

Getting the Indonesian 6-month (211A) e-Visa in 2024

Without paying an agent!

There have been recent rumors of the ability to apply for and receive the famed 211A visa (aka 6 month visa) through the Indonesian e-visa site, yourself, without going through an agent.

The government fee for the 211A visa is 1,500,000 IDR (approximately USD \$100), per passport. This gets you a visa good for 60 days, with possibility of 2 more 60-day extensions costing 2,000,000 IDR each, for a maximum stay of 6 months.

The agent fee for applying for you, and “guaranteeing you” (financially) typically runs from \$100-\$150 USD per passport, in addition to the government fee for the visa. Plus once you use an agent to get the visa, you have to use that agent to extend the visa, and that isn’t free either. The agents typically also charge a 500,000-750,000 IDR fee for each 2-month extension (in addition to the 2M IDR per extension owed to the government). So it is really worth a little effort to apply for the visa yourself, without going through an agent.

The website is (similar to Indonesian Customs’ Vessel Declaration website) very quirky and buggy. We tried in February 2024 to apply ourselves, after a friend indicated they had been successful. But finally gave up and hired an agent to get the visa for us, because we were running out of time. So start with your application well in advance of your planned arrival date.

In May I had to fly out for personal business, and I had a little time and good internet, so I tried again to apply for my visa myself.

It ain’t easy... Here’s a little coaching on what obstacles I faced, and how you might get around them, in May 2024.

Create an Account on the eVisa Website

Start at <https://molina.imigrasi.go.id/> (I believe <https://evisa.imigrasi.go.id/> will get you to the same place) and CREATE AN ACCOUNT FIRST. Then go in and start an application and select the 60 day tourist visa. (Read this whole article first carefully before you start!, especially the part about applying early!)

Step 1: The first step to create an account is to upload a carefully scanned or photographed copy of your passport. This must be a high quality copy as a JPG. This is the step that causes the most problems, and you have to do it twice (first in creating an account, and a second time when creating a visa application). The website would not accept the upload of the passport. I never did resolve why, or exactly how to get around this problem when it occurs, except to keep trying. Try with different browsers, try different times during the day, maybe clear the cache on your browser, maybe even try someone else’s computer. It seemed random (and not the fault of the passport jpg) when it would work and when it wouldn’t. One other person said it was important to allow sufficient time for the passport to fully upload. Go slowly and be patient.

Step 2: Second, you have to upload a color passport-type photo of yourself. File format using *.JPEG/ .JPG/ .PNG in color. Min. 400x600px. Max. size 2Mb. Proper composition as a normal passport photo. We just put on nice clothes, stood up against a white wall and took a picture with our cell phone, and then cropped it to look like a passport photo. (there is an example of what they are expecting on the upload page).

Then there’s the usual information to enter about your nationality, date of birth, and passport.

Step 3: Next, enter an email address. This will be your user id for the account, and will be how they communicate with you. So (a) pick an email address that is not likely to reject emails from Indonesia (some email servers are much pickier than others)—Gmail worked for us. The website checks right then to make sure that email address has not been used before.

One problem we ran into in February, was that as part of creating an account, the website sends a confirming email to your email address, and you need to click on the link in that email to actually create the account. The problem we had in February was that we didn't get any confirming email (some part of the website process on their end was not working). But, the website did remember that we had tried to create an account with that email address, and would not let us try again with the same email address. It was frustrating, and the only work-around was to use a different email address and try again. We were quickly running out of email addresses to use (see workaround below). A few days later we tried again and were able to create an account and get the email confirmation.

Applying for the Visa

Once you have created an account, then log on and apply for the visa. There is an initial entry screen and these are the answers you should give:

Passport (your nationality)

Main Purpose: General, Family or Social

Sub Purpose: Tourism, Family Visit, and Transit

Chose Visa: Tourist Single Entry Visit Visa for 60 days

Planning to Stay: 60 Days

Financial Information Upload: One of the functions that an agent performs is to act as a financial guarantor for each visa applicant. For example, if the visa holder has to be deported or flown home for some reason, the agent is responsible for covering the costs, if the visa holder cannot. If you are applying for yourself, without an agent to guarantee you, you must supply 3 months' worth of bank statements showing a balance of (I forget how much, I think \$2,000 USD or equivalent). Be sure to blank out your account numbers before uploading.

