



IMMIGRATION UPDATE - AUGUST 12, 2025

Posted on August 12, 2025 by Cyrus Mehta

Headlines:

[DV-2025 Entrants From UK and Dependent Areas Need to Re-Check Their Selection, DOS Says](#)

– The Department of State has determined that for a "small number" of 2025 Diversity Visa Program entrants from Great Britain (United Kingdom) and its dependent areas, "the selection status results may have been previously incorrectly reported."

[DOS Proposes Rule to Increase Vetting and Combat Fraud in DV Program](#)

– The Department of State published a notice of proposed rulemaking to "improve the integrity and combat fraud" in the Diversity Visa (DV) Program.

[DOS Launches Visa Bond Pilot Program, Imposes Visa Bonds on Nationals of Malawi and Zambia](#)

– The Department of State (DOS) published a temporary final rule on August 5, 2025, announcing the start of a 12-month visa bond pilot program. As part of that pilot, DOS announced visa bonds on nationals of Malawi and Zambia coming to the United States on B-1/B-2 visas.

[Routine Visa Services Paused at U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe as Part of Worldwide Review of Visa 'Screening and Vetting Procedures'](#)

– The U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe has temporarily paused all routine visa services, including "applications for immigrant visas as well as nonimmigrant visas for tourists, business travelers, students, exchange visitors, and most other nonimmigrant categories." DOS said that the pause at U.S. Embassy Harare is part of its "reviewing and evaluating existing screening and vetting procedures worldwide."

[USCIS Issues Policy Guidance to Prevent Trans Women From Competing in Women's Sports in the United States](#)

– U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services issued a policy alert, effective immediately, to prevent trans women

from entering the United States to participate in women's sports.

Details:

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DV-2025 Entrants From UK and Dependent Areas Need to Re-Check Their Selection, DOS Says

On August 8, 2025, the Department of State (DOS) [announced](#) that in reviewing the entry selection system for the DV-2025 Program, the agency has determined that for a "small number" of entrants from Great Britain (United Kingdom) and its dependent areas, "the selection status results may have been previously incorrectly reported." DOS asks that DV-2025 entrants from those areas go to [Entrant Status Check](#) and use the unique confirmation number saved from their DV-2025 online entry registration to confirm whether their entry has been selected for the DV program.

DOS reminded selectees that eligibility to apply for a diversity visa extends through the end of the fiscal year (September 30), and that visas may become unavailable before that date if DOS issues all visa numbers authorized by Congress for that fiscal year. To be scheduled for an interview, selectees who wish to immigrate to the United States must first submit a complete DS-260 application. If scheduled, selectees should be prepared to provide all required documentation at the time of interview, including a medical exam, DOS said.

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DOS Proposes Rule to Increase Vetting and Combat Fraud in DV Program

On August 5, 2025, the Department of State (DOS) published a [notice of proposed rulemaking](#) to "improve the integrity and combat fraud" in the Diversity Visa (DV) Program.

DOS proposes to require DV Program applicants "to provide valid, unexpired passport information and a scan of the biographic and signature page uploaded to their electronic entry form, or otherwise indicate that they are exempt from this requirement." The proposed rule would make additional changes, such as replacing use of the term "gender" with "sex" and replacing "age" with "date of birth."

Comments are due by September 19, 2025, and should be submitted in the

manner and format specified in the notice.

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DOS Launches Visa Bond Pilot Program, Imposes Visa Bonds on Nationals of Malawi and Zambia

The Department of State (DOS) published a [temporary final rule](#) on August 5, 2025, announcing the start of a 12-month visa bond pilot program. Individuals applying for visas as temporary visitors for business or pleasure (B-1/B-2) who are nationals of countries identified by DOS as having "high visa overstay rates, where screening and vetting information is deemed deficient, or offering Citizenship by Investment, if the alien obtained citizenship with no residency requirement," may be subject to the pilot program, DOS said. Consular officers may require covered nonimmigrant visa applicants to post a bond of up to \$15,000 as a condition of visa issuance, as determined by the consular officers.

Based on their B-1/B-2 visa overstay rate, DOS [announced](#) visa bonds on nationals of Malawi and Zambia coming to the United States on B-1/B-2 visas. Starting August 20, 2025, any citizen or national traveling on a passport issued by one of these countries who is found otherwise eligible for a B-1/B-2 visa must post a bond in amounts of \$5,000, \$10,000, or \$15,000, determined at the time of the visa interview. The applicant must also submit a Department of Homeland Security Form I-352 agreeing to the terms of the bond, through the Department of the Treasury's online payment platform Pay.gov. This requirement applies regardless of place of application.

DOS said that applicants should only submit a Form I-352 to post a bond after being directed to do so by a consular officer. Applicants will be provided a direct link and must pay via Pay.gov. "A bond does not guarantee visa issuance, and if any individual pays fees without being directed to do so by a consular officer, that money will not be returned," DOS said.

All visa holders who have posted a visa bond must arrive to and depart from the United States via one of the ports of entry listed below, DOS said:

- Boston Logan International Airport (BOS)
- John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
- Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD)

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Routine Visa Services Paused at U.S. Embassy in Zimbabwe as Part of Worldwide Review of Visa 'Screening and Vetting Procedures'

Effective August 7, 2025, the U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe, has temporarily paused all routine visa services. The Department of State [said](#) that this pause "includes applications for immigrant visas as well as nonimmigrant visas for tourists, business travelers, students, exchange visitors, and most other nonimmigrant categories." DOS said that the pause at U.S. Embassy Harare is part of its "reviewing and evaluating existing screening and vetting procedures worldwide."

DOS said that affected visa applicants have been notified. The agency will update its website "when appointment scheduling resumes and inform applicants whose appointments were rescheduled". DOS noted that applications for A-1, A-2, G-1, G-2, G-4, C-2, and C-3 diplomatic and official visas will continue to be processed.

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USCIS Issues Policy Guidance to Prevent Trans Women From Competing in Women's Sports in the United States

On August 4, 2025, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued a [policy alert](#), effective immediately, to prevent trans women from entering the United States to participate in women's sports. The alert, which characterizes trans women as "male," clarifies how Executive Order 14201, [Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports](#), affects eligibility for certain visa classifications. Specifically, USCIS said, the alert "revises guidance relating to the following visa categories: O-1A aliens of extraordinary ability, E11 aliens of extraordinary ability, E21 aliens of exceptional ability, and national interest waivers (NIWs)."

The alert clarifies how extraordinary ability and exceptional ability will be determined with respect to trans women athletes. For example, the alert states that "with respect to demonstrating extraordinary ability in athletics in both the nonimmigrant and immigrant classifications, USCIS considers the fact that a male athlete has been competing against women as a negative factor in determining whether the alien is among the small percentage at the very top of the field." Also, USCIS "does not consider a male athlete who has gained the necessary acclaim in men's sports and seeks to compete in women's sports in the United States to be seeking to continue work in his area of extraordinary

ability for both the relevant nonimmigrant and immigrant classifications." The alert provides that for the extraordinary ability and exceptional ability classifications, "male athletes seeking to enter the United States to compete in women's sports do not substantially benefit prospectively the United States." The alert also clarifies that "it is not in the national interest to the United States to waive the job offer and, thus, the labor certification for male athletes whose proposed endeavor is to compete in women's sports."

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