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How to get an OEC as a skilled worker

⚠️ This is a work in progress. guide will be updated as I find more information.

To leave the Philippines as a Filipino with work abroad, you need an OEC (Overseas Employment Certificate). It's very hard to get one.

This document outlines how you can get one as a skilled worker.

Rico Sta. Cruz (@rstacruz)

Checklist

Obvious requirements

- **Passport** — must be valid for at least 6 months.
- **Visa** — or entry permit to host country.

Contract requirements

- **Employment standards** — Get your employment contract revised to include provisions for:
 - Return ticket in case of termination
 - Return ticket in case of war or conflict
 - Sending your remains in case of death
 - Others requirements in Section 135
- **Contract verification** — Get your employment contract "red-ribboned":
 - Get your employer to mail your contract to the nearest POLO office
 - Get POLO to mail back your contract to your employer
 - Get your employer to mail back the contract to you

Employer requirements

- **Company profile** — *business license or commercial registration* of your employer

Credentials

- Diploma and Transcript of Records
- PRC license (if applicable)
- Curriculum Vitae and Resume

Other Phase 1 requirements

- **Additional country-specific requirements** — for Canada, USA, Middle East and African countries, see the checklist for direct hires document.
- Proof of insurance coverage
- POLO endorsement letter against exemption

Phase 2 requirements

- **Medical exam** — Get a medical exam from accredited health facilities
- Pre-departure orientation seminar (PDOS)
- Pre-employment orientation seminar (PEOS)
- POEA clearance

Citations

Most of these information were taken from the [Checklist of requirements for evaluation of Direct Hire Application](#).

Checklist for direct hire evaluation

As of May 27th of 2018, the POEA has a new list of requirements for evaluation. This document is not available online; it's only available in the *Direct Hire* department of the POEA offices in EDSA.

⚠ This list is more updated than the the list you can [find in their website](#).

Effective: May 27, 2018 Pre-Employment Service Office- Landbased Center

CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION OF DIRECT HIRE APPLICATION
PROFESSIONAL AND SKILLED WORKERS
 (All documents to be submitted must be in duplicates)

WORKER _____
 EMPLOYER _____
 WORKSITE _____
 POSITION _____

DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

PHASE 1

	Remarks
<input type="checkbox"/> Passport with validity period of not less than six (6) months	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Valid Work Visa, Entry/Work Permit (whichever is applicable per country). If visa assurance or guarantee is issued by employer, the same should be noted/acknowledged by the Government or Immigration Office in the Jobsite	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment Contract: _____ Original copy of Employment Contract or Offer of Employment _____ Verified by the Employment Contract or Offer of Employment _____ Authenticated by the Philippine Embassy/Consulate for countries with no POLO	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Company Profile, Business license/commercial registration of the employer	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> POLO Endorsement Letter addressed to the Administrator seeking exemption from the ban on direct-hiring	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional country-specific requirements: a. Canada- Labor Market Opinion (LMO), Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) for and Canadian Letter and Employer's Certificate of Registration from ECON (Province of Saskatchewan Executive Council) or Saskatchewan Immigration Nominee Program (SINP) approval are required from workers to Saskatchewan in lieu of LMO b. USA- Labor Condition Application and Notice of Action c. Middle East and African countries- Contingency plan issued by the employer	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional documents to support job application: _____ Certificate of employment or Business Permit: If self-employed _____ Diploma and Transcript of Records (TOR) _____ NC II/PRC license _____ Curriculum Vitae/Resume	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Proof of certificate of insurance coverage covering at least the benefits provided under Section 37-A of RA 8042 as amended;	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Notarized Statement on how the workers secured his/her employment with attached photocopy of employer's passport/ID and contact details	_____

PHASE 2

<input type="checkbox"/> Valid Medical Certificate from DOH-accredited medical clinic authorized to conduct medical exam for OFWs	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Employment Orientation Seminar Certificate (PEOS)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) Certificate issued by OWWA	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> POEA Clearance (for employers under Section 124d of the POEA Revised Rules & Regulations)	_____

ACTION TAKEN:
 _____ Returned due to incomplete documents
 _____ Others

RECEIVING OFFICER:
 PRINTED NAME & SIGNATURE _____
 DATE: _____

RECEIVED BY:
 PRINTED NAME & SIGNATURE _____
 DATE: _____
 QUEUE NO. _____

Direct Hire exception

When going to POEA offices, the direct hire department may assert that there's a ban on direct hires. Be aware that skilled workers are exempted from this ban, even if POEA officers may tell you otherwise.