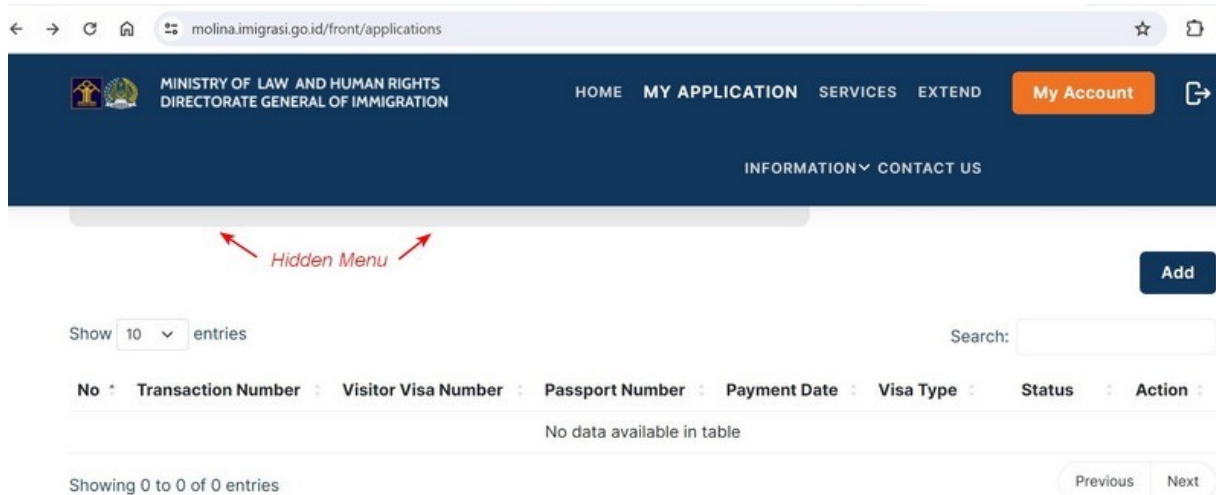
I consolidated 3-months worth of bank statements into one PDF file using a program I bought long ago called CutePDF. This also has a "typewriter" function with allowed me to XXX out the account numbers (I don't know/remember if the website allows for uploading 3 separate files, maybe they do).

Your Address in Indonesia: You will also need to supply an address in Indonesia. "On my Boat" doesn't work. I used a friend's address (after asking permission). I think a marina address, or maybe even a hotel address would work fine. So figure out what you are going to use before you start the application process.

Upload your Passport: The first step is again to upload a copy of your passport. This is where I ran into trouble in both attempts to apply. The SAME passport upload that I used to create the account wasn't accepted when I had to upload it again to apply for a visa. I tried a bunch of different stuff, same passport but different file name, different sizes from very small file to a high resolution jpg. I tried using a photo of my passport carefully taken with a cell phone, as well as a high resolution scan with a scanner. Nothing I did worked. This is when I gave up and hired an agent in February. In May, I happened to be in the USA and I happened to be applying at 1am Jakarta time, and it worked the first time. Coincidence, or a clue??

I am suspicious that they may have a number of applications per day cut-off, and rather than telling you that, they just quit accepting applications with a stupid error. Or their hard drive fills up, or... who knows? So if nothing else works, try very early in the morning. Keep trying.

