KPMG Meijburg & Co Tax & Legal

IND allows recognized sponsors more flexibility for minor compliance errors

For many employers, recognized sponsor status is an important pillar of their Dutch immigration program. It enables employers to bring highly skilled migrants to the Netherlands through a faster and simplified immigration process. In return, recognized sponsors must comply with various obligations towards the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (*Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst*; IND). Compliance with these obligations is important: non-compliance can lead to enforcement measures and, in more serious cases, may ultimately put an employer's recognized sponsor status at risk.

In practice, the IND has applied these obligations strictly. Certain changes, for example, must be reported within a prescribed timeframe. A notification submitted only a few days late can already constitute a breach of the notification requirements. Until now, there has been limited scope to distinguish between a relatively minor administrative error and more serious or repeated non-compliance.

This now appears to be changing.

More room for a proportionate response

As of **November 1, 2026**, the IND will adopt a more proportionate approach to certain compliance breaches. The underlying obligations and notification deadlines will not change. However, for certain minor or first-time breaches, the IND will have more flexibility to take a lighter approach, for example by first contacting the employer or arranging a compliance meeting, rather than immediately issuing a formal warning or imposing an administrative fine.

The IND may consider the nature of the breach, the circumstances and how the employer responds and remedies any errors. The approach will therefore become more focused on ensuring that the response is appropriate to the breach, rather than immediately resorting to formal enforcement where this is not considered necessary.

This lighter approach does not, however, amount to an unlimited grace period. Written or verbal communication can be used as an intervention no more than twice within a one-year period. In the event of further non-compliance, the IND may, for example, proceed to a formal, in person, compliance meeting with a representative of the recognized sponsor.

A welcome, but limited, relaxation

For recognized sponsors, this is a positive development. Importantly, it does not mean that notification deadlines will become less important or that employers can simply report changes a few days late. A late notification remains a breach of the notification requirements. However, the IND will have more flexibility to take the seriousness and circumstances of the breach into account when determining its response.

For HR and Global Mobility teams, therefore, little changes in their day-to-day practice. Processes should remain designed to ensure that changes are reported to the IND correctly and on time and that the other obligations applicable to recognized sponsors continue to be met.

The difference will primarily be felt when something inadvertently goes wrong. A minor or one-off compliance error will no longer necessarily trigger the same response as more serious or repeated non-compliance.

The IND will apply the new approach in practice for a period of one year, after which it will be evaluated.

KPMG Meijburg & Co
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