

Visa/Permit Information for Volunteers

As of DECEMBER 2011

This is the best advice that we can give regarding visas and permits to come and volunteer at Forever Angels Baby Home. Immigration changes the rules sporadically and there is an awful lot of misinformation in Tanzanian Embassies throughout the world - but we do our best to stay on top of things in Tanzania and we update this document regularly.

1) Only get your Visa/Permit in Tanzania! Some of the Tanzanian embassies in other countries will say that they can get a visa for you, but do not believe them. So far, every visa we've seen that has been granted by a foreign embassy has been wrong and the volunteer has ended up paying **again** once they arrive. Or, the date on the Visa is from the date it was purchased, not the date of entry, and it runs out before the Volunteer leaves Tanzania!

Normal practice is to get a visa at the border of Tanzania once you arrive. It is easy and generally hassle free so please do not try to get it before you arrive in Tanzania.

2) There are TWO different things you need; a visa and a permit.

* A **visa** is what will get you across the border into Tanzania and you need one simply to 'be' in the country. You can get these from the airport in Dar-es-Salaam or Mwanza once you arrive and they cost \$50 US.

There are two types:

A Tourist Visa (lasts for 3 months) - \$50

A Business Visa (lasts for 2 months) – \$50. You need to letter of 'Invitation' from Forever Angels to get a Business Visa – please ask me to send you this before you leave home.

Both types of visa are pretty much the same – they give you permission to be in Tanzania – but you are **NOT** allowed to legally work / volunteer on either – so you also need a 'permit' in order to volunteer.

* A **permit** gives you **permission to work** in Tanzania (and volunteering is considered 'work' by immigration rules here.) You can basically only volunteer short term (less than 2 months), or long term (more than 6 months). If you choose to stay between 2 and 6 months – you basically need to keep re-buying a short term permit and it becomes very expensive.

Staying for up to 2 months?

You need to get a CTA permit (Conducting a Temporary Assignment). These cost \$200 and should be obtained from, either the airport on arrival in Mwanza (you can get it at the same time as your Visa to enter the country. Just tell the Immigration Officials that you are coming to volunteer for less than 2 months and need a CTA Permit. You need \$200 and the letter of invitation from us and it is quick and simple.)

N.B. If you arrive in Mwanza when the Immigration Office is closed or they are being particularly unhelpful – JUST get the \$50 Entry Visa (Tourist or Business) and we will take you to the Immigration Office in town within the first couple of days of your arrival to get your CTA Permit. (Again, you will need \$200 and your invitation letter from us.)

Staying for longer than 2 months and up to 3 months?

(THIS IS AN EXPENSIVE OPTION)

You should get a short-term RPC Permit (Residence Permit class 'C'). These cost \$550 and can be obtained from the immigration office in Mwanza within the first few days of your arrival. Our Administrator will go with you to help arrange this and to translate if necessary.

A short-term RPC Permit will make you a Temporary Resident of Tanzania (with some extra concessions such as slightly cheaper rates at the safari lodges etc) It allows you to leave and re-enter the country as often as you like within the three months. A Short Term RPC Permit can be extended for another three months (up to three more times) for a further \$550 each time. This is an easy, but expensive way to stay long-term. You will need the following paperwork:

- a.** Two original signed TIF1 forms. Ask us for a copy and we will complete our half for you.
- b.** 6 passport photographs on a blue background.
- c.** A signed volunteer contract. Ask us to prepare one for you.
- d.** A copy of your CV
- e.** Copy of your passport (photo page)
- f.** Copies of your academic certificates
- g.** A letter of introduction from Forever Angels.

Staying for more than 3 months?

You should get a long-term RPC Permit (Residence Permit class 'C'). These are only processed in Dar-es-salaam and can take a couple of months to complete.

We will do most of the leg-work for you, but you need to send us your documentation at least 2 months before you travel.

Long term RPC Permit's last for anything up to 2 years and can be renewed indefinitely.

They cost \$550 plus an extra \$100 for postage and processing and are the cheapest (but still expensive) and best way to stay in Tanzania long term. If you are staying for over 3 months, this is what you need to get. The paperwork must be correct and you must have skills or experience that we can argue will be valuable to our objectives and which are not readily available from Tanzanians. You will need the following paperwork:

- a. Two original signed TIF1 forms. Ask us for a copy and we will complete our half for you.
- b. 8 passport photographs on a blue background.
- c. A signed volunteer contract. Ask us to prepare one for you.
- d. A copy of your CV
- e. A certified copy of every page of your passport
- f. Certified copies of your academic certificates
- g. A certified copy of your birth certificate

A 'Certified' copy means that a solicitor or lawyer has stamped and signed the photocopy to say that it is a 'true copy' of the original. They will normally do this cheaply or even for free if you explain that you are coming to volunteer in an orphanage. Gather together these documents and post them to us at Forever Angels via a courier service such as DHL. We will then add some more papers and send them to Dar-es-salaam for processing. When it is done we will courier it back to you before you travel, and you can use the hardcopy to get across the border. Once you arrive, you should visit the Immigration office with our Administrator to get your residence permit endorsed in your passport.

Be properly prepared and make sure you send us all these documents early so we can get this processed for you, ready for your arrival. (If your permit is not ready in time, you can still enter the country on a Business Visa (which lasts for 2 months and you can get for \$50 at the airport, while waiting for the permit to arrive.)

NOTE: Many volunteers at other orphanages in Tanzania simply get a 'Tourist Visa' and tell Immigration Officials that they are visiting the country rather than volunteering. This is very cheap and easy (\$50 US and lasts up to 3 months), but it is not actually allowed, and so we can't recommend it to you. Having volunteers on the wrong visa reflects badly upon the Baby Home.

Ultimately the penalties for being 'caught out' are yours, not ours and if Immigration did catch you 'working' on a Tourist Visa - the normal penalty would be to buy a new visa and permit (possibly a 'special permit' that costs \$600) on the spot. Be warned!