Pay for the Visa: The next stumbling block was a sneaky one. I didn't realize it at the time, but part of the web page was not visible on my screen. My application screen, after submitting my application looked like this:

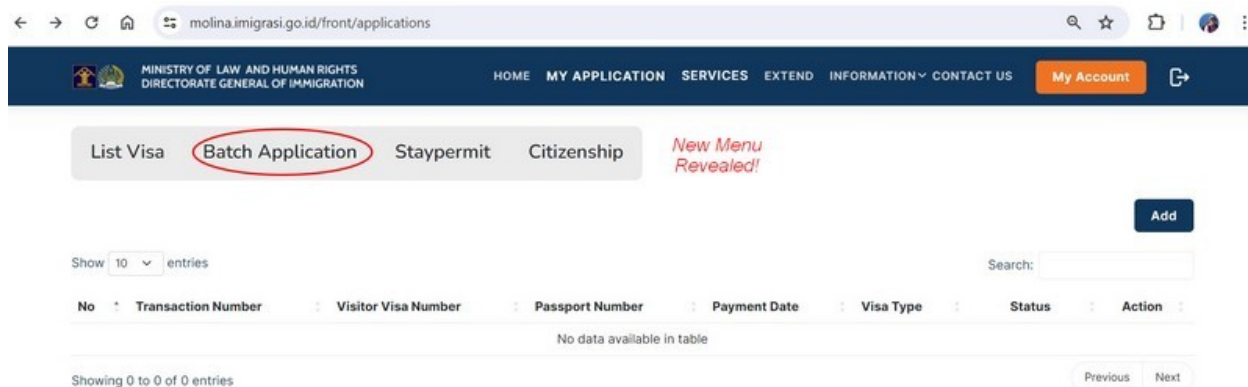


After completing the "submit" part, the Transaction list was empty, and I had submitted without paying for the visa. How do I pay for the visa?? None of the visible menu items, including "My Application" would show my application.

There are, I believe, 2 ways.

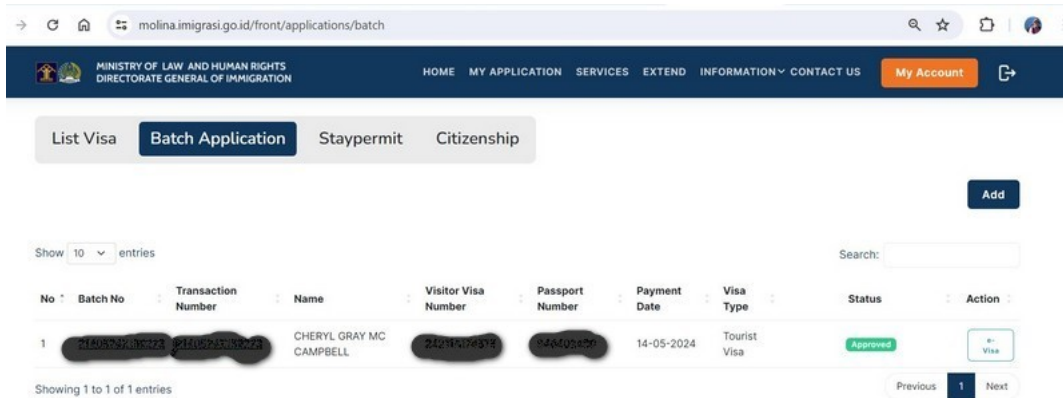
1. They send you a confirmation email after you submit. In that email is a button to click that will take you to your submission, and there you can click on a link to go to the payment website. This is what I did.
2. If your Application List is empty, as mine was (see picture above), figure out how to "zoom out" on your browser. In Chrome on Windows, there's a Zoom function in the settings menu (3 little vertical dots on the far right end of the menu bar). Apparently with 100% zoom on my laptop, the black bar on the top of the page covers up a critical menu that allows you to click and show your "batch" status.

Zooming out, I found out later, reveals the previously hidden menu item.



Click on the "Batch Application" menu and the visa application shows up.

I believe one of the clickable things in a visa you have not yet paid for, will get you to your specific payment page on Finpay.com



For my payment, I used a US credit card, and it worked fine. I got payment confirmation from Finpay.com, their payment processor, in my email.

