

# IMMIGRATION SENTINEL

September 2025



Jennifer Cory, Partner

## September 2025 Visa Bulletin

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) [September 2025 Visa Bulletin](#) reflects no forward movement in the employment-based categories. Because of the steady increase in both USCIS and Department of State demand patterns for EB visas this fiscal year, DOS expects to reach FY-2025 limits in most EB categories by September 30.

## USCIS Fee Payment Changes

U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) will continue to accept paper check and money order payments in addition to credit and debit payments until October 28, 2025. Thereafter, [USCIS will accept only ACH debit transactions using Form G-1650 or credit card payments using Form G-1450.](#)

Welcome to the September 2025 issue of our monthly newsletter, *The Immigration Sentinel*. As we monitor immigration benefits and compliance developments, we hope that this medium will be a valuable resource in helping you stay informed and prepared for potential changes that may impact you corporately and individually.

## USCIS Fee Payment Changes

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [announced](#) plans to terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Honduras, Nicaragua, and Nepal after the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals granted the Trump Administration's request for a stay, pending appeal, in *National TPS Alliance v. Kristi Noem*. With respect to Nepal, USCIS further [announced](#) TPS benefits (and any related employment authorization) are no longer in effect as of 8/20/25.



Jeffrey Widdison, Senior Counsel

## USCIS Resumes Neighborhood Investigations

USCIS announced in Policy Memorandum (PM-602-0189) that it is resuming personal investigations of people applying for naturalization, in accordance with INA § 335(a). These personal investigations, also known as neighborhood investigations, cover the vicinity of an applicant's place of residence and employment and include at least the 5-year period prior to the filing of the naturalization application. The purpose of the INA 335(a) investigation is to corroborate an applicant's eligibility for naturalization, which includes scrutiny of their residency, good moral character, attachment to the U.S. Constitution, and disposition to the good order and happiness of the United States. USCIS may request information from the applicant seeking naturalization such as testimonial letters from neighbors, employers, co-workers, and business associates who know the alien and can provide substantiated information about the alien, including any of the requirements for naturalization.

## DV Lottery Limits Approaching

DOS announced that Egypt is close to reaching the per-country limit of 7% of the 52,056 visas available for the FY2025 Diversity Visa (DV) program. DOS may begin to take steps to avoid exceeding the country-specific numerical limits, including canceling visa interview appointments.

## Immigration Enforcement Expansion

The Guardian reported that the Trump Administration has expanded its immigration enforcement by reviewing over 55 million U.S. visa holders for potential visa revocation or deportable violations, applying "continuous vetting" even to those already in the country. This review includes increased social media screening for "anti-American" views, with new requirements for foreign students to disclose their social media activity before visa issuance.

## Visa Issuance Suspended for Gaza

DOS announced via the social media platform X that it is suspending the issuance of all visitor visas for individuals from Gaza. DOS stated that the pause is intended to allow for "a full and thorough review of the process and procedures" used in granting "medical-humanitarian visas."

## Discretionary Review

USCIS updated Policy Manual guidance on factors that officers may consider in benefit requests that require an exercise of discretion, including an individual's past request for parole and alleged involvement in anti-American or terrorist organizations. USCIS's Policy Manual contains a review of immigration benefits that involve discretionary review.

## FY2024 Visa Statistics

DOS's Visa Services Office published its annual Report of the Visa Office, presenting comprehensive immigrant and nonimmigrant visa statistics for fiscal year 2024. The report also includes select sections with historical visa data, providing context for current trends.

## 2025 DV Lottery Selection Errors

In reviewing the entry selection system for the 2025 Diversity Visa Program, DOS determined that for a small number of entrants from Great Britain (United Kingdom) and its dependent areas, the selection status results may have been previously incorrectly reported. DOS asks that DV-2025 entrants from Great Britain and its dependent areas go to the Entrant Status Check and use the unique confirmation number saved from their DV-2025 online entry registration to confirm whether their entry has been selected in the DV program.

## **U.S. Embassy Closure**

DOS announced that, effective 8/7/25, the U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe has temporarily paused all routine visa services. This pause includes applications for immigrant visas as well as nonimmigrant visas for tourists, business travelers, students, exchange visitors, and most other nonimmigrant categories. DOS will update its website when appointment scheduling resumes and inform applicants whose appointments were rescheduled. Applications for A-1, A-2, G-1, G-2, G-4, C-2, and C-3 diplomatic and official visas will continue to be processed.

## **Visa Bond Pilot Program**

DOS announced a 12-month long B-1/B-2 visa bond pilot program that is effective 8/20/25 to 8/5/26. Those subject to the pilot program may be required to post a bond as a condition of issuance of a B-1 (visitor for business) or B-2 (visitor for pleasure) visa. The pilot program covers applicants who are nationals of countries identified by the Department as: (a) having high visa overstay rates, (b) where screening and vetting information is deemed deficient, or (c) offering Citizenship by Investment, if the individual obtained citizenship with no residency requirement. Countries deemed to meet these criteria will be identified on a rolling basis as announced on the Department's website at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). The exact amount of the bond is based upon the applicant's circumstances as determined by the consular officer in an amount of no less than \$5,000 and up to \$15,000.

**Please contact us at [CoryImmigrationTeam@FisherBroyles.com](mailto:CoryImmigrationTeam@FisherBroyles.com) or 1.833.4FB.VISA with questions. We stand ready to support!**