

Panama creates 12-month Working Holiday visa for ages 18-30

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Summary

A new Panamanian visa created by Executive Decree No. 21 of 13 October 2026 lets nationals aged 18–30 from countries with a bilateral agreement stay and work temporarily for up to 12 months.

Details (summary of the article)

Casa Solution reports that Panama has created a Working Holiday short-stay visa through Executive Decree No. 21 of 13 October 2026, published in the Official Gazette on 14 October. It is open to people aged 18 to 30 who are nationals of countries that have signed a reciprocal Working Holiday agreement with Panama; the decree does not list eligible countries, and immigration officials have so far named only Japan. Applications are filed in person at the Special Projects Office of the National Immigration Service and require eight documents, including a notarised passport copy, apostilled birth certificate and police record, health insurance, proof of funds, three photos and a Foreign Ministry certificate confirming participation in the programme. Holders may work only temporarily and must first obtain a separate work permit from the Labour Ministry (Mitradel). The visa lasts a maximum of 12 months, cannot be extended or converted to another immigration status inside Panama, and does not lead to residency. Breaches can mean cancellation and deportation. Officials say the aim is cultural exchange and youth mobility, which could bring more young visitors to places such as Boquete, Bocas del Toro and Casco Viejo.