CYRUS D. MEHTA & PARTNERS PLLC
US IMMIGRATION & NATIONALITY LAW

IMMIGRATION UPDATE - MAY 12, 2020

Posted on May 12, 2020 by Cyrus Mehta

Headlines:

USCIS Changes E-Verify and I-9 Central Email Addresses – As of April 24, USCIS is no longer able to receive and answer emails sent to e-verify@dhs.gov and i-9central@dhs.gov.

New Bill Would Reallocate 40,000 Unused Green Cards for Medical Workers – A new bill introduced in the U.S. Senate would reallocate previously authorized, unused immigrant visas for 25,000 nurses and 15,000 doctors, and family members, to alleviate shortages.

Are Laid-Off H-1B Workers Entitled to COBRA Coverage? – H-1B workers who are laid off may be entitled to COBRA benefits, which allow an employee who was working for an insured employer group of 20 or more employees to purchase health insurance for up to 18 months after losing their job.

Firm in the News..

Details:

Back to Top

USCIS Changes E-Verify and I-9 Central Email Addresses

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced on May 6, 2020, that it recently migrated to Microsoft Office 365 and that, as of April 24, it is no longer able to receive and answer emails sent to e-verify@dhs.gov and i-9central@dhs.gov. Those who sent an email to those addresses on or after April 24 and did not receive a response within 48 hours are asked to resend their messages to e-verify@uscis.dhs.gov or i-9central@uscis.dhs.gov.

Details: E-Verify notice,

https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHSCISEVERIFY/bulletins/28a4541

Back to Top

New Bill Would Reallocate 40,000 Unused Green Cards for Medical Workers

A new bill (S. 3599) introduced May 5, 2020, in the U.S. Senate would reallocate previously authorized, unused immigrant visas for 25,000 nurses and 15,000 doctors, and family members, to alleviate shortages. The filing period under the bipartisan Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act would be limited to 90 days after termination of the President's COVID-19 emergency declaration.

Such visas, to be processed on an expedited basis, would not be subject to per-country numerical limitations and would be issued in order of the priority date assigned at the time the visa petition was filed.

The bill's final provisions and passage in the short term remain uncertain, as the House of Representatives is not in session.

Details:

- Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act, https://www.durbin.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Healthcare%20Workforce%20Resilience%20Act.pdf
- Summary of legislation, https://www.durbin.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Healthcare%20Workforce%20Resilience%20Act%20Summary.pdf
- Senators' press release, https://bit.ly/3bhFyTN
- "Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act: Is Relief on the Way for Physicians and Nurses?", https://www.natlawreview.com/article/healthcare-workforce-resilience-act-relief-way-physicians-and-nurses

Back to Top

Are Laid-Off H-1B Workers Entitled to COBRA Coverage?

H-1B workers who are laid off may be entitled to COBRA benefits, which allow an employee who was working for an insured employer group of 20 or more employees to purchase health insurance for up to 18 months after losing their job.

Department of Labor regulations require employers to offer the same benefits to H-1B workers as those offered to similarly employed U.S. workers. This includes insurance plans and means that any employer required to provide COBRA benefits to U.S. workers because it has more than 20 employees must also offer those benefits to terminated H-1B workers.

Details:

- DOL fact sheet, https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/whdfs62L.pdf
- Insurance FAQ, https://bit.ly/3cktUJk

Back to Top

Firm in the News.

Cyrus Mehta's views on the administration's latest volte face on work authorizations for H-4 spouses were included in a Time of India article, which is available at https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/international-business/trump-admin-petitions-court-to-not-revoke-working-rights-of-h-1b-spouses/articleshow/75590495.cms

Back to Top