WELCOME TO QATAR
ABOUT QATAR

The state of Qatar lies halfway along the West Coast of the Arabian Gulf, east of the Arabian Peninsula. It is one of the most exciting countries in the Middle East today. An expanding economy and quickening pace of modernization has helped to create a thriving cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic environment.

Both visitors and residents have the opportunity to experience the welcoming and friendly nature of Arab culture. Like anywhere else, respecting and following local traditions allows you the opportunity to experience all that this country has to offer. Qatar has painstakingly preserved its heritage and is a showcase of Arabic and Islamic art, as well as history and culture. This will ensure that your time living and working in Qatar is a rich and rewarding experience.

Please keep in mind that Qatar is a dynamic country and in its effort to transform and open up its economy, many of its immigration policies and processes are periodically under review and subject to change. As such, while every effort has been made to ensure that this guide has the most up to date information, the processes outlined in this document may be subject to various changes and updates. Where this is the case, we have provided links to the relevant authority websites so that you can check and comply with the latest requirements.

*** Please note that throughout this Handbook a number of external organizations are listed - for example: removal companies, attestation agencies. These are merely suggestions of organizations you may wish to contact so they can assist you with services you may require during your move to and stay in Qatar. Please note that the inclusion of an organization within this Handbook does not imply any endorsement by Sidra, and Sidra does not take any responsibility for any service or advice provided by third parties.
The currency in Qatar is called the Qatari Riyal (QR), with a denomination of 100 dirhams per riyal. Coins are rarely used and the denominations for currency notes are QR 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 500. The riyal has a fixed exchange rate with the US dollar of 3.65 riyals to the dollar. Please ensure that if you bring U.S dollars to Qatar for exchange that the note needs to be issued 2009 onward. USD dollar notes issued prior to 2009 will not be exchanged in Qatar.

Qatar has a coastal desert climate with hot and humid summers and relatively warm, pleasant winters. The summer temperature is generally 30-40°C (86-104°F), but can reach up to and in excess of 50°C (122°F). During the winter the temperature will generally range from 10-30°C (50-86°F), though it may occasionally get slightly colder, depending on wind and location within the country (i.e. it tends to be colder out in the desert). Rainfall is minimal, but when it does rain, it tends to do so in strong downpours.

The state religion in Qatar is Islam. Most Qataris belong to the Sunni sect of Islam. Religious policy is set by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Islamic instruction is compulsory for Muslims in all state-sponsored schools.

The state mosque is the Mohammed Bin Abdul Wahab mosque, which is located in the Dafna neighborhood and was designed by renowned Qatari architect Ibrahim Jaidah.

The Fanar Islamic Center and Mosque is located in the old neighbourhood of Doha, adjacent to Souq Waqif. The center provides Arabic lessons to beginners and intermediate speakers.

The official language in Qatar is Arabic, but English is widely spoken and understood. Efforts to learn Arabic are greatly appreciated and well received by the local population.

The state mosque is the Mohammed Bin Abdul Wahab mosque, which is located in the Dafna neighborhood and was designed by renowned Qatari architect Ibrahim Jaidah.

The official language in Qatar is Arabic, but English is widely spoken and understood. Efforts to learn Arabic are greatly appreciated and well received by the local population.

The voltage in Qatar is 240V AC and the sockets are of the three-prong, British design. People are discouraged particularly those arriving from North America or other countries using different voltage – from bringing electrical appliances with them. Voltage converters are not provided in Sidra housing. The television follows the PAL system; DVDs are Region 2 format, though multi-region DVD players are commonly available.
**Food & Drink**

Food in Qatar is mainly influenced by the Muslim cuisine, having a lot of elements from African, Indian and Iranian cuisines, as well some modern international influences. Cuisine from all around is available in Qatar to cater to its Multicultural population.

When it comes to alcohol consumption, visitors should ensure they behave in a manner that does not offend the country’s culture or religious beliefs. Alcohol is not illegal in Qatar, but there are some laws that apply to alcohol and its consumption.

