

U.S. and Canadian Immigration and Nationality Law (Bimonthly) Newsletter and Updates.

Dear Reader:

A federal judge recently issued a temporary restraining order that blocks DHS from ending certain family reunification parole benefits for more than 10,000 individuals, citing a lack of required direct written notice. While this is a positive short-term development for affected families, the underlying legal challenges are still unfolding, so it is important to watch for further updates and deadlines.

Employers should also be prepared for tighter work authorization practices. Recent USCIS policy changes may lead to more frequent renewal requirements and less reliance on automatic extensions, which can create avoidable disruption when processing times run long. Reviewing I-9 procedures now and tracking expiration dates early can help prevent last-minute issues.

The administration has also expanded a visa bond policy to additional countries, which may require certain travelers to post bonds of up to \$15,000. This may add cost and complexity to both business and family travel, so travelers should confirm requirements before making arrangements and allow extra time for consular processing.

For employers planning ahead, DHS has announced a move away from a purely random H-1B cap lottery toward a weighted selection process that may increase selection chances for higher-skilled and higher-paid roles. With the FY 2027 season in view, early planning—job details, wage level strategy, and supporting documentation—will matter more than ever.

Finally, recent reporting has questioned whether stricter immigration measures are

translating into clear job gains for U.S.-born workers, while many industries continue to face real workforce gaps. As policy priorities continue to shift, steady compliance and proactive workforce planning remain the best way to reduce surprises.

We encourage you to stay informed as immigration and travel-related policies evolve. If you have any questions about how these changes may affect your status, workforce, or travel plans, please contact NPZ Law Group at info@visaserve.com or call 201-670-0006 (ext. 104). Our experienced U.S. and Canadian immigration attorneys are ready to assist you.

Know Your Rights: What to Do If ICE Comes to Your Home, Workplace, or Stops You in Public (English & Spanish Versions). [Please click here](#) to download and feel free to share it with your friends and family.

Here are this month's top stories to keep you informed:

DHS ELIMINATES ONE-YEAR FOREIGN RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR R-1 RELIGIOUS WORKERS.

In a significant policy shift, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has issued an interim final rule that removes the long-standing one-year foreign residency requirement for certain R-1 religious workers who reach the maximum five-year period of stay in the United States.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

H-1B LOTTERY CHANGES FOR FY 2027 (MARCH 2026 REGISTRATION): WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW.

The H-1B cap registration process continues to evolve, and employers planning ahead for the FY 2027 H-1B cap season should be aware of important upcoming changes. While the H-1B program has always been competitive, recent regulatory developments signal a shift toward a more strategy-driven and compliance-focused registration process.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

NEW HIGH FEES AND H-1B STRATEGY: KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR L-1 EMPLOYEES, EMPLOYERS, AND HR.

Each year, employers sponsor professionals working in the United States in L-1 status for the H-1B cap lottery. For many organizations, this dual strategy is part of long-term workforce planning, designed to provide flexibility and continuity for key employees.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

E-VERIFY EMPLOYERS: CRITICAL ACTION REQUIRED BEFORE JANUARY 23, 2026.

Employers that use E-Verify must take an important compliance step before January 23, 2026. On that date, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will permanently delete certain older E-Verify records, which could affect an employer's ability to demonstrate compliance during a Form I-9 audit.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

USCIS TO INCREASE PREMIUM PROCESSING FEES EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2026.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced that premium processing fees will increase beginning March 1, 2026. These changes apply to a wide range of employment-based and nonimmigrant filings and will affect employers, employees, students, and applicants who rely on expedited adjudication.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

NEW H-1B FEES COULD REACH \$100,000: HOW EMPLOYERS CAN PREPARE FOR FY2027.

U.S. employers preparing for the FY2027 H-1B lottery may soon face a major budgeting challenge: a potential new fee reported at \$100,000, depending on how and where an employee files.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

EMPLOYER IMMIGRATION IN 2026: WHAT HR TEAMS SHOULD PREPARE FOR NOW.

As 2026 begins, many U.S. employers are entering a more demanding immigration environment—one shaped by tighter review standards, higher costs, and increased enforcement activity.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

GREEN CARD PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYEES: WHAT TO DO BEFORE THE PROCESS BEGINS.

For many foreign nationals working in the United States, employment-based permanent residence is an important long-term goal. While the green card process itself involves multiple legal steps, much of the success of a case depends on

preparation well before filing begins.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

MAJOR VISA APPOINTMENT CHANGES FOR H-1B AND H-4 APPLICANTS: WHAT TRAVELERS AND EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW.

