

Panama and Digital Nomads: A Visa Designed for Remote Work

Remote work is no longer the exception; it has become the standard way of working for thousands of professionals around the world. Panama responded to that trend with an immigration permit created specifically for “digital nomads”: individuals who provide services remotely, through technological means, to employers or clients located outside the country, without generating Panamanian-source income. Below we summarize how this regime works and what those considering a move to Panama to work remotely should know.

Who qualifies?

The permit is not limited to any particular sector or profession. It applies both to individuals with an employment contract with a foreign multinational company and to self-employed workers operating under a teleworking arrangement. In either case, the services must take effect abroad and be rendered to clients or entities outside Panama.

The financial requirement is specific: applicants must prove an annual income of no less than thirty-six thousand balboas (B/.36,000.00), or its equivalent in foreign currency, derived from a foreign source.

Where is the application filed?

The application must be filed directly with the National Immigration Service in Panama; it cannot be initiated through a consulate abroad.

Key documents

The application requires, among others: a duly signed power of attorney, ten photographs, a full copy of the passport, an apostilled criminal record certificate, a health certificate issued by a Panamanian physician, immigration forms, a health insurance policy valid in Panama for the duration of the stay, a certificate of existence of the foreign company, and a letter from the company (on letterhead and signed by its legal representative) setting out the position, duties, monthly income —no less than B/.3,000.00 or its equivalent—, payment frequency, confirmation that the income is foreign-source, the remote work arrangement, and an undertaking to cover repatriation expenses if necessary.



A sworn statement signed by the applicant confirming that they will not accept local employment or provide local services in Panama is also required, together with payment of B/.250.00 to the National Immigration Service.

Self-employed applicants must additionally provide a certificate of existence of their own company registered abroad and a notarized sworn statement describing the commercial relationship with their clients —identification of the parties, services rendered, income received, source of funds and payment frequency—. As proof of foreign income, a bank certification confirming that the funds originate abroad and relate to the declared activity is sufficient, as are duly authenticated bank statements (local or foreign) evidencing that relationship.

Term, renewal and restrictions

The permit is initially granted for up to nine months and may be extended for an additional period of up to nine months. It does not allow dependents: each application is individual. Holders may enter and leave Panama freely while the permit is valid; however, while the application is pending —and until it is approved— they should not leave the country, as the law requires a minimum stay of fifteen business days from the filing of the documents.

The limits of the remote work arrangement

The visa is intended exclusively for remote work with foreign employers or clients. If the holder renders services locally on behalf of the foreign company, the permit may be cancelled. Likewise, failing to comply with the established conditions—for example, by accepting local employment—may result in the cancellation or revocation of the visa.

A point that frequently raises questions is passive income, such as rental or investment returns: the regulations require the income to derive from an employment relationship or from the provision of remote services, so passive income on its own does not satisfy the requirement.

Why it matters

For global companies with distributed talent and for independent professionals seeking a stable base in Latin America, Panama offers a clear immigration regime, with objective requirements and without the local tax burdens associated with other forms of residency. Combined with its territorial tax system, its dollarized economy and its air connectivity, the country stands out as an attractive platform for those who work without borders.

At Alcogal, we advise companies and professionals on assessing and applying for this permit, as well as on the immigration and corporate considerations involved in relocating to and operating from Panama.

Frequently asked questions about Panama's digital nomad visa

What is Panama's digital nomad visa and who can apply for it?

It is a short-stay immigration permit for individuals who work remotely for employers or clients located outside Panama. Both employees of foreign companies and self-employed workers may apply, provided their services take effect abroad and do not generate Panamanian-source income.

What is the minimum income required for Panama's digital nomad visa?

Applicants must prove a minimum annual income of B/.36,000.00 (or its equivalent in foreign currency) from a foreign source, equivalent to no less than B/.3,000.00 per month. The income must derive from an employment relationship or from remote services; passive income alone does not meet the requirement.

How long does the digital nomad visa last and can it be renewed?

The permit is initially granted for up to nine months and may be extended for an additional period of up to nine months, for a maximum of eighteen months. While it is valid, holders may enter and leave the country freely, but they should not leave while the application is still pending.

Can I include my family or work for a Panamanian company with this visa?

No. The permit is individual and does not allow dependents: each family member must file their own application if they qualify. It also does not permit accepting employment or providing local services in Panama; doing so may lead to the cancellation or revocation of the immigration permit.

Where is the application filed and which documents are required?

Applications are filed directly with the National Immigration Service in Panama, not at consulates. Key documents include a full copy of the passport, an apostilled criminal record certificate, a health certificate, an insurance policy valid in Panama, a letter from the foreign company, a sworn statement not to accept local employment, and payment of B/.250.00.



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