

MEDIA INFORMATION

Johannesburg, 25 November 2019

Online applications for new Lesotho Exemption Permit now open in South Africa

- To replace LSP (Lesotho Special Permit) which is set to expire on 31 December 2019
- Submission of online applications and appointment scheduling via VFS Global's website open from 18 November 2019
- Fingerprints and supporting document submissions to start from 25 November 2019 at ten VFS Global centres in South Africa

VFS Global has announced the commencement of applications for the new Lesotho Exemption Permit (LEP) project by the Department of Home Affairs, South Africa to help regularise the stay of Lesotho nationals already residing in South Africa. In order to continue to legally work, study or conduct business in South Africa, valid LSP (Lesotho Special Permit) holders must submit applications online through VFS Global's website (www.vfsglobal.com/LEP/SouthAfrica) to replace their current LSP's, which will expire on 31 December 2019. The cut-off date for submission of online applications is 31 March 2020.

Once the online application submission is completed, LSP holders will be allocated appointments for the mandatory submission of fingerprints and supporting documents. This will commence from 25 November 2019 at ten VFS Global centres across South Africa.

The new LEP entitles the holder to work, study and/or conduct business in South Africa legally, but does not allow them the right to apply for Permanent Residence, irrespective of the period of stay in the country. The permit is not automatically renewable or extendable nor does it allow the holder to change conditions of their permit while staying in South Africa. Those LSP permit holders who wish to convert their status to a mainstream visa should proceed to apply for such a visa from Lesotho.

Commenting on the project, **Mr. Jiten Vyas, Regional Group COO, VFS Global**, *"The work we have done so far in the government within the citizen services space stands as a strong testimony to our world-class service capabilities and enhanced applicant experiences that we are able to offer, irrespective of the scale of operations, as a trusted partner to the Department of Home Affairs, South Africa. As we continue to make every effort to expand our community outreach for this initiative like the LSP project, I am confident that our centres are well equipped to handle the high volumes of applications, within the deadline mentioned, through an easy and effective application experience to help regularise the stay of Lesotho nationals living in South Africa for work, education or business."*

VFS Global's role is limited to scheduling appointments, acceptance of applications, enrolling biometrics, acceptance of fees, submission of applications to Department of Home Affairs and returning the outcomes back to the applicant/s. The adjudication of the permit applications is done by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). VFS Global has no role in the decision-making process.

-Ends-

Notes to editor:

LEP Requirements
<p>Valid LSP holders must submit the following documents as part of the LEP application process at the nearest VFS Global centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesotho passport valid for more than 6 months at time of application• Lesotho ID card• Copy of the LSP permit• Evidence of employment – in the case of an application for work rights• Evidence of business – in the case of an application for business rights• Evidence of an admission letter from a recognised learning institution –in the case of an application for study rights
<p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LEP permits will be issued for a maximum period of 4 years, effective from 01 January 2020 and expiring on 31 December 2023, notwithstanding the date of application• Cut-off date for submission of applications is 31 March 2020• After the online application submission, LSP holders will be allocated appointments for the required submission of fingerprints and supporting documents from 25 November 2019 at the following VFS Global centres across South Africa

Lesotho Exemption Permit Centres

Address in Durban: 4 Linden Road, Essenwood, Berea, Durban

Address in Cape Town: 2 Long street, 7th Floor, Cape Town

Address in Port Elizabeth: Office 7C 1st floor Moffet and Main, Cnr 17th Ave and Main Road, Walmer, PE

Address in Gauteng: Mount Royal Building, 657 James crescent, Halfway House, Midrand

Address in Rustenburg: 89 Ridder Street

Address in Kimberly: Unit 3 Building 2, Agri Office Park, N12 Kimberly

Address in Polokwane: Shop 13, Thornhill Shopping Centre, Veldspaat and Munnik Avenue Bendor Park, Polokwane

Address in Nelspruit: Office 5F, Nedbank building, 30 Brown Street, Nelspruit

Address in Bloemfontein: 282 Oliver Tambo Road, Hamilton

Address in George: Unit 5 Eagle View, Progress Street, George

Email id: infolep@vfsglobal.com

Helpline: +27 87 230 0411

Website: <https://www.vfsglobal.com/lep/southafrica/>

Submission Timing (Gauteng, Bloemfontein, Rustenburg, Durban and Cape Town):

0800hrs-1700hrs (Monday to Friday, except holidays)

Submission Timing (Port Elizabeth, Kimberly, Polokwane, Nelspruit and George):

1500hrs-1700hrs (Monday to Friday, except holidays)

*VFS Global will be responsible only for accepting applications for client missions. All applications submitted will continue to be assessed and processed by the respective client missions. Timelines for turnaround are as per the discretion of the authorities.

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About VFS Global

VFS Global is the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. VFS Global has Swiss parentage and is a portfolio company of EQT, a leading global private equity firm headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden. With 3399 Application Centres, operations in 147 countries across five continents and over 215 million applications processed as on 31 October 2019, VFS Global is the trusted partner of 63 client governments.

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