



MINISTRY OF HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE AND LAND TRANSPORT SEYCHELLES PLANNING AUTHORITY

Policies and Guidelines Library

TEMPORARY WORKERS ACCOMMODATION POLICY

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1.0 SUMMARY

The present economic growth and increased investments in Seychelles in the last few years, in particular the tourism sector, have given rise to an exponential increase in the number of temporary foreign workers landing on our shores. The majority of the temporary foreign workers have been confined to the construction and industrial sectors.

Given the persisting limited land resources and limited space, temporary workers' employers have somewhat been 'pushed' to integrate their workers in well-established communities all over the island. It goes without saying that when such happens, the situation not only exerts undue pressure on the community but one that deserve special attention. The areas of social ills, conflicts are just a few.

2.0 PURPOSE

This policy aims at providing advice for potential developers of temporary, accommodations, ensuring that developers are aware of the requirements in providing, managing and removal of the infrastructures and establishing guidelines to be used in considering any applications proposed for the development of these lodgings .

2.1 STATEMENT

For the purpose of this document, the term temporary foreign worker is defined as 'foreign citizen receiving temporary entry to the territory of the Seychelles and receiving local employment for a clearly defined time period and tasks'.

This document sets out the policy to regulate suitable areas for accommodation of temporary foreign workers.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Demand for scarce land resource is ever increasing. Many employers of temporary foreign workers have faced difficulties to find ideal location to provide adequate accommodation for their employees. So far, only very small areas on Mahe (Zone 21) and Praslin (Eve Island) have been specifically designated as suitable for temporary foreign workers' accommodation.

In industrial designated zones, such as that of the Providence Industrial Estate (PIE) illegal residential quarters have sprung up and these amongst other things, pose environmental and public health threats give the inadequate provision of sanitary facilities, proper sewage treatment systems, waste disposal and in some cases, disrespect for basic hygiene standards. Several of these makeshift accommodations, it is established, are below the minimum acceptable residential standards set by Public Health Services (PHS) and building regulations of the Town and Country Planning Act.

In other cases, foreign workers have been housed either in dense or well established residential locations and communities or on construction sites for extended periods of time or in dispersed small makeshift accommodations all over the country.

In the context of Seychelles, even if we enjoy and live in a multiracial and multicultural society, we have our unique culture. Our islands have fragile ecosystems and sensitive natural landscape. These cannot be compromised at the expense of any economic boom. This calls for the need to review the present situation in terms of accommodation in this sector and to provide for an adequate policy to address all the short coming.

This document sets out the guiding principle to regulate suitable areas for accommodation of temporary foreign workers. The policy includes the time limits of such type of accommodation and provides standards in terms of density and maximum numbers of workers per area that must be respected. In addition, other regulatory authorities such as the Public Health Services will assess and apply their own standards on health and hygiene related issues, while the Fire and Rescue Services will regulate fire prevention and protection issues.

This policy will apply to temporary foreign workers employed in the construction and industrial sectors and will not apply to foreigners working in the Seychelles on a fixed-term contract for example those in the tourism business.

4.0 APPLICABILITY & SCOPE

The Seychelles Planning Authority and all other responsible arms of Government. These are applicable to all developments defined in the Physical Development legislation.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Areas where accommodation for temporary foreign workers is not permitted

- (i) All areas classified and designated as high density residential or housing estate as classified by land use planning
- (ii) The zone defined as Inner Victoria
- (iii) Any tourism designated area or mixed residential and tourism zone with the exception of construction periods of medium to large hotels and in designated staff accommodation on the premises of large hotels

2. Areas with permitted use for temporary foreign workers accommodation

- (i) Separate zones designated in land use plans as areas for temporary workers accommodation.
- (ii) Accommodation for temporary foreign workers on their respective construction sites e.g. large hotels, commercial buildings or industrial sites.
- (iii) Permanent accommodation of temporary foreign workers on industrial sites for specific types of enterprises and in clearly defined locations.
- (iv) On private property owned by the employer of the temporary foreign workers in appropriate types of accommodation separate from their place of work.

