



IMMIGRATION UPDATE - SEPTEMBER 02, 2025

Posted on September 2, 2025 by Cyrus Mehta

Headlines:

[DHS Proposes Rule to End Duration-of-Status Admissions Policy for Students, Exchange Visitors, and Foreign Media Representatives](#) – The Department of Homeland Security announced a proposed rule to end the "duration of status" (D/S) admissions policy for F-1 (student), J-1 (exchange visitor), and I-1 (foreign media) nonimmigrants. The proposed rule would transition current F-1s and J-1s on D/S to a maximum four-year admission as of the effective date of the final rule.

[DOS to Require Immigrant Visa Applicants to Interview in Designated Home Country Consular Districts](#) – The Department of State will require immigrant visa applicants to interview in the consular district designated for their place of residence, or in their country of nationality if requested, with limited exceptions.

[USCIS Implements Payment by Electronic Debit; Paper Checks and Money Orders Will No Longer Be Accepted](#) – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has implemented a new way to pay fees using electronic debits from U.S. bank accounts and will stop accepting paper checks and money orders after October 28, 2025.

[DOJ Expands Qualifications to Recruit More Temporary Immigration Judges](#) – The Department of Justice is amending the Temporary Immigration Judge (TIJ) provisions "to permit the Director, with the approval of the Attorney General, to designate or select any attorney to serve as a TIJ for a renewable term not to exceed six months."

[OFLC Archives Searchable FAQ Database](#) – The Department of Labor's Office of Foreign Labor Certification's archived searchable FAQ database will no

longer be updated and should not be relied on for the most recent OFLC guidance.

[Send Business Visa Inquiries Through Navigator, Not Via Email, DOS Says](#) –

The Visa Navigator, which leads the user through a series of prompts, can be found on the relevant U.S. embassy or consulate's website.

Details:

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DHS Proposes Rule to End Duration-of-Status Admissions Policy for Students, Exchange Visitors, and Foreign Media Representatives

On August 27, 2025, the Department of Homeland Security announced a [proposed rule](#) to end the "duration of status" (D/S) admissions policy for F-1 (student), J-1 (exchange visitor), and I-1 (foreign media) nonimmigrants. The proposed rule would transition current F-1s and J-1s on D/S to a maximum four-year admission as of the effective date of the final rule. Unlike most nonimmigrants, who are admitted for a set period, F, J, and most I nonimmigrants are currently admitted for D/S as long as they comply with the terms of their status.

Details of the proposed changes include:

- *Fixed dates of admission for F-1 and J-1 nonimmigrants:* F-1s and J-1s would no longer be admitted for D/S. Instead, they would be admitted for a fixed date range, not to exceed four years or their program length.
- *Transition rules for F-1 and J-1 nonimmigrants in the United States:* F-1s and J-1s currently in valid status within the United States would have valid status up through the program end date on their I-20 or DS-2019, on the date the final rule would be effective, not to exceed four years from the final rule's effective date.
 - For those who leave the United States during the pendency of a timely filed extension of status, upon seeking admission, their specific circumstances will determine whether they are limited to the maximum four years or a period previously authorized.
- *Fixed dates of admission for I-1 foreign media representatives:* I-1s would be admitted for a maximum of 240 days, or 90 days for Chinese nationals (not including Hong Kong/Macau).

- *Extension of status required:* These nonimmigrants would need to timely file an extension of status to extend their stay.
 - F-1s who timely file an extension of status would be considered as remaining in status until U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) adjudicates the extension. While a timely filed extension is pending, Optional Practical Training, Curricular Practical Training, or hardship-based work authorization would be extended for a maximum of 240 days.
 - J-1s who timely file an extension of status would be considered as remaining in status for either a maximum of 240 days or until USCIS adjudicates the extension, depending on the circumstances.
- *Grace period reduction for F-1:* The "grace period" for F-1s to leave the United States would be reduced from 60 days to 30 days.
- *F-1 program restrictions:* F-1 students would face restrictions in changing programs, and graduate students would be prohibited from doing so.

Comments on the proposed rule are due by October 27, 2025.

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DOS to Require Immigrant Visa Applicants to Interview in Designated Home Country Consular Districts

Effective November 1, 2025, the Department of State (DOS) will [require](#) immigrant visa applicants to interview in the consular district designated for their place of residence, or in their country of nationality if requested, with limited exceptions. The National Visa Center will begin scheduling appointments accordingly. This includes Diversity Visa 2026 applicants.