**Water**

Tap water and bottled water in Qatar is very safe to drink.

**Time Zone**

Qatar is at GMT+3, which is three hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time; this is the equivalent to seven/eight hours ahead of New York EST/DST, depending on the season. Due to the proximity to the equator - and minimal change in daylight hours - daylight savings/summer time changes are not applied here.

Please also refer to www.timeanddate.com for time differences specific to your country of origin.

**Public Holidays**

Islamic holidays are observed in Qatar. Both Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha are major public holidays lasting from three to five working days. Islamic festivals are determined by the lunar calendar, so timings shift each year. To see estimated times for Ramadan from year to year visit www.when-is.com/ramadan.asp

- Eid Al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Muslim year, lasting 30 days).
- Eid Al-Adha takes place during the month of the Hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca that every Muslim is required to make at least once in his life, provided he has enough money and the health to do so).
- National Sports Day is also a national holiday in Qatar, held annually on the second Tuesday in February.
- Qatar’s National Day, which is on December the 18th, is observed by embassies and government offices, but not necessarily private businesses.

**Business Hours**

Sidra follows the Qatar standard Sunday to Thursday workweek, with working hours from 07:30am-3:30pm daily. Some of the more traditional private businesses and shops still follow a split day, whereby they close around noon and re-open from 4:00pm until 10:00pm. Depending on your position and duties, other workings hours schedules to be expected.

**Dress Code**

In Qatar it is recommended that you mainly wear clothing that will keep you cool. Attire should preserve modesty, thus form-fitting, transparent or revealing clothing is considered inappropriate. This extends to public places across all of Qatar. A small selection of warm clothes is advisable for the coldest evenings of the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food &amp; Drink</th>
<th><strong>Dress Code</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Qatar it is recommended that you mainly wear clothing that will keep you cool. Attire should preserve modesty, thus form-fitting, transparent or revealing clothing is considered inappropriate. This extends to public places across all of Qatar. A small selection of warm clothes is advisable for the coldest evenings of the year.</td>
<td><strong>While working at Sidra you are required to observe the employee dress code:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee identification issued by the onboarding team must be displayed as directed at all times. No alteration of the badge is permitted (i.e., stickers, obliteration of pictures)</strong></td>
<td>- Employee identification issued by the onboarding team must be displayed as directed at all times. No alteration of the badge is permitted (i.e., stickers, obliteration of pictures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No aspect of appearance should be embarrassing or offensive to visitors or co-workers</strong></td>
<td>- No aspect of appearance should be embarrassing or offensive to visitors or co-workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing must be neat, clean, pressed and appropriate in length</strong></td>
<td>- Clothing must be neat, clean, pressed and appropriate in length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clothes that are revealing or unnecessarily tight-fitting are not considered appropriate apparel. Clothing must extend to an appropriate length on the arms (the general guideline is the elbow) and below the knee at all times. Unacceptable garments are low-cut necklines, see-through blouses and shirts, midriff-cut tops and strapless tops, tight pants, and short skirts (note this is not an all-inclusive list).</strong></td>
<td>- Clothes that are revealing or unnecessarily tight-fitting are not considered appropriate apparel. Clothing must extend to an appropriate length on the arms (the general guideline is the elbow) and below the knee at all times. Unacceptable garments are low-cut necklines, see-through blouses and shirts, midriff-cut tops and strapless tops, tight pants, and short skirts (note this is not an all-inclusive list).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hair, beards and mustaches should be clean and well-groomed at all times</strong></td>
<td>- Hair, beards and mustaches should be clean and well-groomed at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shirts worn must be free of offensive language, pictures, advertising or political statements</strong></td>
<td>- Shirts worn must be free of offensive language, pictures, advertising or political statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tattoos and body piercings other than ears should not be visible at any time</strong></td>
<td>- Tattoos and body piercings other than ears should not be visible at any time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Should religious beliefs or practices conflict with this policy, reasonable accommodation will be made for employees</strong></td>
<td>- Should religious beliefs or practices conflict with this policy, reasonable accommodation will be made for employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Failure to comply with the dress code will result in corrective action. Repeated failure could lead to progressive discipline up to and including termination</strong></td>
<td>- Failure to comply with the dress code will result in corrective action. Repeated failure could lead to progressive discipline up to and including termination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Art & Culture
PLACES TO VISIT

Parks & Promenade

Attractions

ACTIVITIES

Qatar is an exciting place to discover, from beautiful desserts to the excitement of downtown. The sea that surrounds Qatar is a great adventure in itself.

