



IMMIGRATION UPDATE - AUGUST 25, 2025

Posted on August 25, 2025 by Cyrus Mehta

Headlines:

[USCIS Updates Guidance to Consider 'Anti-Americanism' in Adjudicating Immigrant Benefits and 'Good Moral Character' for Naturalization Applicants](#)

– U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced updates to its guidance related to considering "anti-Americanism" in adjudications of immigrant benefits and expanding what constitutes "good moral character" for naturalization applicants.

[Trump Administration Says It is Reviewing All U.S. Visa Holders for Possible Violations](#)

– The Trump administration is reviewing the visas of more than 55 million people for any violations that would qualify them for deportation.

[Trump Administration Pauses Work Visas for Commercial Truck Drivers](#)

– A State Department spokesperson said the pause was done "to conduct a comprehensive and thorough review of screening and vetting protocols used to determine their qualifications for a U.S. visa."

[Appeals Court Allows End to Temporary Protections for 61,000 Central Americans and Nepalese](#)

– The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit granted an emergency stay pending appeal that allows the Trump administration to move forward with plans to end Temporary Protected Status for an estimated 61,000 people from Honduras, Nicaragua, and Nepal.

[Egypt is Close to Seven Percent Cap for DV-2025 Program](#) – Egypt is close to reaching the per-country limit of seven percent of the 52,056 visa numbers available in the Diversity Visa program for fiscal year 2025.

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USCIS Updates Guidance to Consider 'Anti-Americanism' in Adjudicating Immigrant Benefits and 'Good Moral Character' for Naturalization Applicants

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced several updates to its guidance related to considering "anti-Americanism" in adjudications of immigrant benefits and expanding what constitutes "good moral character" for naturalization applicants. Below are highlights:

"Anti-Americanism." On August 19, 2025, USCIS [announced](#) that it has updated its [guidance](#), effective immediately, to USCIS officers to consider "anti-Americanism" in immigrant benefit requests where an exercise of discretion is required, including factors related to past requests for parole and "any involvement in anti-American or terrorist organizations," as well as "where evidence of antisemitic activity is present." The guidance does not define "anti-Americanism" and appears to leave discretion to USCIS officers. USCIS spokesman Matthew Tragesser said, "America's benefits should not be given to those who despise the country and promote anti-American ideologies."

The guidance highlights several areas of focus, including the adjudication of employment-based immigrant petitions in cases involving national interest waivers and adjudications of extensions of stay, changes of status, and reinstatement. The updated guidance also discusses "how an exercise of discretion is applied when adjudicating an EB-5 investor petition or application in cases involving threats to the national interest, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, and criminal misuse."

Advocates [expressed concerns](#) about the guidance having a chilling effect on free speech and ideological questions being triggered by social media posts or peaceful protesting. "A lot of this administration's activities infringe on constitutional rights and do need to be resolved, ultimately, in courts," [said](#) Ruby Robinson, a senior managing attorney at the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center. Immigration lawyers are advising companies sponsoring foreign employees to counsel them on social media behavior. The Associated Press [concluded](#) that the policy "represents a major shift in U.S. immigration vetting, one that goes beyond criminal history or security risks and into the realm of personal beliefs. For skilled foreign workers, especially those navigating long immigration timelines, this could mean greater uncertainty and the need for

extra vigilance in how they present themselves—online and offline."

Good moral character. USCIS released a memorandum, [Restoring a Rigorous, Holistic, and Comprehensive Good Moral Character Evaluation Standard for Aliens Applying for Naturalization](#), on August 15, 2025. The memo states that for naturalization applicants, USCIS will consider not only the "absence of wrongdoing" but also will engage in a "holistic assessment" of an applicant's "behavior, adherence to societal norms, and positive contributions that affirmatively demonstrate good moral character."

The memo defines good moral character as "a character commensurate with the standards of average citizens of the community" in which the applicant resides. USCIS officers are directed to review the totality of the circumstances in each case and "must account for" an applicant's "positive attributes and not simply the absence of misconduct," the memo states, noting that positive factors include but are not limited to:

- Sustained community involvement and contributions in the United States.
- Family caregiving, responsibility, and ties in the United States.
- Educational attainment.
- Stable and lawful employment history and achievements.
- Length of lawful residence in the United States.
- Compliance with tax obligations and financial responsibility in the United States.

The memo directs USCIS officers to apply greater scrutiny to potentially disqualifying behavior or action and discusses proper rehabilitation and reformation.

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Trump Administration Says It is Reviewing All U.S. Visa Holders for Possible Violations

According to [reports](#), the Trump administration is reviewing the visas of more than 55 million people for any violations that would qualify them for deportation. The Department of State said that all U.S. visa holders will be subject to "continuous vetting" for indications of ineligibility to enter or stay in the United States. This may include people currently outside of the United States who have multiple-entry tourist visas.

The heightened scrutiny will include [reviews of social media accounts](#) and law enforcement and immigration records in visa holders' home countries.

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Trump Administration Pauses Work Visas for Commercial Truck Drivers

According to [reports](#), the Trump administration is pausing issuance of work visas to foreign commercial truck drivers. "The increasing number of foreign drivers operating large tractor-trailer trucks on U.S. roads is endangering American lives and undercutting the livelihoods of American truckers," said Secretary of State Marco Rubio. A State Department spokesperson [said](#) the pause was done "to conduct a comprehensive and thorough review of screening and vetting protocols used to determine their qualifications for a U.S. visa." The spokesperson noted that the new policy "applies to all nationalities and is not directed at any specific country."

The Trump administration is also enforcing a requirement for truckers to be proficient in spoken and written English.

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Appeals Court Allows End to Temporary Protections for 61,000 Central Americans and Nepalese

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit [granted](#) an emergency stay pending appeal that allows the Trump administration to move forward with plans to end Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for an estimated 61,000 people from Honduras, Nicaragua, and Nepal.

The TPS designation for 7,000 Nepalese expired on August 5, 2025. The TPS designations for 51,000 Hondurans and 3,000 Nicaraguans will expire on September 8, 2025.

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Egypt is Close to Seven Percent Cap for DV-2025 Program

The Department of State (DOS) [announced](#) on August 19, 2025, that Egypt is close to reaching the per-country limit of seven percent of the 52,056 visa numbers available in the Diversity Visa (DV) program for fiscal year 2025. "As we are approaching this cap, it may become necessary to take steps to avoid

exceeding the country-specific numerical limits. This includes potentially canceling visa interview appointments for individuals for whom a visa is not available," DOS said.

DOS noted that individuals affected by the early conclusion of the DV program for nationals of any country that reaches the seven percent limit "may reapply in subsequent program years for which their foreign state of chargeability qualifies for the DV program."

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Firm in the News

[Cyrus Mehta](#) was quoted by the *Times of India* in [Want a Visa, or a Green Card? It's Vital to Have Pro-American Ideologies, States USCIS](#). Mr. Mehta said, "How does the USCIS define 'anti-American'? Being critical of the Trump administration or for that matter any administration should not be deemed as anti-American. Indeed, it should be considered a virtuous activity to be critical of America or its administration as it is through criticism and dissent that we can reflect on all points of view, self-correct, grow and evolve."

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