

Eased U.S.-Russia Visa Rules Go Into Force Sept. 9

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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In a major triumph for the U.S.-Russia reset, the two countries will introduce a simplified visa regime that includes three-year visas from next month.

The Foreign Ministry has exchanged diplomatic notes with the U.S. Embassy — the final step in the landmark deal — and the new rules will come into force on Sept. 9, the ministry said Monday in a [statement](#).

The new rules will make three-year multiple-entry visas allowing a maximum stay of six months the norm for both tourists and business travelers.

The ministry said a decision on whether to approve each application will now have to be made within 15 calendar days of submission.

The visa agreement — initiated by Washington as President Barack Obama sought to improve

relations with Moscow — also ends a requirement for U.S. visitors to obtain a written invitation from a Russian citizen or organization to apply for a visa. The United States had no such requirement for Russian visitors but will continue to ask first-time applicants to attend an interview.

President Vladimir Putin signed the visa agreement on July 28, days after being ratified by the State Duma and Federation Council. Under U.S. law, no ratification was required in the United States.

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