

Visa Pause Lifted

Three weeks after implementing a temporary pause, the [U.S. Department of State](#) has announced it will resume processing visa applications. Under new directives, U.S. consular officers will conduct “comprehensive and thorough vetting” of all students and exchange visitor applicants to identify “any indications of hostility toward the citizens, culture, government, institutions or founding principles of the United States.” The State Department has not provided specific criteria for how such indicators will be determined to the public.

The directive also instructs U.S. consulates to prioritize expedited visa appointments for two key groups:

- Foreign-born physicians participating in U.S. medical programs on exchange visas.
- Students applying to U.S. universities where international students comprise less than 15% of the total enrollment.

A [Washington Post article](#) further reports "that the new procedures will take effect in five business days." The Department of State has also stated that consulates "should consider overall scheduling volume and the resource demands of appropriate vetting."

The DOS announcement stated that:

"We use all available information in our visa screening and vetting to identify visa applicants who are inadmissible to the United States, including those who pose a threat to U.S. national security. Under new guidance, we will conduct a comprehensive and thorough vetting, including online presence, of all student and exchange visitor applicants in the F, M, and J nonimmigrant classifications."

As part of this process, all F, M, and J visa applicants will be required to make their social media profiles publicly viewable for inspection.

Applicants should consult the website of their nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for current appointment availability and further instructions.