

Thursday, October 2, 2008

Immigration Update: Diversity Visa Lottery Starts!

By Nancy-Jo Merritt and Matthew J. Martinez

Each year the State Department makes a small amount of "green card" visas available pursuant to an electronic lottery process. Companies with foreign national employees may wish to make information about the application process available to interested employees. The U.S. Department of State has posted instructions regarding registration for the 2010 Diversity Immigrant visa Program (DV-2010). The Congressionally mandated Diversity Immigrant Visa Program provides for a maximum of 55,000 Diversity Visas (DV) each fiscal year to be made available for persons from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States. There is a limited list of countries whose citizens are eligible to apply for U.S. immigrant ["green card"] status, so be sure to check the country list on the website link below.

The registration period for DV-2010 begins at Noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), Thursday, October 2, 2008, and ends at Noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST), on Monday, December 1, 2008. Selection is made based on a computer-generated, random lottery drawing of applications submitted following simple, but strict, eligibility requirements.

Complete instructions, including the list of all of the eligible countries for DV-2010, are available at [http://www.travel.state.gov/pdf/T1026V-DV-2010bulletin\(3\).pdf](http://www.travel.state.gov/pdf/T1026V-DV-2010bulletin(3).pdf). Applicants may access the electronic Diversity Visa entry form (E-DV) at www.dvlottery.state.gov during the registration period. Paper entries will not be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the last week of the registration period to enter. Heavy demand may result in website delays. No entries will be accepted after noon, EST, on December 1, 2008.

We wish everyone luck!

More TPS Extensions

On September 25th, we sent a notice regarding the extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nationals of El Salvador. The government has similarly extended TPS for nationals of Nicaragua, and Honduras. This updated TPS information is now available at http://service.govdelivery.com/service/view.html?code=USCIS_4.

Nancy-Jo Merritt focuses her practice in immigration law and has nearly three decades of experience representing domestic and international companies with issues concerning foreign national employees and business immigration matters. She provides strategic counseling to clients and assists employers in developing compliance programs. She earned her B.A., (1964) M.A., (1974) J.D., (1978) from Arizona State University.

Matthew J. Martinez focuses his practice in the area of immigration and nationality law. Mr. Martinez works with companies to conduct internal I-9 audits in an effort to assess compliance with immigration, employment and discrimination laws, and works with clients to develop hiring policies and procedures. He also assists employers in responding to agency-initiated workplace investigations and in defending against immigration-related discrimination complaints. He earned his B.S. (1995) and his J.D. (1999) from Brigham Young University.



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