Public Releases by Topic
News Releases
Updates
Questions and Answers
Fact Sheets
Media Contacts
Alerts
Outstanding Americans by Choice

Home > NEWS

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Law Extends USCIS Programs through September 2012

WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) advises its customers that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act of 2010, signed by the President on Oct. 28, 2009, extends the following USCIS programs until Sept. 30, 2012:

- E-Verify
- Immigrant Investor (EB-5) Pilot Program
- special immigrant visa category for non-minister religious workers
- date by which J-1 nonimmigrant exchange visitors must obtain that status in order to qualify for the "Conrad 30" program.

E-Verify, an Internet-based system operated by DHS in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA), allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. More than 168,000 participating employers at nearly 640,000 worksites nationwide currently use the program. Since Oct. 1, 2009, more than 1.3 million employment verification queries have been run through the system and approximately 96.9 percent of all queries are now automatically confirmed without any need for employee action.

Under the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program, USCIS will continue to receive, process, and adjudicate all Regional Center Proposals and Forms I-526, Immigrant Petitions by Alien Entrepreneur, and Form I-485, Applications to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, affiliated with Regional Centers relying on "indirect" job creation analysis. Currently, there are more than 70 regional centers throughout the United States.

The special immigrant visa category for non-minister religious workers covers those within a religious vocation or occupation and also applies to accompanying or 'following-to-join' spouses and children of non-ministers. USCIS will continue to receive and process Form 1-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant and Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, based on Form I-360 petitions.

Finally, USCIS will continue to adjudicate immigration benefits covered by the "Conrad 30" program. The "Conrad 30" program allows each state health department to submit a request directly to the Department of State to initiate the waiver process for a foreign medical graduate who obtained J-1 status to change or adjust to another status without the required two-year foreign residence. The law previously required the foreign medical graduate to have acquired J-1 status before Sept. 30, 2009; the law now extends the program to cover J-1 admissions before Sept. 30, 2012.

Last updated:11/23/2009

More Information

E-Verify
Immigrant Investor EB-5

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