3. Specific rules and standards applying to the various areas with permitted use for temporary foreign workers accommodation

(i) Land Use sub-category area for temporary foreign workers accommodation

Through the land use planning activities conducted by the Planning Authority all districts on the main islands of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue, land has been classified into specific use areas. Under the main category of 'residential land', there shall be a sub-category for 'temporary workers accommodation'. The areas designated under this sub-category are state land and are ideally used for semi-permanent housing of a changing workforce of foreign workers. Most of these areas are located on reclaimed land. These areas can be allocated or leased to companies employing large numbers of temporary foreign workers for clearly defined periods of time (usually not more than 2 years). In such locations, the lessee or the allocated land user is permitted to:

- Construct semi-permanent accommodation for foreign workers including all the required facilities

- Provide accommodation for foreign workers in a dormitory style, with a minimum of 4.65 square meters per worker in the case of single beds, or a minimum of 3.5 square meters per worker in the case of bunk beds
- Provide accommodation in prefabricated, demountable units or containerized units
- Construct any of the prefabricated units or semi-permanent dormitories up to maximum height of ground floor plus two (2) storeys
- Overall density must not be higher than 1 worker/20 square meters of total available area
- Specific regulations and standards by the Environment, Public Health Services and Fire and Rescue authorities shall apply.

(ii) Accommodation for temporary foreign workers on construction sites

For the period of construction, a limited number of foreign workers can be housed on location, depending on the area and the type of building site. This temporary accommodation of workers on construction sites will only commence after the issuing of an official planning approval for the development on the land and only for a period of time to be defined by the Planning Authority for the specific development. The maximum permissible time for housing workers on construction sites is restricted to 36 months (3 years) for tourism development and 24 months (2 years) for industrial projects.

Accommodation on construction sites can be provided in prefabricated or any type of demountable building in a dormitory style. Minimum required standard is 4.65 square meters per worker in the case of single beds, or a minimum of 3.5 square meters per worker in the case of bunk beds. Proper kitchen and covered dining area, bathroom, laundry and separate toilet facilities must be provided according to the specifications by Public Health Services and other pertinent authorities. Existing water supply from PUC and sewage systems as requested by Environment and Planning Authority must be in place. Additional measures for pollution control might apply depending on the location.

In exceptional cases accommodation on construction sites can also be provided in permanent buildings or existing rooms on site, which will be used for their designated use after the construction period has ended.

On any construction site where workers or security staff is accommodated temporarily, a visual protection towards main roads, adjacent residential or touristic areas is required in the form of boundary walls, hoarding or solid fencing. Details of this visual protection are defined and prescribed by Planning Authority.

a) For hotel construction sites in built-up areas:

Number of rooms/keys for new guesthouse/hotel construction site	Maximum number of temporary foreign workers to be accommodated on site
5 -10	7
11-20	15
21-40	20
41-60	25
61-80	35
81-100	50
Over 100	60

These numbers can be reduced by decision of the Planning Authority based on criteria such as sensitivity of the area as special tourism zone, protected areas or residential neighborhoods.

These maximum numbers of foreign workers permitted to stay on a hotel construction site can be adapted in the case of hotel development projects on small islands, such as islands in the Marine Park of Ste. Anne, for any of the satellite islands of Praslin and La Digue or any of the Outer Islands.

b) For construction sites in industrial areas or industrial estates

Size of industrial construction site	Maximum number of temporary foreign workers to be accommodated on site (including all security staff living on site)
Small industrial development, warehouse or small production site, less than 1000 sqm. plot size	05
Medium-sized industrial development consisting of several buildings or one large facility; 1000 – 3000 sqm. plot size	10
Large industrial development consisting of several large buildings and multiple facilities; over 3000 sqm. plot size	20

These numbers can be reduced by decision of the Planning Authority based on criteria such as safety and security, environmental hazards etc.

c) For commercial buildings

Size of commercial construction site	Maximum number of temporary foreign workers to be accommodated on site (including all security staff living on site)
Small commercial development, ground +2	5
Medium-sized commercial development, above ground +2	10
Large commercial development, ground +2 and above	20

These numbers can be reduced by decision of the Planning Authority based on criteria such as safety and security, environmental hazards etc.

