



Western Cape  
Government



Department of Economic Development and Tourism

# Tourist guide applications

Frequently asked questions

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A tourist guide is any person who, for monetary or other reward, accompanies people who are travelling through or visiting any place within a country.

## Abbreviations

CATHSSETA	Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
THETA	Tourism and Hospitality Education and Training Authority

### 1. How do I find out more about tourist guiding as a career?

We recommend that you read the Travel and Tourism Career Guide which is published by the Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) available on the CATHSSETA website at [www.cathsseta.org.za](http://www.cathsseta.org.za).

## **2. What is a tourist guide?**

A tourist guide is any person who, for monetary or other reward, accompanies people who are travelling through or visiting any place within a country, and who furnishes those people with information or comments about the places or objects visited.

According to the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations a tourist guide is “a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area which person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognised by the appropriate authority”.

## **3. Who needs to register as a tourist guide?**

According to the Tourism Act No. 3 of 2014, tourist guide means any person registered as such under section 50 and who for reward accompanies any person who travels within or visits any place within the Republic and who furnishes such person with information or comments.

### **GIVEN THE ABOVE, YOU NEED TO REGISTER AS A TOURIST GUIDE IF YOU:**

- ▶ Conduct tours or activities for reward, and
- ▶ Furnish information or comments about the places visited or activities undertaken, and/or
- ▶ Claim to be a tourist guide.

## **4. How is tourist guiding regulated?**

Tourist guiding is a regulated industry in terms of the Tourism Act No. 3 of 2014 and the respective regulations for tourist guiding (published as Government Notice R641 in Government Gazette 15607 of 8 April 1994 and Regulations No. R. 744 of 2001 in Government Gazette 22563 of 17 August 2001).

### **THE ACT PROHIBITS THE FOLLOWING:**

- ▶ A person acting as a tourist guide without being registered.
- ▶ A person, company or close corporation employing as a tourist guide any person who is not registered.
- ▶ A tourist guide acting in a manner which could be deemed misconduct.



You need to register as a tourist guide if you conduct tours or activities for reward, furnish information or comments about the places visited or activities undertaken, and/or claim to be a tourist guide.



## 5. What are the requirements for registering as a tourist guide?

Provincial Registrars are appointed in each of the nine provinces to register tourist guides. In order to be registered as a tourist guide in South Africa, a person must meet the following minimum requirements:

- be a South African citizen or be in possession of a valid work permit
- must have undergone training with a Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA)-accredited training provider or any other accredited institution which offers training recognized by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)
- be in possession of a valid first-aid certificate from an institution recognised by the Department of Labour and a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)

- pay a registration fee of R240 (renewable every 3 years)
- submit a recent passport-size photo:
  - submit a colour photo, taken in the last 6 months.
  - use a clear image of your face. Do not use filters commonly used on social media.
  - have someone else take your photo. No selfies.
  - take off your eyeglasses for your photo.
  - use a plain white or off-white background (e.g. stand against a wall or screen).
  - face the camera when taking the photo
  - make sure that you stand in a well-lit area and that there are no shadows over your face.
  - crop the image so that only your face and shoulders appear on the photo.
- submit a completed and signed registration form and the code of conduct and ethics upon registration (When you apply on the Western Cape Government website your registration form will be automatically populated for you).

## **6. What documents do I need for applying as tourist guide in the Western Cape?**

You will need recently certified copies of the following documents:

- South African identify document (either the old, green ID book or a new ID card are accepted)
- Passport and permanent residence permit (if not a South African citizen)
- Valid First-Aid certificate from a recognised training institution
- Training certificates from a recognised training institution
- Letter of competence
- CATHSSETA (or former THETA) certificate or in the case of an Institute of Higher Education, the academic records and diploma/ degree certificate



- Proof of payment (unless you opt to pay by debit or credit card during the application process)
- ID/ passport-sized photo (need not be professionally taken)
- When applying, we also ask for the following non-mandatory documents – see number 5 above for tips:
  - Driver's license
  - Professional driver's license
  - Foreign language competence

These documents are only needed if you wish for DEDAT to publish your details publicly stating that you are a professional driver-guide or have specific language competencies.