If POEA officers assert that they can't accept OEC applications due to the direct hire ban, bring citations for to the rules below. These are taken from the [Revised POEA Rules and Regulations of 2016](#), page 31.

Direct hire ban rules

Direct hires are not allowed by the POEA. See this excerpt from §123:

SECTION 123. Ban on Direct Hires. — No employer shall directly hire an Overseas Filipino Worker for overseas employment.

However, professionals and skilled workers are exempted from the direct hire ban. See this excerpt from §124(d)(2):

SECTION 124. Exemption from the Ban on Direct Hiring. — The following are exempted from the ban on direct hiring:

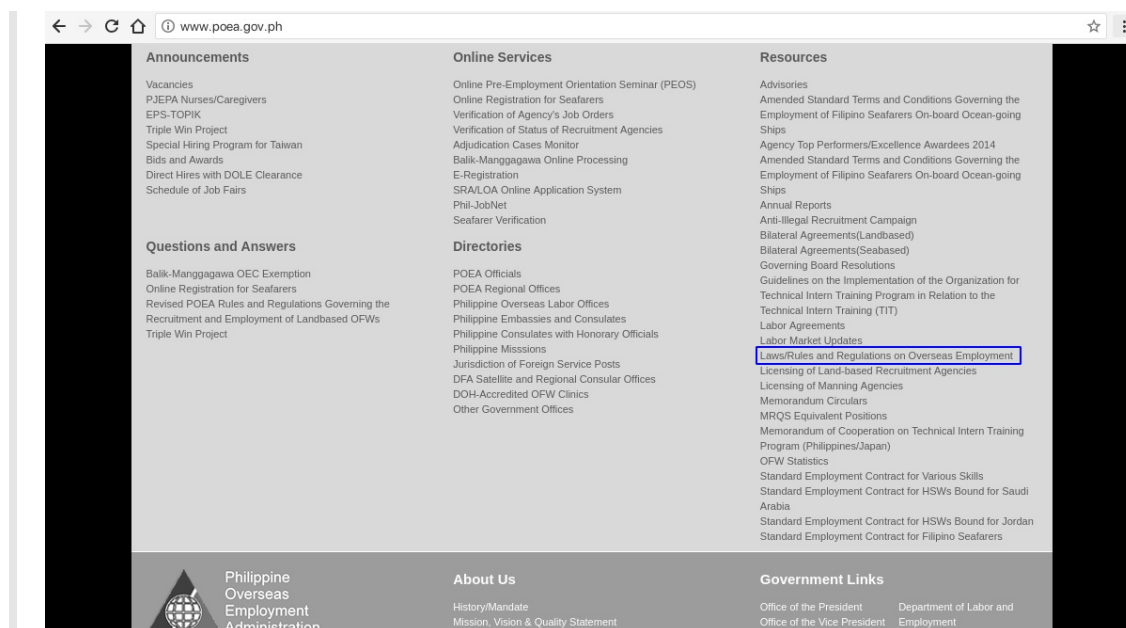
... d. Other employers as may be allowed by the Secretary of Labor and Employment, such as:

..... Professionals and skilled workers with duly executed/authenticated contracts containing terms and conditions over and above the standards set by the POEA. (...)

Finding this document

1. [POEA website](#) (start here)

The POEA website has list of resources near the end of the page. Look for the link that reads *Laws and Rules for Overseas Employment*.



2. [Laws and Rules for Overseas Employment](#)

This page has a link to the "Revised POEA Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers - 2016." As of May 2018, this is the latest revision of the rules and regulations.

