



PwC Legal Flash Alert



CSME Changes: Things to Know



Background

Foreign nationals working in Trinidad and Tobago ("T&T") for more than 30 days in a year are generally required to secure work permits. The law however made special provision for qualifying Caricom nationals, where these persons are to be exempted from the work permit requirements and can reside and work in T&T where a CSME Skills Certificate ("certificate") is obtained from the relevant Government agency. Until recently however, the categories of persons qualified to apply for the said certificate were limited to mainly university graduates, sports and media personnel. There have however been some recent changes to the law to extend the categories of persons who now qualify to apply for the certificate.



What was the Law before?

Under the Immigration (Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals) Act the following persons are eligible to apply for a CSME Skills Certificate to work in Trinidad and Tobago. With the certificate, eligible persons were able to seek employment and work in T&T indefinitely.

1. University Graduates;
2. Artistes;
3. Musicians;
4. Media workers; and
5. Sports persons



Changes to the Law

The Immigration (Caribbean Community Skilled Nationals) Amendment Act 2022 was proclaimed in March 2023. This means that seven (7) additional categories of workers are now eligible to work in T&T upon obtaining the certificate:

1. Non-Graduate Nurses;
2. Non-Graduate Teachers;
3. Artisans with a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ);
4. Holders of Associate Degrees or a comparable qualification;
5. Household Domestics with a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) or an equivalent qualification;
6. Agricultural Workers; and
7. Security Guards

Moreover, the existing category of "Artistes" has also been expanded to include barbers and beauticians. Further the Trinidad and Tobago National Training Agency provides CVQ accreditation and approval with regard to items 3 and 5.



Who are impacted?

CARICOM nationals seeking employment in T&T in various sectors.

For queries and assistance on T&T immigration requirements including the CSME process please contact us.