Many H-1B and H-4 visa applicants are experiencing unexpected changes to their stamping appointments at U.S. consulates abroad. Starting December 8, 2025, consular posts began rescheduling interviews originally set for mid-December and beyond. Many new dates now fall in March 2026, and some are being pushed as far out as June 2026.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

UNLOCKING THE O-1 VISA: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH EXTRAORDINARY ABILITY.

For many talented professionals, artists, researchers, founders, and athletes, the O-1 visa is one of the most strategic ways to work in the United States. It is often chosen by individuals who are highly accomplished in their field and want a path that does not require a degree, does not rely on a lottery, and offers the flexibility to build a long-term future in the U.S.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

UNDERSTANDING L-1A, L-1B, AND L-1 BLANKET VISAS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR GLOBAL BUSINESSES EXPANDING TO THE U.S.

Many international companies look to the United States to expand their operations—whether it's an IT firm, a medical group, or a restaurant business entering the U.S. market. One of the most effective immigration tools for this type of expansion is the L-1 visa, which allows companies to transfer key personnel from a foreign office to a U.S. entity.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

DOS VISA BULLETIN UPDATE: VISA BULLETIN FOR FEBRUARY 2026 - IF YOUR "PRIORITY DATE" IS CURRENT, PLEASE LET US KNOW?

The February 2026 Visa Bulletin reflects a more cautious pace following January's movement. Most Employment-Based and Family-Based categories remain unchanged, while the EB-4 Certain Religious Worker (SR) category is now officially unavailable due to statutory expiration. Here's what applicants need to know this month. [Read more . . .](#)

[To view the current cutoff dates for each visa preference category and country of chargeability, please click here to access two charts provided by the U.S. Department of State's monthly visa bulletin.](#)

CANADIAN IMMIGRATION LAW NEWS.

CANADA TIGHTENS RULES FOR INTRACOMPANY TRANSFERS: WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has introduced stricter standards for Intracompany Transfer (ICT) work permits under the International Mobility Program. These changes are designed to ensure that only genuine transfers of executives, senior managers, and specialized knowledge workers qualify.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

ONTARIO EXPANDS OINP ELIGIBILITY FOR SELF-EMPLOYED PHYSICIANS IN 2026.

Ontario has introduced important changes to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) that directly affect internationally trained physicians. Effective January 1, 2026, Ontario has broadened eligibility under the Employer Job Offer:

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

ONTARIO INTRODUCES NEW JOB POSTING RULES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026: WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW.

Ontario employers who advertise publicly advertised job postings should prepare for major compliance changes beginning January 1, 2026.

[To read more, please click here . . .](#)

NPZ's Immigration Insights: New YouTube Series on U.S. & Canadian Law


H-1B & H-4 VISA STAMPING DELAYS: WHAT TRAVELERS AND EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW.



David H. Nachman, Esq.
Managing Attorney

H-1B & H-4 Visa Stamping Delays That Travelers and Employers Need to Know

YOUR **LATEST** INTERVIEW DATE.

 **SUBSCRIBE**

PUBLIC CHARGE CRACKDOWN: NEW DOS MEMO, STRICTER VISA INTERVIEWS & WHAT FAMILIES MUST PREPARE.



Snehal Batra, Esq.
Managing Attorney

Public Charge Crackdown: New DOS Memo, Stricter Visa Interviews What Families Must Prepare For (Dec 2025)

 **SUBSCRIBE**

UPCOMING EVENT

NJICLE Webinar: H-1B Visa Update: Navigating the Effect on Employers

February 5, 2026

Time: 9:00am-11:00am

Venue: Online via Zoom

[Register now — click here](#)

Stay updated on the latest immigration news by joining our monthly newsletter mailing list. [Sign up click here](#)

Stay Informed on US & Canada Immigration - Expert Insights from NPZ Law Group Podcast Library



Subscribe or listen on
Apple Podcasts



Listen on
Google Podcasts



Listen on
Spotify Podcasts

NPZ Law Group - Immigration & Nationality Law

VISASERVE Plaza, 487 Goffle Road, Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450
USA

Phone: 201-670-0006 | E-mail: info@visaserve.com | Website: <https://visaserve.com>

Locations: [Raritan Office](#) | [New York City Office](#) | Florida Office | Canada Office | Affiliated
Office in India

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update preferences](#)

