



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

9 August 2007

ZZZ102585.E

Kuwait/Sri Lanka: Whether the wife of a worker from Sri Lanka with a renewable two-year contract with a private employer in Kuwait can obtain a residence permit allowing her to live in Kuwait with her husband for the duration of his contract; procedures for obtaining such a permit; whether the decision to grant a residence permit to a worker's wife is discretionary or automatic and whether this decision is made by state authorities or the employer

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In 7 August 2007 correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official at the Embassy of Canada in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates provided the following information, which he obtained from a senior immigration official in Farwaniya City, Kuwait: The spouse of a foreign worker in Kuwait can obtain a residence permit if the worker sponsors him or her; the primary condition for sponsorship is that the worker earn a minimum salary of 250 Kuwait Dinars (KWD) [approximately 942 Canadian dollars (CAD) (OANDA 7 Aug. 2007)] per month from public or private sector employment (Canada 7 Aug. 2007). However, according to the Kuwait Information Office, a Washington-based organization "dedicated to fostering a greater understanding of Kuwait's politics, society, culture, economy and security needs by the U.S. political, media, academic, and business communities" (Kuwait Information Office n.d.a), the worker's minimum salary requirement is KWD 450 [CAD 1,696 (OANDA 7 Aug. 2007)] per month if publicly employed, and KWD 650 [CAD 2,450 (ibid.)] if privately employed (Kuwait Information Office n.d.b). However, the office's Web site, whose information is not dated, reports that the government is considering lowering the salary requirements (ibid.). In addition, the Web site states that the fee for a spouse's residence permit is KWD 100 [CAD 377 (OANDA 7 Aug. 2007)] for the first year and KWD 10 [CAD 37 (ibid.)] to renew each year thereafter (Kuwait Information Office, n.d.b). Moreover, a KWD 40 fee [CAD 151 (OANDA 7 Aug. 2007)] must be paid annually for health insurance (Kuwait Information Office n.d.b).

To obtain a residence permit for his or her spouse, the employee must act as a sponsor (ibid.; Canada 7 Aug. 2007). He or she must bring the necessary documentation, such as a copy of his or her work permit and proof of salary, as well as the necessary fees, to his or her local immigration department (ibid.). No further details regarding the procedure for obtaining a residence permit could be found among the sources consulted within the time constraint of this Response.

The information obtained by the official at the Embassy of Canada in Abu Dhabi indicates that the granting of a residence permit is not automatic, and is subject to immigration regulations in Kuwait, including conditions such as

meeting the minimum salary requirements (ibid.). Nonetheless, although the permit must be approved by immigration authorities, the worker's employer can help or hinder the process (ibid.). For example, the employer could increase his employee's salary and provide the necessary documents to support the sponsorship application, or the employer could deny the employee his or her employment documents thus hindering the application process (ibid.) According to the information obtained by the Canadian embassy official, there are many cases involving low-wage earners in Kuwait in which employers deny them employment documents (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Canada. 7 August 2007. Embassy of Canada in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Correspondence from an official.

Kuwait Information Office, USA. N.d.a. "About the Kuwait Information Office." <<http://www.kuwait-info.org/about.html>> [Accessed 8 Aug. 2007]

_____. N.d.b. "Services." <<http://Kuwait-info.org/services.html>> [Accessed 7 Aug. 2007]

OANDA. 7 August 2007. "Currency Converter." <<http://oanda.com>> [Accessed 7 Aug. 2007]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The following oral sources were contacted but did not provide information within the time constraints of this response: Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Canada (Ottawa); Embassy of the State of Kuwait (Washington, DC); Embassy of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (Kuwait); The Kuwait Consular Office (New York).

Publications including: *Travel Information Manual (TIM)*.

Internet sites, including: Kuwait Ministry of the Interior; Embassy of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (Kuwait); United States (US) Department of State.

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.