## 7. What are the different categories of tourist guides in South Africa?

There are three categories of tourist guides in South Africa:

- **Site Guides** – these tourist guides have attained the minimum qualification in order to guide in a “limited geographical area” i.e. Hiking Table Mountain, taking a day tour of Cape Town, etc;
- **Provincial Guides** – are national guides that are qualified to take tourists around an entire province i.e. Western Cape or Northern Cape;
- **National Guides** – are permitted to conduct tours around South Africa, crossing all provincial boundaries. These guides would typically accompany people taking a comprehensive tour of South Africa.

The tourist guide identity card issued by DEDAT will specify the category of guide based on the qualifications completed by the tourist guide.

## 8. What are the different classes of tourist guides?

There are three classes of tourist guides in South Africa:

- **Adventure Guides** – conduct a guided adventure experience e.g. rock climbing, paddling, abseiling, etc.
- **Nature Guides** – conduct a guided nature experience in areas such as Game Reserves, National Parks, nature conservation areas, trails, and the like.
- **Cultural Guides** – conduct a guided cultural experience in a limited geographical area such as a museum, community, wine farm, town, city, region or province.

The tourist guide identity card issued by DEDAT will specify the class of guide based on the qualifications completed by the tourist guide.

## 9. What are the different types of qualifications available to tourist guides?

Qualifications for tourist guides are governed by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). There are only two qualifications registered on the NQF for tourist guides:

- National Certificate in Tourism: Guiding (NQF2)
- National Certificate in Tourism: Guiding (NQF4)





National Guides are permitted to conduct tours around South Africa, crossing all provincial boundaries.

The tourist guide identity card issued by DEDAT will specify the NQF level based on the qualification completed by the tourist guide.

## 10. What is CATHSSETA?

The Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) is one of the 21 SETAs established under the Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998) in 2001. CATHSSETA was formally known as the Tourism and Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA) until 1 April 2012, when it became the Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority. CATHSSETA's mandate is to facilitate skills development within the sub-sectors it has been mandated with through the disbursement of grants for learning programmes and monitoring of education and training as outlined in the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). To learn more visit the CATHSSETA website at [www.cathsseta.org.za](http://www.cathsseta.org.za).

## **11. Why is a CATHSSETA certificate required?**

The Regulations in Respect of Tourist Guides (issued in accordance with the Tourism Act (Act No. 72 of 1993)) states that a copy of the qualification from the respective SETA (previously known as the THETA and now known as the CATHSSETA) must be submitted as part of the application process. For more information visit the CATHSSETA website at [www.cathsseta.org.za](http://www.cathsseta.org.za). Where a learner has completed a diploma or degree through a SAQA registered institution then the applicant needs to supply the academic results and degree/diploma certificate.

## **12. I'm a new learner and have not yet received my CATHSSETA certificate. What do I do?**

You can contact CATHSSETA directly or via your training provider to request a screenshot of your certificate and upload this as evidence when applying with DEDAT. You will require your CATHSSETA number (also referred to as the C-number) or your ID number when enquiring with CATHSSETA.

## **13. How do I know if my qualification is accredited with CATHSSETA?**

Your training provider will be able to provide you with a CATHSSETA registration number or alternatively the SAQA code. You can use this number to check that they are officially registered with CATHSSETA or SAQA accredited. You can also contact CATHSSETA for a list of accredited training providers. Usually, the certificate that you received from your training provider will contain your THETA or CATHSSETA number and will also display the THETA or CATHSSETA logo. If you are unsure about this, contact your training provider and/ or CATHSSETA directly.

## **14. I completed my studies with a training provider that was not registered with THETA or CATHSSETA.**

If you have experience working as a tourist guide then you can undergo Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). According to the CATHSSETA, RPL allows for a person to obtain or strive towards obtaining a qualification, based on an assessment of the person's past training and work experience, whether obtained



Any person who wishes to obtain a formal qualification, based on past experience, may participate in the RPL process.

formally or informally. As an employed or unemployed person, if you already have extensive experience in a particular occupation but are finding it difficult to progress your skills development, you can follow the RPL path. You would need to identify which qualification best suits your experience, then you would be assessed by a registered RPL assessor or subject matter expert, according to the requirements of the qualification. This will identify where there are gaps in your experience, which you can address through credit-bearing skills programmes in order to acquire the qualification. Any person who wishes to obtain a formal qualification, based on past experience, may participate in the RPL process. For more information contact a relevant, accredited training provider.

