

Frequently Asked Questions: Work Permits for Syrian Refugees in Jordan

Valid as of December 2018

Under Jordanian law, employers of non-Jordanian workers are legally required to obtain a work permit from the local Labour Directorate of the Ministry of Labour. If all requirements are met, eligible Syrians will be issued one-year or short term work permits authorizing their employment with the specific employer. The following aims to answer frequently asked questions about work permit requirements and the application process.

Q1: WHAT ARE THE WORK PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES?

Minimum age for non-Jordanians to work and obtain a work permit is 18.

Documents required from the worker:

1. Valid Ministry of Interior (Mol) service card.
1. One Personal passport size photos.

Documents required from the employer:

2. Certificate of Incorporation/ Commercial Registry Certificate.
3. Professional licence certificate.
4. A statement from Social Security confirming registration of the company.
5. A statement from Social Security listing the employees of the company (first time employees will not be on this list but Social Security subscription will be requested upon renewal).
6. Two copies of a written contract signed by both parties (employer and employee).
7. Identity Card of the employer or an authorization from the employer allowing a delegate to apply for the work permit signed by the employer.
8. Bank statement or Legal Guarantee of the company. This is requested for all sectors, except for the work permit programmes in Agriculture and Construction sector.

Documents required from the individual employer in the agricultural sector (not a cooperative)

1. The record issued by the Directorate of Agriculture stating the land surface, the type of tenure and the kind of irrigation used.
2. Two copies of a written contract signed by both parties (employer and employee).
3. Identity Card of the employer or an authorization from the employer allowing a delegate to apply for the work permit signed by the employer.

Documents required from the agriculture cooperative:

1. Registration certificate of the cooperative, which is issued by the Jordanian Cooperative Enterprise.
2. Letter from the cooperative requesting the work permit

Q2: WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE TO OBTAIN A WORK PERMIT?

For the employer

1. Approach the Labour Directorate where the employer/company is registered
2. Fill out the application form.
3. Attach the required documents mentioned above.
4. Wait for approval of the Ministry of Labour/ Labour Directorate.

For job seekers in the agriculture and construction sectors (non-employer specific)

1. For agricultural activities: work permits have to be requested through agricultural cooperatives.
2. For construction sector : work permits have to be requested through the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, the only body authorized to facilitate the issuance of construction work permits not tied to an employer.

Q3: WHAT ARE THE MAIN LEGAL RIGHTS OF WORKERS IN JORDAN?

1. The right to an employment contract.
2. The right to a minimum wage.
3. The right to have a day off on Friday unless the nature of the work requires otherwise. In that case, the day off may be any other day of the week.

4. Every worker has the right to 14 days of annual leave. After 5 consecutive years with the same employer, the entitlement becomes 21 days of annual leave.
5. Each worker has the right to 14 days of full paid sick leave during one year based on a certified medical report. The sick leave may be renewed for another 14 days with full pay based on a medical report by a medical committee.
6. Maximum working hours are up to 48 hours per week. If an employee works for more than eight hours per day and 48 hours per week, he/she is entitled to overtime compensation. Time allocated for food and rest is not considered part of the working hours.
7. The right to receive overtime compensation if working on weekends or national/religious holidays. The employee may agree to work over the regular working hours. In that case, the overtime wage is 125% of his usual wage during weekdays and 150% during holidays, public holidays and weekly holidays.
8. The wages have to be paid within a maximum of seven days from the date it is due.
9. Women have the right to paid maternity leave for a total of 10 weeks (paid by the social security), and the right to one paid hour for nursing per day for a period of one year from the date of delivery.
10. The right to be enrolled into Social Security.
11. The right to be medically treated and receive compensation in the case of any work-related injury.
12. The employee has the right to keep his/her passport and all his/her personal and identity documents.
13. The worker must carry his/her work permit at all times and it needs to be presented to the official authorities when requested.

Q4: SHOULD YOU PAY FOR THE WORK PERMIT?

Work permits are free of charge. As a practice, the 10 JODs processing fee requested by Ministry of Labour may need to be paid by the employee. In the agricultural sector and the construction sector the employee needs to pay the 10JODs processing fee and additional not more than 3 JODs to the service providers. Syrians applying for a work permit in the construction sector will also need 45 JOD to cover the cost of mandatory insurance.

Q5: CAN YOU KEEP YOUR REFUGEES STATUS AFTER OBTAINING LEGAL EMPLOYMENT AND CAN YOU RECEIVE ASSISTANCE?

