

## Moscow/Beijing Embassy Frequently Asked Questions

PAE



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## **Application/Clearance Process**

### **1. How much do jobs at the Embassy pay?**

Salary will be dependent on the type of job, level of expertise and experience. You can send an e-mail along with your resume to [paemoscow@pae.com](mailto:paemoscow@pae.com) to find out the current salary for your position.

### **2. What types of jobs are available? Where are the jobs located?**

To see the available job listings, please return to the home page. The jobs are generally located at the U.S. Embassies in Moscow and Beijing for at least the first two-year contract.

### **3. How long does the application/clearance process take? How soon will I be contacted?**

Upon receiving your completed physical application, it will be sent to either the Embassy in Moscow or the Embassy in Beijing for approval. Once approved, you will be asked to fill out your security forms online. Once this has been completed, your file will go to the Department of State for clearance processing. The application and security clearance process takes six to eighteen months to complete. You will receive periodic e-mails reminding you that you are an uncleared candidate in our pipeline.

Once your clearance is approved by the Department of State, we will notify you. It is generally good for five years. You will be contacted by e-mail or phone when PAE is interviewing candidates for open positions that match your qualifications. Think of the application and clearance process as setting yourself up with another option for your future where it is always better to have more options than less.

### **4. Why am I unlikely to receive a clearance for Moscow if I have family ties in Russia? (Same question for those applying for China.)**

Keep in mind, if you have family ties in Russia or China it is unlikely that the Department of State will grant a clearance for you to the location where you have family. This is because they do not want to put anyone in the situation where their family is pressured by local security services to pressure the employee working for PAE at the U.S. Embassy. Additional information can be found at <http://www.state.gov/m/ds/clearances/index.htm>.

This also applies to Americans who marry local nationals, as they are likely to have their eligibility to remain in country on the project revoked. Candidates in this situation who would still like to apply for the project should apply only for another location outside of the area in question.

## 5. I just took a new job. Does that mean I shouldn't apply for PAE's positions in Moscow or Beijing?

Keep in mind that the application and security clearance process generally takes six to eighteen months to complete, so we describe our project as another option for someone's future. Once a clearance is granted, it is good for five years. It is always better to have more options than less, so you can continue the process with PAE!

## 6. After the interview and agreement by both employer and employee on the assignment, what is the timetable for deployment, and when are we contractually considered employees?

Once a candidate is selected, it takes approximately four to six months to get them to Post. When most of the steps have been completed in the passport, visa and medical clearance process, employees will be brought to orientation and hired. In general, applicable expenses are covered from the Point of Hire to the assigned Embassy or Consulate.

## 7. What are the most common mistakes made when filling out the Application Package?

The application package is lengthy and contains two main parts: the PAE forms and the Department of State forms. PAE does provide an extensive checklist for avoiding errors with the clearance application. Following the instructions on the form is a key to success. Examples of common mistakes include: periods of where people have lived compared to where they physically worked not matching, incorrectly listing addresses (APO/FPO/PO BOXES ARE NOT ACCEPTED), leaving more than a one month gap between periods of housing and employment (consider any unemployment or study periods as periods of employment); failing to list contacts with full name, addresses and phone numbers; and failing to sign and date all forms that require signatures. A thorough "final run" is suggested to avoid any missing signatures.

## 8. Is a medical exam required prior to employment?

Yes, once a cleared candidate has been offered a position, ALL candidates must receive a medical clearance through the Department of State Medical Unit. PAE will provide the proper exam forms from the Department of State at that time, and the medical exam will be done by the candidate's doctors. The exam is very thorough. This is because the Medical Unit is trying to determine whether the city of assignment can take care of any ongoing conditions that affect the employee or prospective candidate.

## 9. How long are the contracts?

Contracts are two years in length. Contracts may be extended upon mutual agreement for a total of up to four years per location. This four year rule is imposed on PAE by the Department of State as this is a regulation that also governs Department of State employees.

## 10. Why do I need a security clearance?

Regardless of your assignment, you will be performing your work in areas where sensitive information is stored or discussed. Therefore, even if you aren't personally handling the information, you must meet the criteria to view or handle that information.

## 11. I am currently an uncleared candidate with PAE. Does the Department of State give PAE interim updates on the status of my security clearance? Once my clearance is granted, how long is it valid?

The Department of State does not give PAE interim updates on the status of security clearances. Once a clearance is granted it will be generally valid for five years from the date that it was issued. PAE will notify you immediately when the Department of State has made a clearance decision.