Doha Bus

Sailing

Kayaking

Desert Tours

Golf

Kite Surfing

Boat/Dhow Rides

Diving

Rock Climbing
Your Directory To Qatar

Hospitals

HMC Hospitals:
- Hamad General Hospital
- Rumailah Hospital
- Women’s Hospital
- Al Khor Hospital
- Al Wakrah Hospital
- NCCCR – National Center for Cancer Care and Research
- Heart Hospital
- The Cuban Hospital
- Pediatrics Emergency Center (ALSadd, Al Rayan, Al Shamal, Al Daayen and Old Airport)

Private Hospitals:
- Al Ahli Hospital
- Al Emadi Hospital
- Turkish Hospital
- Doha Clinical Hospital
- American Hospital
- Aspetar Orthopedics and Sports Medicine Hospital

Supermarkets

- Al Meera
- Ceant Hypermarket
- Lulu Hypermarket
- Family Food Center
- Safari Hypermarket
- Grand Hypermarket
- Kabayan Supermarket
- The Indian Supermarket
- Carrefour
- Monoprix
- Spinneys
- Megamart
- Quality Hypermarket
- Masskar Hypermarket

Malls

- Villagio Mall
- Hayatt Plaza
- Mall of Qatar
- Tawar Mall
- Landmark Mall
- Ezdan Mall
- Gulf Mall
- Al Hazem Mall
- Lagoon Mall
- Dar Al Salam
- Q1 Mall
- Q-Mall
- The Gate Mall
- City Center
- The Mall
- Wathnan Mall
- Royal Plaza
- Al Asmakh Mall
- Marina Mall – Opening Soon
- North Gate Mall – Opening Soon

Telecom Services

- Ooredoo
- Vodafone

Banks

- Ahli Bank QSC
- Arab Bank
- Bank Sederat Iran
- Barwa Bank
- BNP Paribas Doha
- Commercial Bank of Qatar
- Doha Bank
- HSBC
- International Bank of Qatar
- Al Khaliji Bank
- Mashreq
- Masraf Al Rayan
- Qatar Development Bank
- Qatar International Islamic Bank
- Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB)
- Qatar National Bank (QNB)
- Standard Chartered

Transportation

- Taxis
  - Karwa
  - Uber
  - Careem
- Public buses
- Karwa Bus
- West Bay Shuttle Bus
  - This bus service picks up passengers every 12 minutes starting at 6 AM and ends at 9 PM. The route starts at Khalifa Tennis and Squash complex and swings through the Qatar Post Office before zigzagging through the streets between the Corniche and Majlis Al Taawon St. The bus also services the new Doha Exhibition and Conference Center, City Center Mall, Four Seasons Hotel, the Hilton Hotel and the Intercontinental Doha.
- Taxis
- Public buses

Rental Cars

- Al Muftah Rentacar
- Argus Car Hire
- Avis Qatar
- Budget
- Europcar
- Hertz
- Strong Rent a Car
- Fox transportation
- Castle Limousine
Useful Mobile Applications

Useful Contact Numbers

- Emergency (Police or Ambulance) - 999
- Worldwide Emergency Number - 112
- KAHRAMAA - Electricity and Water - 991
- Ooredoo Telephone Assistance - 111
- Local Directory - 180
- International Calls Enquires - 150
- Doha International Airport - 4465 6666
- Labor Department - 4440 6406, 4450 8111, 4440 6537
- Medical Commission - 4467 9111
- Mowasalat Taxi - 4458 8888
- Qatar Airways - 4449 6000
- Weather Forecast - 4465 6590