## **15. How do I register as a tourist guide in the Western Cape?**

We recommend that you use the online application system. Should you not have access to the internet, you can also email us your application or submit a hard copy at the office.

### **THE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS IS A TWO-STEP PROCESS:**

For new users of the system, you first need to create an online profile. Remember to write down your username and password as you will require this to sign in at a later stage. To register your user profile visit: <https://westerncapegov.custhelp.com/>

Once you have registered you can sign in and complete your application by following the prompts for “Tourist Guide permits” listed under eServices.

Once you have signed in, you will be able to register as a new tourist guide, renew an existing permit, order a replacement card or badge, and/or upgrade your registration if you have recently completed additional training.

## **16. Why does DEDAT require certified copies?**

This is purely as a measure to reduce possible fraudulent activities and to provide additional assurance of the authenticity of copies submitted to the Department.

## **17. How do I certify a document?**

You can have copies of original documents certified at any police station, at any time. The certification of copies is done free of charge. You must provide your own copies. The police station's resources, such as photocopiers and paper, are not for use by the public. You can also ask any commissioner of oath to certify your document. When presenting yourself at a Police Station have your copies ready together with the original documents.

## **18. How recent must the certified copy be?**

Certified copies must not be older than 6 months from the date on which the document was certified by a Police Officer or other commissioner of oaths.

## **19. I can't find a copy of a document and need it for my application.**

If you have previously submitted documents to DEDAT, you can contact the Tourist Guide Registration Office for a scanned copy. We can either email you the electronic file for you to upload as part of your online application or we can upload the document on your behalf.



A tourist guide is any person who, for monetary or other reward, accompanies people who are travelling through or visiting any place within a country.



## **20. I have a Zimbabwean exemption permit, can I renew my card?**

In terms of the latest Government Notice exemptions granted to Zimbabwean nationals were extended until 30 June 2023. A valid exemption passport certificate and/or authorization letter issued in accordance with the Immigration Act is not required, therefore Zimbabwean nationals can have their tourist guide registrations extended until 30 June 2023, unless they have any other valid visa that has been issued by the Department of Home Affairs.

## **21. I'm a foreign national, can I work as a tourist guide?**

You can work in South Africa as long as you are a permanent resident, have a valid work permit or an officially registered refugee permit/identity document that entitles you to work in the country.

## **22. Who do I contact for a work permit?**

You can contact the Department of Home Affairs or a company that specialises in South African visa and permit applications. Visit [www.dha.gov.za](http://www.dha.gov.za) for more information. You can also contact your closest South African embassy or consulate for advice.

## **23. My application has been rejected. How do I lodge an appeal?**

There is a formal mechanism available should a tourist guide wish to appeal against a decision taken by the Provincial Registrar. Such appeals may be lodged with the National Registrar of Tourist Guides.

For more information, you can contact the Office of the National Registrar at the Department of Tourism on 012 444 6000 or 0860 121 929, via email at [TouristGuideEnquiries@tourism.gov.za](mailto:TouristGuideEnquiries@tourism.gov.za) or visit [www.tourism.gov.za](http://www.tourism.gov.za).

## **24. How do I lodge a complaint regarding illegal guiding?**

All complaints must be in writing and lodged with the Western Cape Registrar of Tourist Guides:

- WC Provincial Registrar of Tourist Guides
- Department of Economic Development & Tourism
- Western Cape Government
- Ground Floor, Waldorf Building, 80 St Georges Mall, Cape Town
- Email: [registrar.registrar@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:registrar.registrar@westerncape.gov.za)

Complaints must be clear and include as much details as possible about the alleged contravention. Where possible information about the date, time and place when the alleged incident/contravention occurred must be provided. The Provincial Registrar must, if the complaint discloses an offence, lay a charge with the South African Police Services (SAPS) or in a manner prescribed by the Act.

## How to contact us

**Western Cape Tourist Guide Registration Office**

**Department of Economic Development & Tourism**

**Western Cape Government**

**Ground Floor, Waldorf Building, 80 St Georges Mall, Cape Town**

**Tel: (021) 483 9008 / 2960**

**Email: [registrar.registrar@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:registrar.registrar@westerncape.gov.za)**

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