## 12. I recently received a letter from PAE stating that I did not meet suitability and/or security criteria according to the investigation conducted by the Department of State. Where can I go to find out why I did not meet the suitability and security requirements?

You will need to file a request through the Freedom of Information Act. You can visit <http://www.foia.gov/> to learn about how to file this request.

## 13. I already have a security clearance. Do I need another one?

Yes. Even though you may have a security clearance, the Department of State recognizes only Department of State clearances for the purposes of our contract.

## 14. If I'm contacted for a job but not available for the assignment, am I taken out of the running?

No, but you will want to check in with PAE when you become available again.

## 15. I have a Green Card or permanent residency in the United States. May I apply?

You may apply, however, according to the terms of our contract with the Department of State, we are only authorized to hire United States Citizens because this is a requirement for a security clearance.

## 16. If I need a Diplomatic or Official passport for my assignment, is it still necessary for me to have a tourist passport?

YES. A tourist passport is REQUIRED in order to obtain a Diplomatic or Official passport. If an applicant does not have their tourist passport by the time they receive their security clearance, this may cause unnecessary delays in their departure. Any costs for the tourist passport are the responsibility of the candidates/employees.

## 17. You told me I would be receiving an e-mail from you but I never received it. What happened?

Our e-mail address is [paemoscow@pae.com](mailto:paemoscow@pae.com). Several web-based email providers (yahoo, hotmail, gmail, etc.) automatically filter our messages into the junk mail folder if you do not have our email address saved as a contact. If you do not check your junk mail for messages, our message was likely deleted. Once a file is submitted for clearance with the Department of State, automatic updates are also sent out by our e-mail generator – please make sure to save our address so you can receive these.

## 18. Why are positions continually listed on your Job Opportunities Page?

We have an ongoing requirement with the Department of State to fill positions in Moscow and Beijing. Since we have to follow Diplomatic Security regulations that do not allow employees to remain at one location for longer than four years, we are always recruiting new candidates as people finish their two year contracts or head to other locations.

## Work at Post/Benefits

### 19. Where will I live?

You will be assigned your own apartment or townhouse by the U.S. Embassy Housing Board. Commute times are anywhere from 15-90 minutes as both locations are big cities. For additional information regarding housing, click the Life/Lodging link for either Moscow (<https://www.pae.com/careers-embassies-moscow-life>), or Beijing (<https://www.pae.com/careers-embassies-beijing-life>).

All housing is renovated to American standards. You will have amenities such as a dishwasher, refrigerator, washer/dryer, hot water heater and air conditioning. The housing will also be furnished with beds, couches and other furniture so there is no need to bring personal furniture.

### 20. What will my work schedule be? What is the overtime rate?

Generally, Embassy hours are Monday through Friday, 7 AM to 6 PM. Employees will typically work an eight hour shift during that time. Overtime may be required for special projects and especially during high-level visits. Some positions may require shift work. Overtime is paid at the time and a half rate after 40 hours in a week.

### 21. How much leave do I accrue?

You will receive five weeks paid leave per year. PAE also covers the cost of a round-trip ticket back to the USA at the one-year mark to be used in conjunction with vacation time. Additionally, there are 10 paid U.S. holidays that add up to an additional 10 paid local holidays.

### 22. Can I be promoted?

Yes, employees should expect to remain in the position for which they were hired for the two year term of the contract. As positions become available, employees will have the opportunity to apply for a different position. Generally, employees must spend six months in a position before they can be considered for a new position. While employees should not

have an expectation that they will be promoted, PAE prefers to maintain a promotion from within policy when possible.

### 23. Are there dress codes or required uniforms?

The dress code varies depending on the position. While no specific uniforms are required, professional attire is expected. As all PAE employees are working in diplomatic environments, clothing that has a logo, ripped, stained or otherwise damaged clothing is prohibited.

### 24. What happens after I complete my two-year contract?

Many of our employees extend their contract, some transfer to another city on the contract, some move to other PAE projects, others pursue their own interests.

### 25. Is there a 401(k) plan?

Yes, employees will be able to participate upon hire. E-mail [paemoscow@pae.com](mailto:paemoscow@pae.com) for additional details.

### 26. What is the cost of health (medical) insurance?

Please e-mail [paemoscow@pae.com](mailto:paemoscow@pae.com) for additional details.

### 27. When do the health benefits start?

Benefits begin on the date of hire.

## Personal

### 28. Can I bring my spouse with me?

Yes. If you are traveling with a spouse, PAE will cover the cost of your spouse's travel to and from Post provided they receive a medical clearance from the Department of State medical unit prior to travel. If your spouse also works for PAE on a concurrent two-year contract, you will be eligible for a tandem bonus in the amount of \$10,000.

This is mainly a skilled trades contract, and the positions that spouses may qualify for are Office Assistant positions and Custodian positions. PAE typically prefers to promote from within, and often times our Custodians have additional skills that qualify them for office assistant positions. We have many more Custodian positions than Office Assistant positions. Therefore, spouses willing to work as Custodians will receive a higher preference for PAE positions than those only willing to work as office assistants. Accompanied spouses may also apply for positions posted by the Embassy, but this will not qualify for a tandem arrangement.

### 29. Is there any other work for my spouse at the Embassies besides working for PAE?

Yes, each Embassy has a variety of part time and full time cleared and uncleared administrative positions that many PAE and Department of State spouses often fill. If the position requires a clearance, the agency with the open position can sponsor an individual for the necessary clearance. Since these positions are not part of the PAE contract, we do

not place any spouses in these positions. Any interested candidates for these jobs would have to see the Embassy HR department after arrival. Spouses who already have a clearance have a better chance of obtaining employment in a position requiring a clearance than those who arrive at Post without a clearance.

### 30. Can I bring children with me?

You may bring your children, but PAE does not cover the costs associated with bringing children to Post because these are not allowable under our contract with the Department of State. These costs may include travel, procuring a passport/visa, childcare and schooling. PAE will provide guidance on the requirements for children's visa and passports during the interview/deployment process.

Tuition at international schools in Moscow and Beijing usually exceed \$20,000 per year. Some families that have joined PAE on this contract have used homeschooling as their primary means of education for their children. Housing at Post is also sized for the employee plus the spouse only, and the U.S. Embassy Housing Boards are not required to make any special allowance for families.

### 31. Can I bring my family pet?

Yes, depending on the type of pet (cat or dog only), and at your own cost. Pet food and supplies are readily available in the cities. PAE will provide additional updates with regard to local regulations at the time of hire. Generally, In China, dogs may not be larger than 35 cm at the shoulder and certain breeds are not permitted. Airlines have started charging more than in past years, and at this time we do not recommend bringing a pet to Post unless the employee is able to handle all costs. Again, any pet costs are solely the responsibility of the employee, and PAE is not able to make airline travel arrangements based upon whether or not any employee has a pet.

### 32. Can I bring my household belongings?

Yes. For two year contracts, a generous air and sea shipment is covered (single status 2500 lbs, accompanied 5000 lbs).

### 33. What social opportunities are available to me?

The Embassy's Community Association hosts different events throughout the year and for specific holidays. Click here for a start on other things to do in Moscow (<https://www.pae.com/careers-embassies-moscow-life>), or Beijing (<https://www.pae.com/careers-embassies-beijing-life>).

### 34. Will PAE provide assistance with taxes?

No. Employees are responsible for seeking their own professional tax assistance, and they should consult with a tax accountant, attorney or other tax advisor.

### 35. What about my personal safety?

As in any large city, you have to take precautions to ensure your personal safety. The Embassies have Diplomatic Security professionals who are in charge of the Embassy's safety and will brief staff with regard to any items of concern. There are also local guards

hired by the Embassy, and local policemen who work for the city. All Embassy-maintained housing is also guarded.

**36. Can I buy the same products I'm used to here over there?**

Yes, but keep in mind you are no longer in the USA, and certain products may cost more than they do in the States. Groceries and home electronics are available in the city and in the Commissary. It may be best to purchase certain items through online sites in the United States.

**37. Can I bring my vehicle?**

No, the transportation of a vehicle is not permitted in PAE's contract with the Department of State. Municipal transportation in Moscow and Beijing are extremely efficient and affordable. Employees may also purchase a used vehicle from someone departing Post to use while in country, which must be sold prior to departure.

**38. Where can I find more information about living and working at the Embassies in Moscow and Beijing?**

Please visit the Department of State's website and select either the Russia or China country page to obtain additional information about Moscow and Beijing. Additionally, PAE provides some information under "Life in Moscow" and "Life in Beijing."

**39. Where do you get all of the great pictures for the photo album?**

Most of our photos are employee submissions - through various photo contests or shared with our headquarters office from the field.