← → ↻ 🏠 ⓘ www.poea.gov.ph/laws&rules/laws&rules.html ☆ ⋮

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

POEA.GOV.PH About Contact us News Releases Site Map

Our Services OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS LICENSED RECRUITMENT AGENCIES


Laws, Rules and Regulations on Overseas Employment


- Revised POEA Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers - 2016**
- 2016 REVISED POEA RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF SEAFARERS - 2016
- Rules and Regulations on the Employment of Seafarers Onboard Philippine Registered Ships Engaged in International Voyage - Department Order No. 130, Series of 2013
- Omnibus IRR of RA 8042 as amended by RA 10022
- RA No. 9422 - Strengthening the Regulatory Functions of the POEA
- 2003 POEA Rules on Overseas Employment of Seafarers
- 2002 POEA Rules on Overseas Employment of OFWs Full Text
- 2002 POEA Rules on Overseas Employment of OFWs Primer
- Migrant Workers Act of 1995 (RA 8042)
- Labor Code of the Philippines Provisions on Overseas Employment
- Guidelines on Insurance Coverage
- Guidelines on the Implementation of JITCO Program
- Guidelines on the Recruitment and Deployment of OFWs to Canada

STATUS OF RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Type agency name

Search





3. Revised POEA Rules 2016

According to §124(d)(2) in page 31, skilled workers with authenticated contracts are exempted from the ban.

SECTION 123. Ban on Direct Hires. — No employer shall directly hire an Overseas Filipino Worker for overseas employment.

SECTION 124. Exemption from the Ban on Direct Hiring. — The following are exempted from the ban on direct hiring:

- a. Members of the diplomatic corps;
- b. International organizations;
- c. Heads of state and government officials with the rank of at least deputy minister;
or
- d. Other employers as may be allowed by the Secretary of Labor and Employment, such as:
 1. Those provided in (a), (b) and (c) who bear a lesser rank, if endorsed by the POLO, or Head of Mission in the absence of the POLO;
 2. Professionals and skilled workers with duly executed/authenticated contracts containing terms and conditions over and above the standards set by the POEA. The number of professional and skilled Overseas Filipino Workers hired for the first time by the employer shall not exceed five (5). For the purpose of determining the number, workers hired as a group shall be counted as one; or
 3. Workers hired by a relative/family member who is a permanent resident of the host country.

Employment standards

To get your contract verified by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO), your employment contract should meet the "Employment Standards" defined by the POEA.

Citation

The "Employment Standards" are defined in the [Revised POEA Rules 2016](#), page 35, part V, section 135. It's also available in [Memorandum Circular No. 08, Series of 2018, Implementing Guidelines on the Registration of Direct-Hire OFWs](#), page 2, section II.

SECTION 135. Minimum Provisions of Employment Contracts. — Consistent with welfare promotion thrusts of the Administration, the following shall be the minimum provisions in employment contracts for Overseas Filipino Workers:

- a. Complete name and address of the employer/company;
- b. Position and jobsite of the Overseas Filipino Worker;
- c. Basic monthly salary, including benefits and allowances and mode of payment. The salary shall not be lower than the prescribed minimum wage in the host country or prevailing minimum wage in the National Capital Region of the Philippines, whichever is higher;
- d. Food and accommodation or the monetary equivalent which shall be commensurate to the cost of living in the host country, or off-setting benefits;
- e. Commencement and duration of contract;
- f. Free transportation from and back to the point of hire, or off-setting benefits, and free inland transportation at the jobsite or off-setting benefits;
- g. Regular work hours and day off;
- h. Overtime pay for services rendered beyond the regular working hours, rest days and holidays;
- i. Vacation leave and sick leave for every year of service;
- j. Free emergency medical and dental treatment;
- k. Just/valid/authorized causes for termination of the contract or of the services of the workers, taking into consideration the customs, traditions, norms, mores, practices, company policies and the labor laws and social legislations of the host country;
- l. Settlement of disputes;
- m. Repatriation of worker in case of imminent danger due to war, calamity, and other analogous circumstances, at the expense of employer; and
- n. In case of worker's death/repatriation of Overseas Filipino Workers human remains and personal belongings, at the expense of the employer.

Next: Once your contract is OK, submit it for [POLO verification](#).

POLO verification

This article is a stub. You can help by expanding it.

