

Immigrant Visa Processing Updates for Nationalities at High Risk of Public Benefits Usage

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) announced it will pause the issuance of immigrant visas at U.S. consulates worldwide starting January 21, 2026 for nationals of 75 countries that DOS deems are “at high risk of public benefits usage”. The U.S. government has not indicated when the suspension will be lifted.

The nationalities affected include:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, The Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Republic of the Congo, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, and Yemen.

For a list of Immigrant Visa categories, please refer to <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/all-visa-categories.html>.

It is important to note at the outset that the pause impacts **immigrant visa issuance at U.S. consulates abroad**, and **does not affect nonimmigrant visas** such as B tourist visas, F student visas, J exchange visitor visas, H-1B work visas, etc.