

NEWSLETTER No. 4 Q3 2013

COMING TO GENEVA

This newsletter focuses on three key issues anyone coming to Geneva will need to consider.

PERMITS

To reside and work in Geneva you need to have a permit issued by the Cantonal Population Office (OCP or l'Office Cantonal de la Population). There are 3 types of permit that would normally be considered for someone coming to work in Geneva:

1. B permits: entitles the holder to work and live in Geneva, which depending on the applicant's nationality can be for 5 or 10 years.
2. G permits: entitles the holder to work, but not to live full time in Geneva. These are only available to European residents and are commonly described as "frontalier" permits.
3. L permits: entitles the holder to work and live in Geneva for up to 364 days.

An employer cannot employ someone on a B permit before the permit is delivered. **This is new from 1 June 2013.** An applicant for a G permit can start to work in Geneva as soon as an application is submitted to the OCP.

TAX POSITION OF PERMIT HOLDERS

All holders of B, G and L permits have tax at source deducted by their employer. Normally, a B permit holder does not need to file a tax declaration in Geneva. Exceptionally, where a B permit holder earns more than CHF 500'000 he/she has to file a tax declaration and the tax at source is treated as a payment on accounts against his final tax bill. Other exceptions would be where the individual owns property in Geneva or where he has sufficient wealth to be liable for wealth tax. G permit holders do not need to file a Swiss tax return though there is a possibility to do so in certain situations. A G permit holder will almost certainly need to file a tax return in their country of residence. The 2013 tax at source rates are available online on the Geneva Tax Department's web site. Swiss tax rates are progressive and vary between 0% and 37% of gross salary.

SOCIAL SECURITY/PENSIONS/INSURANCES

Local hires go onto the Swiss national insurance and pension systems (see Newsletter No. 3 Q2 2013 for further details of Swiss pension systems). Swiss national insurance covers state pension, invalidity benefit, unemployment insurance and maternity benefits. In addition employees are covered for accidents at work and out of work by their employers

Seconded/expatriate staff can stay on the national insurance and pension systems of the country from which they have been seconded, usually for a period of up to five years

Who are we?

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