



BAN ON EMPLOYMENT VISA TRANSFERS FOR EXPATRIATE WORKERS IN OMAN

The Omani government has instituted a ban on the transfer of employment visa for expatriate workers in Oman who have not completed their two (2)-year contract with their companies.

The visa transfer ban will prohibit expatriate workers from changing employers in the middle of their contracts. It is being implemented due to the complaints of employers over the "pirating" of expatriate workers and, which might dissuade companies from hiring foreign workers due to additional hurdles in employment procedures. The said ban is consistent with the ongoing "Omanization" efforts of the government and can open job opportunities to Omanis.

The ban on visa transfer which was implemented on 01 June 2014 will not completely prevent transfer of expatriate workers to other companies as workers can request their current companies for a "no objection certificate" (NOC) which would legally allow employees to transfer workplaces.

The ban on visa transfer also affects workers who have finished contracts and went home with the intention of transferring to another employer. According to the Omani government, expatriates who wish to transfer jobs will have to wait for two years before being allowed to re-enter Oman as foreign workers. The rule does not cover a returning employee of the same company. This rule will be implemented starting 01 July 2014.

The Philippine Embassy in Muscat is continuously monitoring the situation in order to gauge the consequence of the new ruling on the status of the Filipino workers in Oman.

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