DOS also said that residents of countries where routine visa operations are suspended or paused should apply at [designated immigrant visa processing posts](#), unless the applicant is a national of another country with ongoing operations.

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USCIS Implements Payment by Electronic Debit; Paper Checks and Money Orders Will No Longer Be Accepted

On August 29, 2025, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) [announced](#) that it has implemented a new way to pay fees using electronic

debits from U.S. bank accounts and will stop accepting paper checks and money orders after October 28, 2025.

Effective immediately, individuals can make payments directly to USCIS by completing and signing [Form G-1650, Authorization for ACH Transactions](#), and filing it with their applications, petitions, or requests. This new payment option is in addition to the existing option of paying by credit card using [Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions](#)

USCIS said the new payment method aligns with [Executive Order 14247, Modernizing Payments to and from America's Bank Account](#), and is "aimed at reducing the time and manpower required to process checks and money orders, as well as reducing the risks of fraud, lost payments, and theft."

USCIS said it will continue to accept paper check and money order payments in addition to credit and debit payments until October 28, 2025. After October 28, USCIS will accept only ACH debit transactions using Form G-1650 or credit card payments using Form G-1450. USCIS said that those who do not have a U.S. bank account cannot use Form G-1650 but may submit Form G-1450 and use a prepaid credit card to pay filing fees.

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DOJ Expands Qualifications to Recruit More Temporary Immigration Judges

To "help further address its caseload and expand the pool of potential candidates" to be Temporary Immigration Judges (TIJs), the Department of Justice (DOJ) is "[amending](#) the applicable TIJ regulation to remove regulatory constraints that go beyond the regulatory constraints on permanent IJ hiring."

Specifically, DOJ is amending the TIJ provisions "to permit the Director, with the approval of the Attorney General, to designate or select any attorney to serve as a TIJ for a renewable term not to exceed six months, subject to all statutory and regulatory limits on temporary service." Similarly, DOJ said it "no longer believes the restriction of TIJs to current employees with a threshold level of immigration law experience serves interests. Immigration law experience is not always a strong predictor of success as an IJ, and EOIR has hired individuals from other Federal agencies and Department components without prior immigration experience who have become successful and exemplary IJs," DOJ explained. Further, the agency said, "there is no clear reason to prohibit

individuals at other Federal agencies with stellar credentials—e.g., Supreme Court clerkships or significant experience in high-salience, complex litigation" who are "otherwise well-qualified" from serving as TIJs "solely because they lack a certain level of immigration experience or are not currently serving in the Department, neither of which is even a prerequisite to serve as a permanent IJ."

In selecting TIJs, DOJ said it "will continue to look for the most qualified individuals overall with primary weight given to an applicant's education and employment history. Further factors may carry additional weight, such as prior judicial or quasi-judicial service of any kind, service in State or Federal government, including trial or litigation experience, and immigration law experience." The Director and Attorney General will "retain discretion to consider any other factors deemed relevant and to make selections."

According to [reports](#), the Trump administration is considering reassigning some military judges to become TIJs.

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OFLC Archives Searchable FAQ Database

Effective August 30, 2025, the Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) has archived the searchable Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) database. It will only be available at its [new location](#).

OFLC said the database is "being stored at a website that is not controlled by DOL. Stakeholders are advised to update their bookmarks and hyperlinks if they wish to continue to access the archived FAQs." OFLC noted that "the archive may take time to load, but once it does, it is fully functional." OFLC noted that "the archived searchable FAQ database will no longer be updated once it is archived and should not be relied upon to provide the most recent OFLC guidance. It is advisable to only rely on the searchable FAQ database for historical guidance."

For more information, see the [OFLC's news page](#) (scroll to August 27) and [OFLC's FAQ page](#).

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Send Business Visa Inquiries Through Navigator, Not Via Email, DOS Says

According to reports, business visa inquiries to the Department of State (DOS)

must now be sent through the Visa Navigator platform rather than via email.

The Visa Navigator, which leads the user through a series of prompts, can be found on the relevant U.S. embassy or consulate's website. For example, the Visa Navigator for the U.S. Embassy and Consulate in Nigeria is [here](#). The Navigator notes that it "is not an online application. Completing the navigator does not entitle you to a U.S. passport or any other citizenship or immigration benefit. The U.S. consulate may require you to provide additional information or supporting documents before acting on your request."

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