OEC services

- [Australia](#)
- [Singapore](#)

Australia

+612 6273 8882

[Australia](#)

- email poloaustralia@philembassy.org.au

Health facilities

You need a medical certificate as part of the requirements for obtaining an OEC certificate. This involves a physical examination.

As of May 2018, the latest list of accredited health facilities you can find online is dated *March 2018*.

https://hfsrb.doh.gov.ph/images/Listing/ListofAccreditedMfows_03_28_18.pdf ⚠️ There is a more updated list available in the Direct Hire department of POEA offices in EDSA.

Finding this document

- [Health Facilities and Services Regulatory Bureau](#)
 - footer, "list of accredited"
- [List of accredited health facilities](#)
 - Ctrl+F "Overseas Workers"

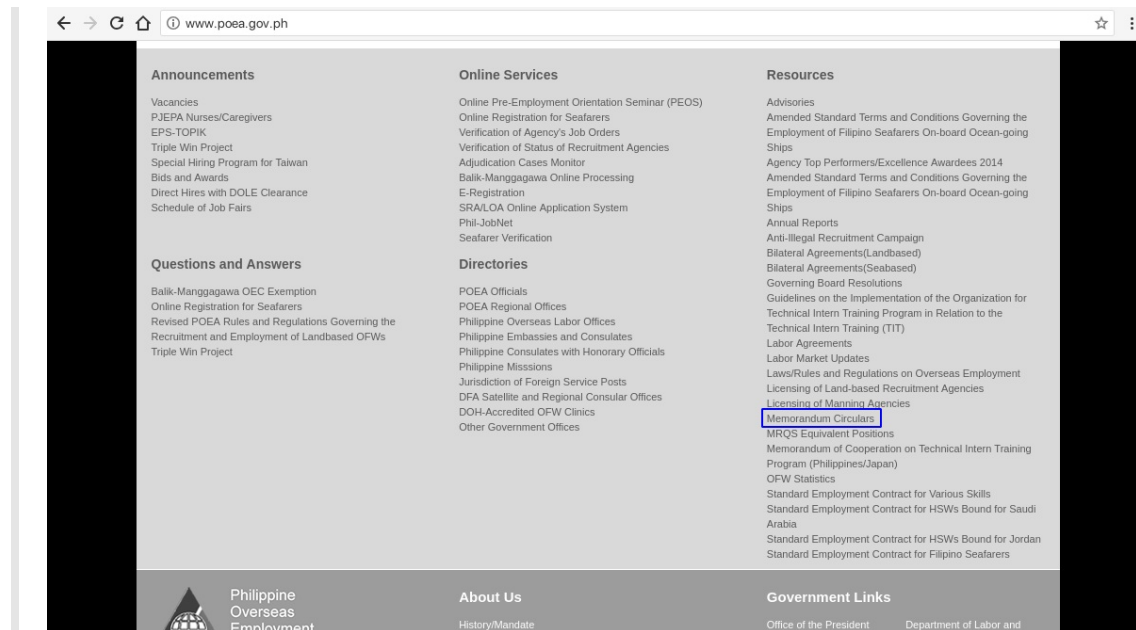
Memorandum Circular 08

See: [POEA Memorandum Circular No. 08](#).

