



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

Dear Reader,

Effective August 5, 2026, USCIS has given its officers greater discretion to deny immigration benefit applications outright, without first issuing a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID), when required initial evidence is missing or eligibility isn't clearly established at filing. This is a meaningful shift from the agency's prior practice, and it puts more pressure on getting petitions and applications complete and well-documented the first time, since applicants can no longer count on a second chance to fix gaps after filing.

DHS has also finalized a rule permitting USCIS to refer certain affirmative asylum applications directly to immigration court without conducting an interview first, and has issued an interim final rule allowing USCIS to mandate electronic filing for certain immigration forms going forward. Separately, a broader public charge standard takes effect September 18, 2026, giving officers more latitude to weigh an applicant's use of means-tested benefits, such as Medicaid, SNAP, or housing assistance, when adjudicating certain green card cases. Together, these changes point toward a more document-intensive, less forgiving filing environment heading into the fall.

On the travel side, we continue to hear from clients affected by TSA's data-sharing arrangement with ICE at domestic airports, as well as CBP's authority to board buses and trains within 100 miles of any U.S. border. If you or someone you know is planning domestic travel and has any pending application, past removal order, or status question, please reach out before booking — we've put together separate guidance for green card holders, visa holders, and undocumented individuals covering exactly what to carry, what your rights are, and how to handle being

stopped or questioned. Meanwhile, the August 2026 Visa Bulletin shows India EB-2 now unavailable, with the Department of State warning of possible retrogression ahead for India EB-1, China EB-2, and Philippines EB-3 before the fiscal year closes.

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:

9-11 BIOMETRIC FEE NOW APPLIES TO SAME-EMPLOYER H-1B AND L-1 EXTENSIONS, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 9.

A fee that used to apply only to new H-1B and L-1 petitions is about to reach a much larger group of filings. Homeland Security has finalized changes to the 9-11 Response and Biometric Entry-Exit Fee, closing an exemption that let companies avoid the charge simply by keeping an employee on staff and filing a routine extension instead of a new petition.

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

DOMESTIC TRAVEL RISK ISN'T ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL: FIND THE RIGHT GUIDE FOR YOUR IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Not every traveler faces the same risk when flying within the United States, and it's a mistake to assume a rule protecting one person applies equally to everyone.

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

DOL'S OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OPENS NATIONWIDE H-1B AND PERM FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS.

On July 8, 2026, the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General announced a nationwide initiative to investigate fraud and strengthen compliance oversight across employment-based visa programs.

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

USCIS CAN NOW DENY CASES WITHOUT AN RFE: 2026 POLICY UPDATE.

USCIS announced this policy update on August 5, 2026, stating that officers may deny benefit requests without first issuing a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID) when required initial evidence or eligibility has not been established at filing.

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

TSA IS SHARING PASSENGER DATA WITH ICE — WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW.

A quiet policy shift is changing how immigration enforcement finds people who may have overstayed their authorized period of admission, and employers with foreign national employees should be paying attention.

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

FILING AN EXTENSION OF STAY UNDER THE NEW F, J, AND I RULES: THE DEADLINES THAT ACTUALLY MATTER.

Once the DHS rule ending duration of status takes effect on September 15, 2026, the date printed on an F-1 student's, J-1 exchange visitor's, or I foreign media representative's Form I-94 becomes the hard deadline for their authorized stay.

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

F-1 AND J-1 STUDENTS EYEING AN EB-5 INVESTMENT: WHY STATUS TIMING MATTERS MORE THAN EVER.

International students thinking about an EB-5 investment as their path to a green card now have an added layer of timing to work through. With the end of duration of status taking effect September 15, 2026, F-1 students and J-1 exchange visitors will move from an open-ended admission tied to their program to a fixed period with a hard end date.

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

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

The August 2026 Visa Bulletin brings a quieter month for the employment-based categories hit hardest over the summer, but it introduces a meaningful shift on the family-sponsored side and a fresh warning for EB-1 India that filers should not overlook. **[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.

U.S. ENDS "DURATION OF STATUS" FOR F-1 STUDENTS — HOW DOES CANADA COMPARE?

Effective September 15, 2026, DHS is replacing the open-ended "duration of status" system for F-1, J-1, and I visa holders with a fixed admission period capped at four years — meaning students needing more time must file a formal Extension of Stay with USCIS, along with a \$470 fee, and the post-graduation grace period is shrinking from 60 to 30 days.

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

ONTARIO PUBLISHES FULL SCORING CRITERIA FOR THE NEW WORKFORCE PRIORITY STREAM.

On July 20, 2026, Ontario released the full points system and requirements for its new Workforce Priority Stream, which replaced all eight former OINP streams.

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

IRCC PAUSES NEW PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS: WHAT FAMILIES SHOULD DO NOW.

As of July 15, 2026, IRCC has stopped accepting new interest-to-sponsor forms under the Parents and Grandparents Program, though it does not affect anyone already in the queue — roughly 60,500 applicants remain in the system, and IRCC still plans to finalize permanent residence for up to 15,000 parents and grandparents in 2026.

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

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

POSSIBLE \$100K FEE FOR OPT WORK AUTHORIZATION? WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR.



ICE DETENTIONS AT DOMESTIC AIRPORTS: WHAT TRAVELERS NEED TO KNOW.



UPCOMING EVENTS

GSC SHRM 2026: Immigration Enforcement: What Employers Need to Know in 2026

September 29, 2026
Time: 10:30am-11:30am
Venue: Atlantic City, NJ

IMMIGRATION POLICY UPDATE: WHAT'S CHANGED IN 2026

October 1, 2026
Time: 12:00pm-2:00pm
Venue: [Online via Zoom](#)

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