- Following the circular the General Immigration Dept notifies the Free Trade Zone in order to issue a visa in lieu of destroyed.

Eighteenth: Procedures for refunding fee of work visa after rejection of transaction by the concerned bodies (state ministries):

Required documents for cancellation of work visa

An employee from the Administrative Services Dept will do the following procedures:

1. Obtaining a letter from the government body implying that the transaction has been rejected.

2. Receiving the original receipt for payment of fee from the investor.

Procedures for cancellation of work permit

The cancellation is carried out by the Administrative Services Dept:

- Issuing a cancellation letter addressed to the Finance Dept
- The Administrative Services Dept attaches the rejection letter
- A docket is prepared to pay the amount