Finding this document

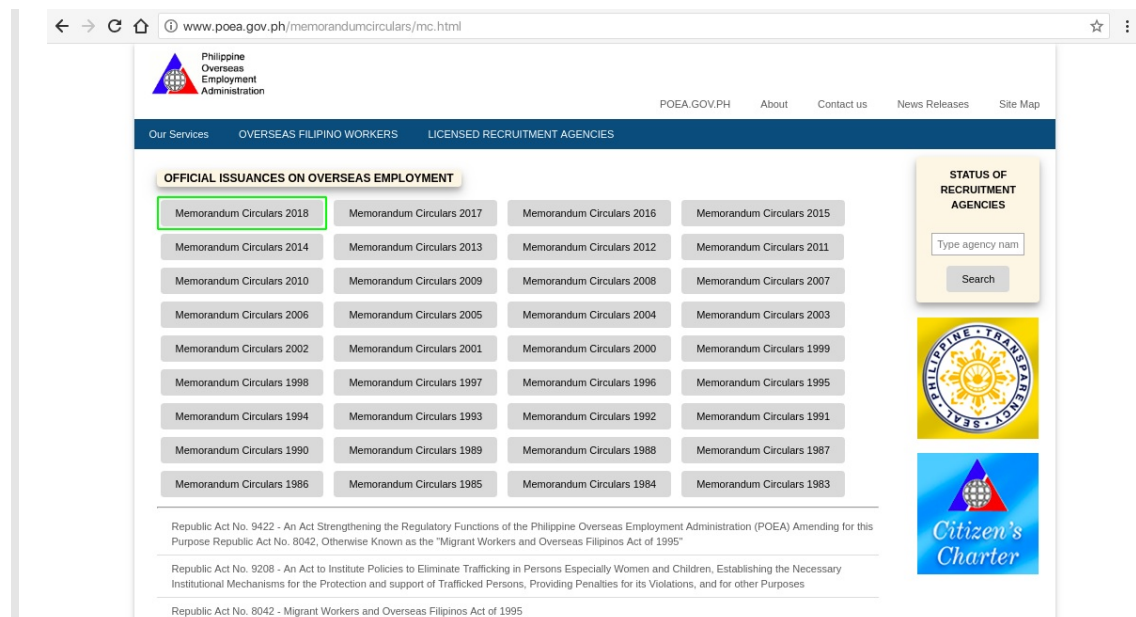
1. [POEA website](#) (start here)

There is a list of resources at the bottom of the page. Look for the link to *Memorandum Circulars*.



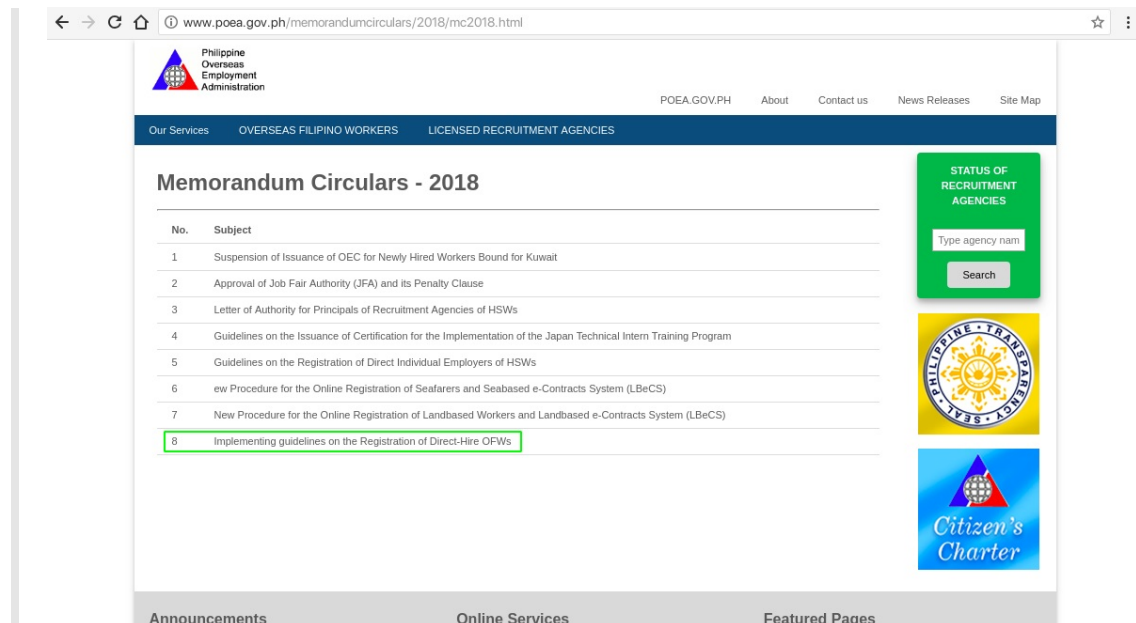
2. [Memorandum Circulars page](#)

This page lists the "Official Issuances on Overseas Employment." It has a link to the *Memorandum Circulars of 2018*.



