

PREFACE AND CAVEAT

The last edition of *The Consular Practice Handbook*, published in 2023, covered the aftermath of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic emergency as well as consular processing changes implemented by the Biden Administration.

In 2026, practitioners are facing new challenges under the second Trump Administration. The sixth edition of the *Consular Practice Handbook* is your starting guide for dealings with the U.S. Department of State as you seek visas and other services for your clients while navigating the numerous changes that have been implemented by the administration.

To help you get started, Jan Pederson's article *The Fundamentals of Lawyering at Consular Posts* is essential reading, as it provides a comprehensive and updated look at all aspects of consular processing.

Visa Services Under the Second Trump Administration will guide you through some of the most significant changes that have taken place during the first year of the current administration.

The National Visa Center and the Kentucky Consular Center is a key introductory piece for those seeking an understanding of how to deal with these entities. The *Handbook* also contains step-by-step instructions for completing the DS-160 and DS-260.

From there, the *Handbook* expands into detailed treatment of specific topics, including updates on inadmissibility, waivers, delays and strategies for overcoming them, and challenging visa refusals. The issues involved with various types of visas (B, E, F, K, and L) are the subject of separate articles.

The wisdom and advice of the AILA practitioners featured here will prepare you well to successfully obtain results for your clients.

Finally, special thanks to Aaron P. Karnell, editor of this edition, who generously provided his time by offering feedback on the last edition and by updating several articles in this new edition. His rich experience as both a former consular officer and a private practice attorney has been invaluable.

Caveat:

The articles in this publication were written between November and December 2025, but the Trump Administration continues to announce immigration-related changes at a dizzying rate. *As a result, practitioners must supplement the information provided in this publication in order to keep current.* In addition to primary sources of law, practitioners are encouraged to review AILA's website for the latest information and developments in immigration law and policy.

Note: As this book was headed to the printer, the Trump Administration announced that, effective January 21, 2026, it would pause the immigrant visa issuance for people from 75 countries. The policy creates a non-statutory presumption of public

charge ineligibility for anyone applying with a passport from one of the named countries. This new announcement applies only to immigrant visas.

This issue is new, and practitioners should follow AILA for additional updates and guidance.

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