The Visa: 7 calendar days later, I received an email from Immigration with my visa as a PDF, which I printed to take with me. (The airline check-in agent wanted to see it).

Once issued, the visa is good for 90 days, meaning that you have 90 days to enter Indonesia with that visa. Then, when you enter, you get 60 days from the date you enter—at a port, on entry, they stamp your passport with the end date, and remember it's 60 days, not 2 months!

On Arrival: On arrival at the airport in Jakarta (I was flying back in after a short visit home), nobody was there to look at my passport or the visa printout. I put my passport in an automated scanner, and got the green light, the gate opened, and I walked through to Customs. No stamp in passport, but my proof of entry was Visit Stay Permit (PDF), which was emailed to me automatically by Immigration. This, I assume, takes the place of the stamp in my passport. It has the date of arrival and the end date of the current 60 day visa.

My cost was just the government cost of the visa...1,500,000 IDR (about \$100 USD). No agent fee.

Tips and Tricks

Some additional tips and workarounds:

1. If you run out of email addresses before you get your account activated, and you have a gmail account, there's a geeky work-around. You can put a period (dot) (.) anywhere in your Gmail address (besides in the gmail.com part) and most websites think it is a different email address, but Gmail ignores the dot (so, to the Immigration website, joe.blow@gmail.com is a different account than joeblow@gmail.com . But to Gmail, they both come into the same account.)
2. Make sure that you start trying to apply for the visa well in advance of your arrival. If you wait until the last minute, and then decide to use an agent because you can't manage to complete the process yourself, the agent will charge you an expedite fee on top of their agent fee.
3. I would not leave for Indonesia without having the visa in my hand. I have not yet heard of anyone getting denied, but I have heard of some approvals taking longer than 7 days.
4. The visa that I received is labeled 211A--this is the old name for the extendable-up-to-6-months tourist visa. There is no longer any mention of a 211A visa on the Immigration website anywhere. I believe the closest thing that is listed is the C1 visa, but I am not sure they are identical. When you apply, it is not labeled C1 OR 211A. Another quirk.

I have not tried to extend one of these DIY 211A visas, but theoretically it should be possible, ONLINE, on the same website/account. More on that later.

If you want to Use an Agent

Recommended agents, if you need/want one, with Whatsapp numbers:

Ruth at Isle Marine: +62 812-384-7850 ruth@islemarine.com

Hellen Delima: +62 813-4304-3600 hellen_ambon@yahoo.com

Raymond Lesmana: +62 811-124-574 raymondlesmana@ymail.com

There are many others, but these are the 3 most recommended on the Sail SE Asia Facebook group. These people, unlike Bali and Jakarta-based visa mills, know a little bit about cruisers and the quirks of traveling through Indonesia by boat vs by air. It can make a difference sometimes.

Be sure to confirm cost in advance for initial visa and cost for visa extension (every 60 days). If you have a family aboard, ask about a family discount (we got a small discount for 3 of us last time we used an agent).

Paying For the Agent: Though payment to the government was done by credit card online via Finpay, payment to agents is typically done by bank transfer. Most cruisers in SE Asia use [Wise](#) to make payments like this. Sometimes an agent can accept Paypal.

What is an Agent Good For?

It IS advantageous to have an agent, besides just making it easier to apply for a visa. As your situation changes, or as laws change in Indonesia, it's nice to have someone to go ask for advice. Note that these agents DO NOT help you check in to the country. They are just there to help you get your visa, and assist you with any immigration issues while you are in Indonesia. (The exception is Raymond Lesmana, if you are on a rally organized by Raymond, then assistance in clearing in is included in the overall cost). Having an agent was absolutely invaluable to have in your pocket during Covid when everything went sideways.

After nearly 10 years cruising SE Asia, with 5 forays into Indonesia, what we can say is that the only thing that stays the same with Indonesian formalities is that they are constantly changing.

Good luck, and enjoy Indonesia, it truly is magical!

Sherry McCampbell / sv Soggy Paws

May 31, 2024, from Jakarta