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OCTOBER 24, 2026

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By Nepal Digest - October 24, 2026 - Nepal

Checked: 22 October 2026. Relevant changes take effect on 29 October 2026.

A place to live and enough support for daily life can be as important as the job description when preparing a UK religious-work visa application. For some applicants, the sponsoring organisation will soon need to make that commitment for the whole period of permission, including support for eligible dependants.

The change matters to Nepalis applying under the Minister of Religion or Temporary Work – Religious Worker routes, and to organisations sponsoring them. The deciding questions are the route, the duties and whether the worker is legally entitled to the

National Minimum Wage. Nationality or a religious title alone does not answer those questions.

This guide explains the confirmed changes and the practical checks to make before filing. It does not estimate how many Nepalis will be affected: no verified community-specific count was available.

Three dates to keep separate

The Home Office published Statement of Changes HC 584 on 3 September 2026. UK Visas and Immigration published the relevant updated sponsor guidance on 8 October. The religious-work amendments take effect on **29 October**.

For these amendments, applications made before 29 October are assessed under the rules in force on 28 October. The application date therefore matters. Do not substitute the date of a job offer, an intended flight or a sponsor’s informal promise for the date the application is made. Ask your adviser to confirm which rules govern your case before submitting.

The central change: support for the whole stay

For applications made on or after 29 October, sponsor guidance S7.30–S7.31 requires an A-rated sponsor to confirm on the Certificate of Sponsorship that it will maintain and accommodate

the worker and any dependants throughout their UK permission where the role carries no entitlement to National Minimum Wage.

The guidance expressly applies this requirement regardless of where the application is made or how long the worker has already lived in the UK. Someone preparing an extension should therefore check the undertaking even if they have been resident for more than a year.

What to ask before an application from 29 October

Your question	What needs confirming
Does the full-stay undertaking apply?	Check the worker's minimum-wage entitlement for the actual role.
Who provides support?	For a covered role, the sponsor must be A-rated and record the required commitment.
What about family?	The undertaking covers the worker and any dependants; plan their accommodation and living arrangements together.
Is this only for new arrivals?	No. Check applications from inside the UK as well as those made abroad.

Turn that commitment into a practical conversation. Ask where you would live, who would pay the accommodation costs and how everyday support would be provided. If family members are applying, ask whether the proposed home and support arrangements have been planned for everyone. Request clear written answers you can keep with your application records.

A religious role is not automatically wage-exempt

The government’s minimum-wage guidance includes foreign workers among those entitled to the correct minimum wage. It also identifies exceptions, including people living and working in a religious community and certain voluntary workers. The facts of the arrangement matter; being Nepali, working for a charity or using a religious job title does not by itself establish an exemption.

Ask the sponsor to explain the basis on which it says your role is exempt or covered. Compare that answer with the written duties, working arrangements and proposed payments or benefits. If the answer is unclear, obtain qualified advice before agreeing to a package that depends on unpaid work.

The new maintenance provision should not be read as permission to withhold wages from someone who is entitled to them. For workers who remain entitled to minimum wage, the special full-stay undertaking described above is not the applicable financial

test; ask which existing financial requirements your application must meet.

Choose the route by the work you will do

The Minister of Religion visa (T2) covers qualifying work within a faith community, with a licensed sponsor. The Temporary Work – Religious Worker route covers qualifying non-pastoral work or work in a religious order. Both require more than a general invitation to help an organisation.

The amended rules direct someone whose core duties involve leading a congregation in rites, rituals and preaching to the Minister of Religion route. Ask the sponsor to describe the actual weekly duties. A title translated differently between Nepali and English can leave important details unresolved; an accurate description is more useful than choosing whichever label sounds easiest.

The Home Office’s explanation of the amendments also identifies changes for members of religious orders and removal of the previous overall time limit on the Minister of Religion route. These changes do not give an individual an automatic extension or settlement. A future application still needs to satisfy its applicable requirements.

New evidence questions for temporary Religious Workers

The revised Temporary Work rules replace the previous resident-labour consideration with specified alternatives. A role may qualify as genuinely additional to normal staffing needs; it may involve living mainly within and belonging to a religious order; or the applicant may have carried out religious duties abroad for an affiliated organisation for at least the six months immediately before applying, supported by a letter. These are alternatives, not a requirement to satisfy all three.

The amendments also make a distinction for an application to stay with the same sponsor as the last Religious Worker grant. Ask the sponsor or adviser to check that provision against your history rather than assume every extension needs exactly the same evidence as a first application.

Prepare the evidence that matches the basis actually being used. If relying on overseas affiliation, ask who will explain the relationship between the organisations and document the relevant work and dates. If relying on an additional role, ask the sponsor how it will explain why the role is beyond its ordinary staffing requirement. Do not invent a work history or accept a letter you know is inaccurate.

Check the sponsor and the practical package

Use the official register of licensed worker sponsors to check the organisation’s name, relevant route and rating. The register was updated on 22 October when this guide was checked. A familiar community name or an intermediary’s assurance should not replace checking the organisation that will actually sponsor the application.

Ask for the details being entered on your Certificate of Sponsorship and compare them with the offer. Check that duties, dates, proposed pay and the support arrangement describe the same role. Where different people handle recruitment, accommodation and immigration paperwork, establish who is responsible for answering discrepancies before submission.

Keep a simple personal budget as a planning exercise. Separate any pay from accommodation, meals, travel costs and support offered in kind. Ask what you would need to pay yourself and whether family travel or application expenses are included. These questions clarify the arrangement; they do not establish a fixed government allowance or a guaranteed reimbursement.

Keep copies of the job description, sponsorship details, support correspondence and evidence supplied from Nepal. Store identity documents securely and use verified contact details for the

sponsoring organisation. If an agent is involved, make sure you can also communicate directly with the sponsor about the role and living arrangements.

Before you submit

Review four things together: the application date, the correct religious-work route, the evidence supporting the role and the financial arrangement that applies to it. A general statement that an organisation will “look after you” leaves questions unanswered about who will provide a home and support, for how long and for which family members.

Applicants can take those questions to the sponsor now, ahead of 29 October. A clear written plan helps both sides understand the commitment before work, travel and family arrangements are made. Match the paperwork to the life being promised.

Originally published by Nepal Digest - https://nepaldigest.com/uk-religious-worker-visa-changes-nepalis-october-2026/