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Global Immigration alert

March 2026

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United Arab Emirates

Temporary immigration relief measures following flight disruptions

Executive summary

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security (ICP) [announced](#) temporary immigration relief measures in response to flight cancellations and airspace disruptions. The measures [waive](#) overstay fines for individuals unable to leave the UAE as planned and allow residents stranded abroad, whose residence permits expired during their absence, to return without obtaining a new entry permit. Both measures are effective retroactively from 28 February 2026.

Key developments

The ICP has confirmed that overstay fines will not be imposed on individuals who were unable to depart from the UAE due to flight cancellations, suspensions or rescheduling. This measure applies to fines incurred on or after 28 February 2026 and covers:

- Visitors holding tourist or visit visas
- Individuals holding exit permits
- Residents who canceled their residence permits in preparation for departure but were unable to travel due to flight disruptions

The ICP has also confirmed that UAE residents who are currently outside the country and whose residence permits expired while abroad due to airspace closures or flight suspensions may return to the UAE without applying for a new entry permit. This facilitation is effective from 28 February 2026 until 31 March 2026.

Impact on employers

The announced measures may benefit impacted individuals, including short-term travelers and employees who hold UAE residence permits but were affected by flight or airspace disruptions. Once the impacted employees return to the UAE, employers should ensure that they hold valid immigration and employment documentation so they can lawfully reside and continue their work activities in the country. Employers remain responsible for supporting the regularization of impacted employees' immigration status in accordance with applicable UAE immigration and employment regulations.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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