

Visa Bulletin

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VISA BULLETIN FOR SEPTEMBER 2008

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A. STATUTORY NUMBERS

1. This bulletin summarizes the availability of immigrant numbers during **September**. Consular officers are required to report to the Department of State documentarily qualified applicants for numerically limited visas; the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security reports applicants for adjustment of status. Allocations were made, to the extent possible under the numerical limitations, for the demand received by August **8th** in the chronological order of the reported priority dates. If the demand could not be satisfied within the statutory or regulatory limits, the category or foreign state in which demand was excessive was deemed oversubscribed. The cut-off date for an oversubscribed category is the priority date of the first applicant who could not be reached within the numerical limits. Only applicants who have a priority date **earlier than** the cut-off date may be allotted a number. Immediately that it becomes necessary during the monthly allocation process to retrogress a cut-off date, supplemental requests for numbers will be honored only if the priority date falls within the new cut-off date.
2. The fiscal year 2008 limit for family-sponsored preference immigrants determined in accordance with Section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) is 226,000. The fiscal year 2008 limit for employment-based preference immigrants calculated under INA 201 is 162,704. Section 202 prescribes that the per-country limit for preference immigrants is set at 7% of the total annual family-sponsored and employment-based preference limits, i.e., 27,209. The dependent area limit is set at 2%, or 7,774.
3. Section 203 of the INA prescribes preference classes for allotment of immigrant visas as follows:

FAMILY-SPONSORED PREFERENCES

- First:** Unmarried Sons and Daughters of Citizens: 23,400 plus any numbers not required for fourth preference.
- Second:** Spouses and Children, and Unmarried Sons and Daughters of Permanent Residents: 114,200, plus the number (if any) by which the worldwide family preference level exceeds 226,000, and any unused first preference numbers:
- A. Spouses and Children: 77% of the overall second preference limitation, of which 75% are exempt from the per-country limit;
 - B. Unmarried Sons and Daughters (21 years of age or older): 23% of the overall second preference limitation.
- Third:** Married Sons and Daughters of Citizens: 23,400, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences.
- Fourth:** Brothers and Sisters of Adult Citizens: 65,000, plus any numbers not required by first three preferences.

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCES

- First:** Priority Workers: 28.6% of the worldwide employment-based preference level, plus any numbers not required for fourth and fifth preferences.
- Second:** Members of the Professions Holding Advanced Degrees or Persons of Exceptional Ability: 28.6% of the worldwide employment-based preference level, plus any numbers not required by first preference.
- Third:** Skilled Workers, Professionals, and Other Workers: 28.6% of the worldwide level, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences, not more than 10,000 of which to "Other Workers".
- Fourth:** Certain Special Immigrants: 7.1% of the worldwide level.
- Fifth:** Employment Creation: 7.1% of the worldwide level, not less than 3,000 of which reserved for investors in a targeted rural or high-unemployment area, and 3,000 set aside for investors in regional centers by Sec. 610 of P.L. 102-395.

4. INA Section 203(e) provides that family-sponsored and employment-based preference visas be issued to eligible immigrants in the order in which a petition in behalf of each has been filed. Section 203(d) provides that spouses and children of preference immigrants are entitled to the same status, and the same order of consideration, if accompanying or following to join the principal. The visa prorating provisions of Section 202(e) apply to allocations for a foreign state or dependent area when visa demand exceeds the per-country limit. These provisions apply at present to the following oversubscribed chargeability areas: CHINA-mainland born, INDIA, MEXICO, and PHILIPPINES.

5. On the chart below, the listing of a date for any class indicates that the class is oversubscribed (see paragraph 1); "C" means current, i.e., numbers are available for all qualified applicants; and "U" means unavailable, i.e., no numbers are available. (NOTE: Numbers are available only for applicants whose priority date is **earlier** than the cut-off date listed below.)

Fam-ily	All Charge-ability Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPP-INES
1st	01APR02	01APR02	01APR02	08SEP92	01APR93
2A	01DEC03	01DEC03	01DEC03	U	01DEC03
2B	15DEC99	15DEC99	15DEC99	22APR92	08APR97
3rd	15JUN00	15JUN00	15JUN00	15SEP92	22APR91
4th	01OCT97	08APR97	08APR97	15JAN95	08MAR86

***NOTE:** For September, 2A numbers **EXEMPT from per-country limit** will be unavailable because the annual limit for such visas will have been reached. This will only impact the processing of Mexico F2A applicants.

	All Charge-ability Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIP-PINES
Employ-ment -Based					
1st	C	C	C	C	C
2nd	C	01AUG06	01AUG06	C	C
3rd	U	U	U	U	U
Other Workers	U	U	U	U	U
4th	C	C	C	C	C
Certain Religious Workers	C	C	C	C	C
5th	C	C	C	C	C
Targeted Employment Areas/ Regional Centers	C	C	C	C	C

The Department of State has available a recorded message with visa availability information which can be heard at: (area code 202) 663-1541. This recording will be updated in the middle of each month with information on cut-off dates for the following month.

Employment Third Preference Other Workers Category: Section 203(e) of the NACARA, as amended by Section 1(e) of Pub. L. 105-139, provides that once the Employment Third Preference Other Worker (EW) cut-off date has reached the priority date of the latest EW petition approved prior to November 19, 1997, the 10,000 EW numbers available for a fiscal year are to be reduced by up to 5,000 annually beginning in the following fiscal year. This reduction is to be made for as long as necessary to offset adjustments under the NACARA program. Since the EW cut-off

date reached November 19, 1997 during Fiscal Year 2001, the reduction in the EW annual limit to 5,000 began in Fiscal Year 2002.

