



**MINISTRY OF
HOME AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X741, Pretoria, 0001, Tel: (012) 432 6635 Fax: (012) 432 6675
Private Bag X9102, Cape Town, 8000, Tel: (021) 469 6507, Fax: (021) 461 4191

To: All Media/News Editors

Media Statement

Issue Date: 29 August 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

**HOME AFFAIRS TAKES FIRST SMALL BUT MEANINGFUL STEP TOWARDS
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

In a symbolically important first step towards the digital transformation of the Department, the Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber, has instituted a new rule to deliver the outcomes of visa waiver applications digitally via email to applicants. In the first phase of the rollout of this process, the outcome of waiver applications for holders of Zimbabwe Exemption Permits (ZEPs) will be sent digitally, effective immediately. Over time, this digital-first approach will be extended to other applicants in the visa and permit regime.

This means that applicants will no longer be required to visit a VFS branch to collect physical, paper-based copies of the waiver letters. Instead, starting today with ZEP holders and later, all applicants will conveniently receive digital waiver letters, in PDF format, through email. These digital letters can be used to submit a mainstream visa application going forward.

"While this step on its own may be a small one, it is still meaningful as part of our larger quest to clamp down on corruption and to enhance efficiency of services by transforming Home Affairs into a digital-first Department. This simple embrace of a digital-first approach to processing waivers has also significantly accelerated our work to clear the permitting backlog that dates back a decade, which started out at over 306 000 unprocessed applications. Through this change, we have been able to effectively process 60 582 outstanding ZEP waiver applications, many of which date back to 2022. Another 22 529 ZEP waiver applications are set to be processed soon, further reducing the backlog and freeing up valuable resources in a department that has been financially gutted to the point of only having 40% of the staff resources. This step illustrates our absolute determination to use technology to do more with the little we have.", said Minister Schreiber

Applicants who still prefer to collect hardcopies of ZEP waiver letters at branches will still be able to do so, the Department would like to ask applicants to not be doubtful when they receive an outcome digitally via email from the following official addresses:

No-reply1.dhasa@vfshelpline.com

No-reply2.dhasa@vfshelpline.com

No-reply3.dhasa@vfshelpline.com

No-reply4.dhasa@vfshelpline.com

No-reply5.dhasa@vfshelpline.com

No-reply6.dhasa@vfshelpline.com

For media enquiries, please contact:

Siya Qoza

Cell number: 082 898 1657

Duwayne Esau – Spokesperson for the Minister

Cell number: 067 630 4183

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS