

Vietnam's Electronic Labour Contract System: Preparing for 1 July 2026

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Preparing for 1 July 2026: What Employers and Employees Need to Know About E-Contracts

Vietnam is continuing its rapid transition toward a digitally integrated regulatory and administrative environment. Over the past several years, the government has progressively expanded electronic systems across tax administration, social insurance, licensing, citizen identification, public services and corporate compliance management. The introduction of the national electronic labour contract framework forms part of this broader policy direction.

The purpose behind the new e-contract regime extends beyond simply replacing paper employment contracts with digital versions. The framework is designed to create a more standardised, transparent and centralised labour management system, allowing authorities to better integrate employment data with tax, social insurance and national identification systems. At the same time, the reforms aim to reduce administrative friction, modernise employment documentation processes and support Vietnam's long-term digital transformation objectives.

For employers, the changes signal a shift toward more integrated labour compliance oversight. Employment relationships, employee identification, contract execution and workforce data management are increasingly expected to operate within connected digital platforms rather than through isolated internal records. For employees, the framework is intended to improve transparency, accessibility and verification of employment arrangements.

Against this backdrop, Vietnam issued Decree No. 337/2025/NĐ-CP and Circular No. 08/2026/TT-BNV, establishing the legal and technical framework for electronic labour contracts (e-contracts). Together, these regulations set out the operational rules, platform requirements, identification processes and compliance obligations that will apply to electronic labour contracts going forward.

Below is an overview of the upcoming changes and what they mean for employers and employees.

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The Digital Shift: Are E-Contracts Mandatory from 1 July 2026?

One of the most common questions is whether e-contracts will become mandatory starting 1 July 2026. According to the regulations, the use of e-contracts is highly encouraged rather than strictly mandatory for all businesses.

However, 1 July 2026 serves as a critical deadline: this is the last date by which the national E-contract Platform (managed by the Ministry of Home Affairs) is to be officially operational. Furthermore, any e-contracts signed on or after this date must be sent to this centralized platform within 24 hours of the final signature to receive a unique Identification Code (ID).

Why Should Businesses Choose E-Contracts?

Transitioning to e-contracts offers several strategic advantages:

- **Legal Equivalence:** E-contracts carry the same legal weight as traditional paper contracts.
- **Administrative Efficiency:** Data from e-contracts on the centralized platform can be shared directly for public services and other administrative procedures, saving time and costs.
- **Enhanced Security and Transparency:** Each contract receives a unique ID, ensuring it cannot be duplicated or falsified. The platform also maintains an audit trail for 10 years after a contract is terminated.
- **Ease of Access:** Both parties can register accounts to easily look up, verify, and manage their contract data through the national platform.

The Signing Process and Digital Signatures

Gaining a valid e-contract requires specific technical steps. The process must be conducted through specialized software that supports digital signatures and time-stamping.

A common concern for workers is whether they must personally purchase a digital signature. While both parties must use digital signatures to sign the contract, employers are legally responsible for providing the necessary guidance, training, and means to support employees in this process. Additionally, identification and authentication can be integrated through the National Electronic Identification System (VNelD) Level 2 or chip-based citizen ID cards.

Cost Considerations

Adopting e-contracts involves several cost factors, primarily borne by the employer:

- **Employers:** Will typically pay service fees to E-contract Providers for creation, signing, and storage. They also cover costs related to their own digital signatures, time-stamping services, and employee support.
- **Employees:** Are generally protected from unreasonable costs. The law stipulates that costs or risks arising from errors by the E-contract Provider cannot be transferred to the employee unless otherwise agreed.

Summary Table: Key Provisions of Circular No. 08/2026/TT-BNV

Category	Key Details
Effective Date	1 July 2026
ID Structure	A 13-character code (1 letter + 12 digits). Letter 'A' for new e-contracts after 1/7/26; 'B' for paper-to-digital conversions; 'C' for e-contracts signed before 1/7/26.
ID Assignment Timeline	E-contract providers must send the contract to the Platform within 24 hours of the final signature to receive an ID.
Platform Access	Individuals use VNeID Level 2; organizations use accounts provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs or authorized agencies.
Data Retention	Data is stored securely for 10 years starting from the date the labor contract is terminated.
Provider Responsibilities	Must publicize service fees and provide tools for employers to digitize/convert paper contracts.
Security Principles	Access is strictly controlled based on the right subject and purpose. All activities are logged for traceability.

Vietnam’s new electronic labour contract framework represents a significant modernization of labour administration and digital compliance management.

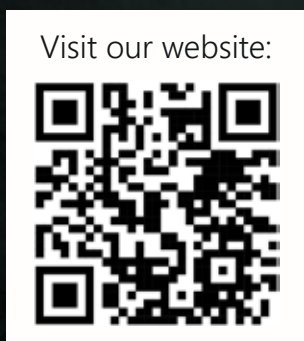
Although the framework introduces additional compliance and technical obligations for employers, it also signals Vietnam’s continued transition toward a more integrated and technology-driven labour management system. Although e-labour contracts have yet to be officially mandatory, employers should begin preparing early to ensure that their employment documentation, eContract workflows, and data governance practices are fully compliant before the new regime takes effect on 1 July 2026.

For any further questions you may have, please reach out to us at vietnam@alitim.com

This article is intended to provide an overview of recent updates and announcements. While it aims to present useful insights, it is important to note that the content shared here should not be considered as formal legal, tax or financial advice. For specific guidance on tax obligations or legal matters related to your business, we strongly recommend consulting with a qualified professional, such as a tax advisor or legal expert or directly reach out to us.

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