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CUMMING & PARTNERS NEWS ALERT

U.S. Pauses Visa Processing For 75 Countries

On January 14, 2026, the Department of State announced it's pausing all immigrant visa issuances to applicants who are nationals of 75 countries. Here's what you need to know.

What is an immigrant visa?

Immigrant visas are travel documents issued to foreign nationals who apply for U.S. legal permanent residence (i.e. green cards) from outside the United States.

Foreign nationals who apply for green cards from inside the United States through Adjustment of Status are not impacted by this measure.

Which countries are affected?

See the full list of countries [here](#). Many were already included on the U.S. government's expanded travel ban list.

When does the suspension of immigrant visa processing take effect?

January 21, 2026.

Are there any exceptions?

The pause doesn't apply to dual nationals applying for immigrant visas with a valid passport from a country that's not among the 75 listed.

What's the reason for the suspension?

The Trump administration stated that immigrants from countries deemed to be "high-risk" can't be a financial burden to Americans, i.e. that they won't use welfare in the U.S. or become a public charge.

Does this pause apply to tourist visas, business visas or non-immigrant work visas?

No, just to immigrant visa applications, e.g. those wishing to live permanently in the U.S.

What happens to immigrant visa applications and interviews?

Nationals of affected countries may continue to submit immigrant visa applications, and the Department of State will keep scheduling applicants for appointments. However, no immigrant visas will be issued to these nationals during this pause.

Does this affect currently valid visas?

No immigrant visas have been revoked as part of Department of State guidance.

How long is the pause?

Indefinite. The Department of State is reviewing appropriate policies, regulations and guidance. On its social media account on January 14, the Department posted, "The freeze will remain active until the U.S. can ensure that new immigrants will not extract wealth from the American people".

As more information becomes available, we'll continue to share updated advice.