B. DIVERSITY IMMIGRANT (DV) CATEGORY

Section 203(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act provides a maximum of up to 55,000 immigrant visas each fiscal year to permit immigration opportunities for persons from countries other than the principal sources of current immigration to the United States. The Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) passed by Congress in November 1997 stipulates that beginning with DV-99, and for as long as necessary, up to 5,000 of the 55,000 annually-allocated diversity visas will be made available for use under the NACARA program. **This reduction has resulted in the DV-2008 annual limit being reduced to 50,000.** DV visas are divided among six geographic regions. No one country can receive more than seven percent of the available diversity visas in any one year.

For **September**, immigrant numbers in the DV category are available to qualified DV-2008 applicants chargeable to all regions/eligible countries as follows. When an allocation cut-off number is shown, visas are available only for applicants with DV regional lottery rank numbers **BELOW** the specified allocation cut-off number:

Region	All DV Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed Separately	
AFRICA	62,300	Nigeria 18,450
ASIA	CURRENT	
EUROPE	CURRENT	
NORTH AMERICA (BAHAMAS)	CURRENT	
OCEANIA	CURRENT	
SOUTH AMERICA, and the CARIBBEAN	CURRENT	

Entitlement to immigrant status in the DV category lasts only through the end of the fiscal (visa) year for which the applicant is selected in the lottery. The year of entitlement for all applicants registered for the DV-2008 program ends as of September 30, 2008. DV visas may not be issued to DV-2008 applicants after that date. Similarly, spouses and children accompanying or following to join DV-2008 principals are only entitled to derivative DV status until September 30, 2008. DV visa availability through the very end of FY-2008 cannot be taken for granted. Numbers could be exhausted prior to September 30.

C. ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF THE DIVERSITY (DV) IMMIGRANT CATEGORY RANK CUT-OFFS WHICH WILL APPLY IN OCTOBER

For **October**, immigrant numbers in the DV category are available to qualified DV-2009 applicants chargeable to all regions/eligible countries as follows. When an allocation cut-off number is shown, visas are available only for applicants with DV regional lottery rank numbers **BELOW** the specified allocation cut-off number:

Region	All DV Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed Separately	
AFRICA	6,900	Egypt 3,100 Ethiopia 3,600 Nigeria 3,350
ASIA	2,900	
EUROPE	6,600	
NORTH AMERICA (BAHAMAS)	2	

OCEANIA	200	
SOUTH AMERICA, and the CARIBBEAN	375	

D. VISA AVAILABILITY FOR OCTOBER

The Mexico F2A and Employment Third preference cut-off dates are “unavailable” for both August and September, since those FY-2008 annual limits have been reached. The Visa Office had originally anticipated that this would be a temporary situation. Then with the start of the new fiscal year in October the cut-off dates would have returned to those which had applied during June. However, continued heavy demand in those categories may require the establishment of cut-off dates which are earlier than those which had applied in June. A formal decision determination of the October cut-off dates will not be possible until early September.

E. DETERMINATION OF THE NUMERICAL LIMITS ON IMMIGRANTS REQUIRED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT (INA)

The State Department is required to make a determination of the worldwide numerical limitations, as outlined in Sections 201(c) and (d) of the INA, on an annual basis. These calculations are based in part on data provided by the Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) regarding number of immediate relative adjustments in the preceding year and the number of aliens paroled into the United States under Section 212(d)(5) in the second preceding year. Without this information, it is impossible to officially determine of the annual limits. To avoid delays in processing while awaiting the CIS data, the Visa Office bases allocations on the minimum annual limits as outlined in Section 201 of the INA, along with estimates. On July 22nd, CIS provided the required data to the Visa Office.

The Department of State has determined the family and employment preference limits for FY-2008 in accordance with the terms of Section 201 of the INA. The numerical limits for FY-2008 are as follows:

- Worldwide Family-sponsored preference limit: 226,000
- Worldwide Employment-based preference limit: 162,704

Under the INA Section 202(A), the per-country limit is fixed at 7% of the family and employment annual limits. For FY-2008 the per-country limit is 27,209. The dependent area annual limit is 2%, or 7,774.

F. OBTAINING THE MONTHLY VISA BULLETIN

The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs offers the monthly "Visa Bulletin" on the INTERNET'S WORLDWIDE WEB. The INTERNET Web address to access the Bulletin is:

<http://travel.state.gov>

From the home page, select the VISA section which contains the Visa Bulletin.

To be **placed on** the Department of State's E-mail subscription list for the “Visa Bulletin”, please send an E-mail to the following E-mail address:

listserv@calist.state.gov

and in the message body type:
Subscribe Visa-Bulletin *First name/Last name*
(example: Subscribe Visa-Bulletin Sally Doe)

To be **removed from** the Department of State's E-mail subscription list for the “Visa Bulletin”, send an e-mail message to the following E-mail address:

listserv@calist.state.gov

and in the message body type: **Signoff Visa-Bulletin**

The Department of State also has available a recorded message with visa cut-off dates which can be heard at: (area code 202) 663-1541. The recording is normally updated by the middle of each month with information on cut-off dates for the following month.

Readers may submit questions regarding Visa Bulletin related items by E-mail at the following address:

VISABULLETIN@STATE.GOV

(This address cannot be used to subscribe to the Visa Bulletin.)

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