3. Memorandum Circulars of 2018 page

This page has a link to *Circular No. 08: Implementing guidelines on the Registration of Direct-Hire OFWs*. As of May 2018, this is the latest circular issued by the POEA.



4. Memorandum Circular No. 08, Series of 2018, Implementing Guidelines on the Registration of Direct-Hire OFWs

This document was published on May 9th of 2018. §I shows the list of exemptions from the direct hire ban. §I(d)(2) in particular shows that skilled workers are exempted.

I. Coverage. No employer shall directly hire an overseas Filipino worker for overseas employment. The following, however, are exempted from the ban:

- a. Members of the diplomatic corps;
- b. International organizations;
- c. Heads of state and government officials with the rank of at least deputy minister; or
- d. Other employers as may be allowed by the Administration, such as:
 1. Those provided in a., b., and c. above who bear a lesser rank, if endorsed by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO), or Head of Mission in the absence of the POLO;
 2. Professionals and skilled workers with duly executed verified/authenticated contracts containing terms and conditions over and above the standards set by the POEA. The number of professionals and skilled OFWs hired for the first time by the employer shall not exceed five (5). For the purpose of determining the number, workers hired as a group shall be counted as one; or
 3. Workers hired by a relative/family member who is a permanent resident of the host country, except domestic workers (live-in caregiver/care worker or household service workers).

Effectivity of Memorandum Circular No. 08

As of May 28, 2018, the [Memorandum Circular No. 08, Series of 2018, Implementing Guidelines on the Registration of Direct-Hire OFWs](#) should already be in effect.

ONAR Registry

The memorandum was filed to the Office of the National Administrative Register on the May 10th of 2018. This can be seen in [ONAR Bulletin Nov. 8 No. 19](#), which covers memorandums filed from May 7th to May 11th of 2018.



Issuances Filed with ONAR 07 May to 11 May 2018

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT	5/8/18	18-361	PROC.NO. 482	Declaring Tuesday, 08 May 2018 as a Special (Non-Working) Day In the Municipality of Camiling, Province of Tarlac	5/4/18
OFFICE FOR TRANSPORTATION SECURITY	5/10/18	18-369	MEMO.CIR.NO. 004	Amendments to Air Cargo and Mail Security	5/4/18
OFFICE FOR TRANSPORTATION SECURITY	5/10/18	18-369	MEMO.CIR.NO. 005	Policies and Standards for Security Screening Equipment	5/7/18
PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION	5/10/18	18-373	MEMO.CIR.NO. 08	Implementing Guidelines on the Registration of Direct-Hire Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)	4/26/18
PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION	5/10/18	18-373	ADVISORY NO. 25	Regulations Amending the Immigration and Refugee Protection of Canada	3/7/18
PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY	5/11/18	18-374	MEMO.CIR.NO. 07-2018	Approved Upward Adjustment on the Existing Vessel and Cargo Handling Charges on International Containerized and Non-Containerized Cargoes Handled at South Harbor and MICT	5/4/18

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER

Rm. 208, Bocobo Hall, University of the Philippines Law Center
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 9205514 loc. 211; Email: onar.claw@up.edu.ph; uplawcenter.onar@gmail.com

Effectivity period

The POEA Memorandum Circular No. 08 states that:

This circular shall be effective fifteen (15) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation and filing with the Office of the National Administrative Register.

This circular shall be effective fifteen (15) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation and filing with the Office of the National Administrative Register.

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Revised POEA Rules of 2016

Revised POEA rules and regulations governing the recruitment and employment of land-based overseas Filipino workers of 2016.

<http://www.poea.gov.ph/laws&rules/files/Revised%20POEA%20Rules%20And%20Regulations.pdf>

Skilled workers requirements list (outdated)

The POEA has an outdated a list of requirements for skilled worker requirements list. **This no longer valid** as of May 27th of 2018. It's still listed as the latest requirements in the website, but a new list of requirements is available from the Direct Hire department of the POEA offices.

