

Effective Immediately: India Decentralizes its Visa and Immigration Services

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India's Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) announced on September 30, 2014 that it is delegating **nearly all of its visa services** to Foreign Regional Registration Offices (FRROs). Services such as extensions, conversions from one type of visa to another, and exit procedures will now be decided by local FRROs rather than by MHA. The transition will place more decision-making power in the FRROs and, thereby, permit the Ministry to focus its energies on policy. The move is seen as a welcome change that will streamline services and, correspondingly, improve predictability for businesses that rely on those visa services.

MHA projects significant increases in efficiency, shortening processing times by 30 to 60 days on average. And, importantly, companies do not need to alter their practices and may continue to follow existing procedures at the FRROs.

Shaun Staller contributed to this article.

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National Law Review, Volume IV, Number 275

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/effective-immediately-india-decentralizes-its-visa-and-immigration-services>