No foreign worker is to be accommodated on any site approved for construction of residences, such as individual houses, apartment buildings, condos etc. or any public buildings. In these cases only up to 4 persons are allowed on site permanently for security purposes.

No foreign worker is to be housed in unmodified standard containers (20ft. and 40ft. containers).

(iii) Permanent accommodation of temporary foreign workers on industrial sites

In specific case of industrial enterprises engaged in the production of materials, equipment or machinery located in an official industrial estate e.g. PIE, the Ministry of Land Use and Housing can specify in a lease contract for the land to be used for such production that a specific number of foreign workers can be accommodated on such sites.

As this is a more permanent type of accommodation for temporary foreign workers engaged in producing industrial goods, all accommodation has to be provided in purpose-built residential blocks including all required facilities. No pre-fabricated or demountable type of accommodation will be permitted in this case. Planning Authority approval for this type of accommodation needs to be sought at the same time of planning the industrial buildings to be located on the same site.

Permanent accommodation for temporary foreign workers on industrial land is restricted **to not more than 50% of the permitted use of the plot**. This should be on the top floor with a separate access. The accommodation for the workers needs to be well integrated with the rest of the development.

No families are permitted to live on industrial land. Women and men are to stay in separate clearly designated areas. Minimum required standard is 4.65 square meters per worker in the case of single beds. In this case no bunk bed type accommodation will be permitted.

Accommodation areas for temporary foreign workers must be kept separate from any industrial production zones within the same building and it must be ensured that no interaction with commercial activities on the same site will occur. For example, accommodation areas in the vicinity of showrooms, on-site sales areas or any kind of visits by the public must be avoided/restricted.

Any company given permission by MLUH to house temporary foreign workers on their industrial production site is only permitted to use these facilities for their own staff. No renting activities will be allowed on these sites.

Number of workers allowed to live on industrial sites:

Size and type of manufacturing business	Maximum number of foreign workers to be accommodated on site (including all security staff living on site)
Small industrial production site, employing up to 20 workers	10
Medium-sized industrial production site, employing up to 30 workers	20
Large industrial production site, employing more than 31 workers	25

Size and type of construction-related business	Maximum number of foreign workers to be accommodated on site (including all security staff living on site)
Any construction business, but depending on plot size	100

(iv) Accommodation of temporary foreign workers on private property/land owned by the employer

In case the employer of the temporary foreign workers owns land which is located outside high density residential areas, housing estates, the area of Inner Victoria or any tourism area or mixed residential and tourism zone, this land can be considered for accommodation of the workers. Approval by Planning Authority will be required as usual. The following conditions apply:

Accommodation must be in a permanent apartment or condo style building. No dormitory style accommodation will be allowed. In case such land area is to be used for housing of temporary foreign workers, no other developments or permanent buildings will be permitted on the land as long as the land is used for this type of accommodation. The total available area (plot size) must be at least 2000 square

meters. In these cases, the owner of the apartment or condo building can rent the facilities to other employers of temporary workers.

In case the land owned by the employer meets the above conditions, the entrepreneur has to meet the following additional criteria:

- The general self-catering unit size applies
- Overall density must not be higher than 1 worker/20 square meters of total available area.
- Specific regulations and standards by Environment and Public Health Services and FRS apply.

Contact Information

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Related Information

Town and Country Planning Act CAP 237

Public Health Services legislations

Environment legislations

Other Documents:

[Related External Document Link](#)