



ZEP Permits fall away December 2022 – Impact on Sit Down Restaurants

29 August 2022 – Issued by The Restaurant Collective

Originally introduced in 2009, the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit (ZEP) was issued during a call to all Zimbabweans inside SA to come forward and regularise their stay – 250 000 people took the opportunity.

Many Zimbabweans were on other short-term permits that required them to leave South Africa every 30, 60 or 180 days. The ZEP therefore made sense as a better alternative to avoid the expense of regular trips to Zimbabwe.

These permits will no longer exist from 31 December 2022. While foreign nationals with asylum seeker permits or existing work visas will not be affected by this, many other Zimbabweans currently in possession of a ZEP permit will need to obtain alternative visas to remain in the country.

The sit-down restaurant industry respects the law's requirements. In every country, foreign nationals are expected to inhabit and work in accordance with the law. This announcement is about getting our house in order. We believe people want to do the right thing and get work visas to remain in the country legally and continue to contribute to the SA economy.

TRC is here to help. We have made contact with a service provider who will help make this process smoother and have negotiated a special rate for restaurant owners who are members of TRC.

ZEP holders need to apply for work visas. This is not a new practice and has always been in place for individuals entering SA from anywhere in the world. The visa application process can take approximately three months, so it is imperative to apply now.

A Zoom meeting will be held on **01 September 2022 at 09:30am** to answer any questions around the process. [Click here](#) to join TRC and you will receive an email confirmation with the link to attend. By joining TRC, you will receive full access to this support at a reduced rate of 50%.