



TROW & RAHAL, P.C.
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Immigration Newsletter

November 2024

In this month's newsletter, T&R provides updates and information about (1) Anticipating the Trump Administration; (2) Lebanon Designated for TPS; (3) The December 2024 Visa Bulletin; and (4) the upcoming Thanksgiving Holiday.

ANTICIPATING THE SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

There are 55 days until the new presidential administration takes office. While we cannot predict what will happen in business immigration, we can speculate based upon what we saw during the first Trump administration. Here are a few things we might expect:

- **Travel ban.** It is expected that the administration will issue an executive order announcing a new travel ban. This was done in the first week of the first administration and became known as the Muslim Ban.
- **Processing delays.** We can expect longer processing times at USCIS for petitions and applications to be processed, as well as at U.S. consulates for applications for visas. It could be required that all visa applicants need an interview again – whether first time or renewal – which would certainly slow things down.
- **Increased scrutiny.** Requests for Evidence (RFE) and denials increased a lot during the first Trump administration and we can expect this again, especially with H and L visas.
- **H-1B lottery.** We can anticipate changes to how the H-1B lottery is selected in the future. However, it is unlikely that changes will take place by the upcoming lottery in March 2025.
- **F-1 students.** Despite suggesting recently that we should give all international students green cards, we will likely see attempts to restrict Optional Practical Training (OPT) and STEM OPT.

- **Public Charge Rule.** We might see increased focus on whether visa applicants or immigrant visa applicants are likely to become a public charge, requiring more documentation about financial resources.
- **Enforcement.** We will likely see increased enforcement at worksites.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW TO PREPARE?

- **Potential Travel Ban Countries:** Foreign nationals from countries that may be subject to a travel ban that could be imposed as early as January 20th will want to be back in the United States before this date. Countries that could be or might be subject to a travel ban include Chad, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Myanmar (Burma), Nigeria, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Venezuela and Yemen.
- **Start USCIS filings of extensions early.** Employers should start extensions of most employee status, including H and L status, 8 months out so that they can be filed when first allowed, which is 6 months from the expiration date. Extensions of O and P visas can be filed one year in advance!
- **Conduct I-9 Compliance audits.** Employers should conduct internal I-9 compliance audits to ensure that their I-9s are in order in case audited.
- **Apply for visas in passports now if needed.** Foreign nationals who need new visas should apply for them as soon as possible if they wish to avoid delays in their ability to travel. With delays in visa issuance anticipated, foreign nationals could get stuck abroad for longer periods of time in the future when applying for visas.
- **Start PERM Labor Certification Applications early!** PERM applications are currently taking about 6 months for a prevailing wage request and then 14 months for a PERM certification. Employers need to leave at least another 6 months for preparation and recruitment. We recommend starting no later than 3 years before the 6th year in H-1B status or earlier!

T&R is here to help foreign nationals and employers with any of the above actions. Please let us know if you need assistance. T&R will also provide updates on changes to policies during the next administration and help guide you.

We will continue to send out this monthly newsletter but for more immediate updates, please follow T&R on social media. Our direct links can be found by clicking the icons in the blue footer below.

LEBANON DESIGNATED FOR TPS

As of today, November 26, 2024, Lebanon is designated for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months starting November 27, 2024 until May 27, 2026. The requirements for Lebanese nationals (and individuals having no nationality who last habitually resided in Lebanon) to obtain TPS include:

- Continuous residence: Resided continuously in the United States since October 16, 2025 or before; and
- Continuous physical presence: Physically present continuously in the United States since November 27, 2024.

See the USCIS news release [here](#) and information on how to apply for TPS [here](#).

DECEMBER 2024 VISA BULLETIN

U.S. Department of State (DOS) released the December 2025 visa bulletin; USCIS will honor dates of filing. There is essentially no movement in the Dates of Filing from November visa bulletin, which is now the second month in a row with little or no advancement. However, the Final Action dates for India for EB-2 and EB-3 do advance – but only by one or two weeks. Full charts can be found [here](#).

This is disappointing for most foreign nationals who remain in the queue for an immigrant visa number to become available so that they can file an application to adjust status or process for their immigrant visas at U.S. Consulates abroad.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

We wish all our clients, colleagues, and friends a peaceful and restful Thanksgiving. At Trow & Rahal we are grateful this Thanksgiving for the opportunity to work with our foreign national clients, their families, and their employers, who make our work meaningful and motivate us to do more each day. We believe that America is a nation of immigrants who make this country stronger and better. We celebrate daily the contributions and successes of immigrants.

The office of T&R will be closed this Thursday and Friday, November 28-29, for the Thanksgiving holiday.



3 Bethesda Metro Center | Suite 610 | Bethesda MD 20814

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