

Proposal on Application for Residential Permit/ VISA at FRRO

December 2013
JCCIC Township Committee

1. Proposal Objective

The JCCIC Township Committee would like to sincerely thank you for evaluating our proposals submitted last year and taking necessary actions towards simplifying the procedures at FRRO.

Especially, until last year, the applicant had to visit FRRO at least twice to obtain a Residential Permit or a VISA. During each visit, the applicant had to spend precious working hours at the FRRO, which took two days to process and issue these documents.

This point has significantly improved by the introduction of a prior registration system at the FRRO homepage, which has resulted in shortening the visiting time for applicants. Now, documents can be obtained within half a day's time.

However, on conducting a survey with JCCIC members between September and November this year, many respondents have requested further improvements in the FRRO processes.

A smooth FRRO clearance process becomes very important for expatriates who stay or work in unfamiliar conditions away from home. Any problem related to FRRO clearances may add to the physical or mental concerns of applicants, which can disrupt other procedures necessary for starting a life in a foreign place. In this regard, we would like to attract your kind attention towards the following points:

2. Issues

(1) Seeking additional documents without prior notification

① Form C

Effective 2013 September, there is a new requirement from FRRO that applicants must submit the "Form C" application online. This was a new requirement that was not notified on the FRRO website. Also, the application documents are not being processed unless attached with an email

acknowledgement copy sent from FRRO. Therefore, there are many cases where Japanese applicants who are unaware of such procedures are disallowed their FRRO registration.

It takes almost 2 weeks from applying to registering information on the Form C. During this time, an applicant cannot open a bank account since the Residential Permit is not issued which poses problems during the early days of one's stay.

② Documents pertaining to share holding information of one's organization
Documents not listed on the information page of FRRO were requested.

(2) Unclear procedures and guidelines within FRRO

On setting foot into FRRO, it is not clear where to go and how to get the required documents. It becomes nearly impossible for someone new to India to understand the systems.

At the time of submission of documents to FRRO, the applicant has no idea about how the documents are going to be processed. Many times it was noticed that in spite of submitting at the counter, the Japanese applicant's documents were left unattended while other applications were being processed. Upon enquiry, the person in-charge took up the submitted form for processing, almost as if he had been reminded his duty.

3. Request from JCCIC

(1) Simplification of the Form C Application

Since applications are being accepted online, the procedure can be further simplified by doing away with the submission of documents physically, which shall reduce the burden on applicants.

(2) Prior notification on additional documents required

- The FRRO homepage must be updated with latest information.
- If there is a necessity for any new document to be submitted, please notify to the JCCIC at least 01 month in advance. This shall enable expatriates to come prepared with requisite documents. The JCCIC Township Committee shall be the point of contact for such notifications.

- “Frequently Asked Questions” for new documents must be listed in order to ensure a smooth screening of documents.

(3) Observing proper Queue system at FRRO

At present, a new applicant finds it very difficult to understand the procedures after coming to FRRO and ends up wasting valuable time.

Enforcing proper queue system, distributing tokens and a customer friendly guidance system should be introduced. To ensure that the right kind of guidance system is followed, we can have an interactive session between FRRO officials and JCCIC Township Committee members.

(4) Standardization and transparency of document processing

Since the applicants are unaware on how their documents are processed after submitting to FRRO, the waiting period seems to be very long which instills various doubts on the applicant’s mind. We recommend that the document processing system must be upgraded to a more transparent one, where the applicants can see the handling of their documents. Also, it will be good to standardize the average time taken for processing an applicant’s documents. It is recommended that FRRO enacts a rule whereby each document submitted by the applicant must be returned to its owner within 2 hours of submission to FRRO.