PROFESSIONAL AND SKILLED WORKERS	
1. Passport with validity period of not less than six (6) months from intended date of departure;	
2. Valid Work Visa, Entry/Work Permit (whichever is applicable per country). -If visa assurance or guarantee is issued by employer, the same should be noted/acknowledged by the Government or Immigration Office in the jobsite;	
3. Employment Contract:	
a. Original copy of Employment Contract or Offer of Employment;	
b. Provisions should be compliant with Sec. 124.d.2, Rule II, Part III, of the POEA Revised Rules 2016;	
c. Verified by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) for countries with POLO and authenticated by the Philippine Embassy/Consulate for countries with no POLO.	
4. Valid Medical Certificate from DOH-accredited medical clinic authorized to conduct medical exams for OFWs.	
5. Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) Certificate issued by OWWA;	
6. Additional country-specific requirements:	
a. Canada - Labor Market Opinion (LMO), Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) form and Canadian Letter; Canadian Letter and Employer's Certificate of Registration from ECON (Province of Saskatchewan Executive Council) or Saskatchewan Immigrant	

Screenshot of outdated requirements (May 2018)

Fees

These were the fees listed in this document:

- USD \$100 (or PHP equivalent) for POEA processing fee
- USD \$25 (or PHP equivalent) for OWWA membership fee

This is most likely no longer valid, either. The new document doesn't have a list of fees.

Finding this document

The location of this document isn't obvious. Here are directions to find the PDF in the May 2018 version of the POEA website.

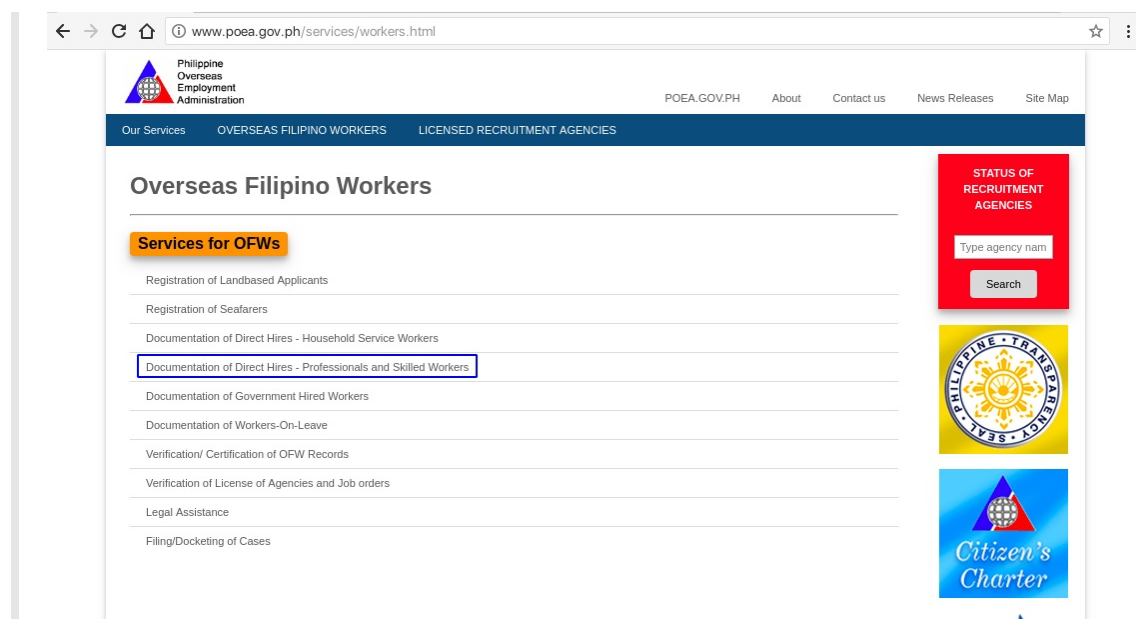
1. Start with the POEA Website

The [POEA Website \(poea.gov.ph\)](http://poea.gov.ph) has a link with information for *Overseas Filipino Workers* in their main navigation.



2. "Overseas Filipino Workers" page

In the [Overseas Filipino Workers](#) page, there's a link to *Documentation of Direct Hires - Professionals and Skilled Workers*. This is the document you're looking for.



3. "Documentation of Direct Hires - Professionals and Skilled Workers" document

This document is named [NH_Professionals.pdf](#).