

Immigrant Visa Processing Updates for Nationalities at High Risk of U.S. Public Benefits Reliance

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President Trump has made clear that immigrants must be financially self-sufficient and not be a financial burden to Americans. The Department of State is undergoing a full review of all screening and vetting policies to ensure that immigrants from high-risk countries do not unlawfully utilize welfare in the United States or become a public charge.

Effective January 21, 2026, the Department of State paused all visa issuances to immigrant visa applicants who are nationals of the following countries:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, The Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Republic of the Congo, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, and Yemen.

Frequently Asked Questions

What happens to my immigrant visa interview appointment?

Immigrant visa applicants who are nationals of affected countries may submit visa applications and attend interviews, and the Department will continue to schedule visa interviews.

Are there any exceptions?

- Dual nationals applying with a valid passport of a country that is not listed above are exempt from this pause.
- Children being adopted by Americans can qualify for an exception, including a National Interest Exception pursuant to Presidential Proclamation 10998, if applicable. These American families should continue the normal adoption process. They should submit visa applications and attend consular interviews. They do not need to take other additional steps to be considered for a case-by-case exception under the National Interest Exception.

Does this affect my current valid visa?

No immigrant visas have been revoked as part of this guidance. For questions regarding admission to the United States, we refer you to DHS.

Does this apply to tourist visas?

No, this pause is specifically for immigrant visa applicants. Tourist visas are nonimmigrant visas and are not affected.