

Dubai launches unique virtual working programme for overseas professionals

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Dubai has launched a unique new programme that enables overseas remote working professionals to live in Dubai while continuing to serve their employers in their home country.

The move provides remote workers – and their families - the opportunity to re-locate, on an annual basis, to one of the world's leading tourism and business destinations and enjoy a safe and high-quality lifestyle underpinned by a strong digital infrastructure that provides seamless connectivity.

Dubai, and the UAE, have been recognised for setting a global model for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The emirate, which opened itself to international tourists on 7 July, has implemented robust safety and hygiene protocols that enabled the reopening of most sectors and destination offerings across the city, including hotels, restaurants, attractions, water and theme parks, beaches, shopping malls and schools and universities.

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) awarded Dubai the Safe Travels Stamp in acknowledgement of its efforts to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and COVID-19 precautionary measures. The emirate also introduced the 'Dubai Assured' stamp to certify that establishments have implemented all public health protocols for the prevention and management of COVID-19.

"The global pandemic has changed how we live and work. As multinationals and leading start-ups across the world accelerate their rates of digital adoption, the need to be physically present to fulfil professional responsibilities has been redefined," said His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing. "People continue to prioritise their health, wellbeing and ability to ensure a positive work-life balance. Dubai is uniquely positioned to offer a safe, dynamic lifestyle opportunity to these digitally savvy workers and their families while they continue to work remotely, whether it is for a couple of months or an entire year."

Dubai's No. 1 global ranking in e-infrastructure in the latest Digital Quality of Life (DQL) survey validates the emirate's exceptional digital infrastructure. The new programme also boosts the emirate's value proposition for start-ups, entrepreneurs and SMEs.

His Excellency Sami Al Qamzi, Director General of Dubai Economy, said: "The virtual working programme further strengthens Dubai's status as a global business hub and demonstrates its progressive thinking and

sustained competitiveness in today's rapidly changing global landscape. Dubai was recently listed as the second best among 60 global cities for remote working jobs by the CEOWORLD magazine. With its advanced infrastructure, global connectivity and pro-business ecosystem, the virtual working programme gives Dubai a significant opportunity to enhance business practices and maximise growth."

His Excellency Hamad Buamim, President & CEO of Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the launch of the virtual working programme strengthens Dubai's position as a world-class business hub that attracts top talent, companies and investors from around the world. "The new initiative is a testament to the emirate's ability to quickly adapt to changing market conditions and introduce new measures that improve ease of doing business and enhance its economic competitiveness. The move also reflects Dubai's ability to create new opportunities for entrepreneurs and professionals to benefit from the city's advanced digital infrastructure and realise their ambitions in a vibrant innovation-driven business environment."

To apply for the annual programme, visit <https://www.visitdubai.com/en/sc7/travel-planning/travel-tools/work-remotely-in-dubai>. The programme costs US\$287 plus medical insurance with valid UAE coverage and processing fee per person.

Criteria for eligibility under the new programme include:

- Passport with minimum 6 months validity
- Health insurance with UAE coverage validity
- Proof of Employment from current employer with a one-year contract validity, a minimum of US\$5,000 per month salary, last month's payslip and 3 preceding months' bank statements
- If the applicant is a company owner: proof of ownership of company for one year or more, with an average monthly income of US\$5,000 per month, and 3 preceding months' bank statements

Through the programme, applicants can obtain all services in Dubai, including telecoms, utilities, and schooling, enabling them to experience the distinctive lifestyle enjoyed by people of over 200 nationalities. Applicants will also benefit from Dubai's zero income tax for individuals.

As one of the world's top property destinations, Dubai has a vast portfolio of housing options to choose from, including beachfront and city villas and apartments, fully serviced hotel offerings managed by globally-recognised operators, and a diverse selection of short and longer-term holiday home rentals. Widely regarded as a leading entrepreneurial hub, the city also provides exceptional co-working spaces, with flexible packages ranging from hourly rates for meeting rooms to weekly, monthly or quarterly bookings.

For those looking to broaden their contacts, Dubai is the first major global destination to fully open up its MICE sector internationally, providing opportunities for networking events and face to face engagement, which are vital factors in accelerating the revival of key sectors. The full reopening of the sector is testament to the city's successful handling of the pandemic, and the safety and hygiene protocols in place which prioritise the wellbeing of citizens, residents and visitors.