There will be no change to the status of Syrians registered with UNHCR once you receive your work permit. UNHCR and partner organisations are committed to continue providing assistance based on needs and vulnerabilities.

Q6: ARE YOU STILL CONSIDERED FOR RESETTLEMENT IF THEY HAVE A WORK PERMIT?

Syrian refugees holding work permits may still be considered for UNHCR resettlement to third countries.

Q7: IS ENROLMENT IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY MANDATORY AND WHAT IS IT FOR?

Social Security subscription is mandatory with the exception of household helpers and unskilled agricultural workers. Syrian workers in the construction sector (registered through the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions - JFGTU) are exempted from the subscription of Social Security. They have to subscribe to private insurance instead. . It is important that the original copy of the signed insurance policy is kept safely so that it can be submitted to the insurance company in case of treatment or in case of compensation for death (within the coverage limits foreseen by the policy itself).

Social security covers: 1- Work-related injuries, 2- Retirement, 3- Disability Insurance, 4- Death insurance, 5- Maternity insurance, 6- Unemployment insurance where applicable.

The subscription is a joint responsibility of the employer and the employee and is to be paid on monthly basis and shall be calculated as follows:

Employer's contribution to social security	14.25%
Employee's contribution to social security	7.50%

Once the employment contract is terminated and the work permit is cancelled, a foreign worker can retrieve what he/she and the employer contributed directly through the Social Security department if contributions are less than 1000 JOD. In the case that contributions are more than 1000 JOD a clearance from the tax department shall be obtained in order to retrieve what he/she and the employer contributed to Social Security.

Q8: CAN CAMP REFUGEES WORK LEGALLY WITH WORK PERMITS?

Refugee camps' residents can obtain a work permit free of charge to work across the country in occupations open to non-Jordanians. Work permit holders will be able to work outside the camps. The work permit serves as a one month leave permit, facilitating the movement in and out of the camp. Processing fees described above apply.

Q9: WHO SHOULD BE CONTACTED IN CASE OF QUESTIONS OR DISPUTES?

GENERAL INQUIRIES: UNHCR Helpline: 06 400 8000

SPECIFIC WORK PERMIT AND LABOUR LAW RELATED QUESTIONS: The Ministry of Labour has a free hotline that receives calls regarding labour law issues and is committed to improve the rights of all workers in Jordan: Free line: **080 022 208**, Zain network: **0796580666**, Orange network: **0777580666**, Umniah network: **0785602666** or through **WhatsApp: 0790955557** and email: hotline@mol.gov.jo. The hotline has answering machines that receive complaints after 3:30 pm. **LEGAL ISSUES:** For legal counselling and/or mediation, please contact **ARDD-Legal aid at 06-4617477** operating Sunday-Thursday, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM; or **approach the Legal Unit in UNHCR Amman-Khalda**.

Q10: IF YOUR WORK PERMIT HAS EXPIRED, DO YOU NEED THE CLEARANCE OF YOUR FORMER EMPLOYER OR YOUR SPONSOR TO GET A NEW ONE?

- A. No, now you can transfer to a new employer when the permit has expired without the clearance of the previous employer. You only need clearance if the work permit has not expired.

During the period of validity of a work permit you are not allowed to work in an occupation different from the one authorized by the permit.

Q11: CAN I MOVE FROM ONE SECTOR TO ANOTHER?

- A. You can now get a work permit in other sectors open to foreigners when your current permit in the agricultural, supporting services or bakeries sectors is expired.

Q12: DO YOU NEED A CERTIFICATE OF PRIOR LEARNING TO OBTAIN A WORK PERMIT IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR?

- A. You do not need to attend a training course and have a certificate to obtain a work permit in the construction sector. You only need a copy of your insurance policy for work injuries from one of the insurance companies approved by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Note that the price of the insurance policy is 45 JODs. However, everybody is encouraged to get a certificate of prior learning through the ILO.

Q13: YOU WORK IN A SHORT TERM LABOR INTENSIVE PROGRAM (cash-for-work). ARE YOU ENTITLED TO A WORK PERMIT?

- A. Yes, you are. The agency/institution implementing the project in the field (municipalities, field directorates of line ministries, NGOs or associations) will request the work permit to the Ministry of Labour. The work permit will have a duration based on the duration of your contract and for a maximum period of six months.

Please always make sure that the source of the information is UNHCR so that you are not exposed to fraud.

All UNHCR services are FREE.

