

Important Announcement on Waivers of the Interview Requirement for Certain Nonimmigrant Visas

Last Updated: December 23, 2022

The Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Department of Homeland Security, has extended until December 31, 2023, previously approved authorities allowing consular officers to waive the in-person interview for certain H-2 (temporary agricultural and non-agricultural workers) applicants; certain students, professors, research scholars, short-term scholars, or specialists (F, M, and academic J visa applicants); and for certain temporary workers who have an individual petition approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (H-1, H-3, H-4, L, O, P, and Q visa applicants) who meet certain conditions, including that they are applying for a visa in their country of nationality or residence. Under these authorities, consular officers have discretion to waive the visa interview requirement for certain first-time and renewing H-2 visa applicants, and for certain F, M, and academic J, and individual petition-based H-1, H-3, H-4, L, O, P, and Q applicants who were previously issued any type of visa, and who have never been refused a visa unless such refusal was overcome or waived, and who have no apparent ineligibility or potential ineligibility; or for certain first-time F, M, and academic J, or individual petition-based H-1, H-3, H-4, L, O, P, and Q applicants who are citizens or nationals of a country that participates in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), provided they have no apparent ineligibility or potential ineligibility and have previously traveled to the United States using an authorization obtained via the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) .

Applicants renewing a visa in the same classification within 48 months of the prior visa's expiration are also eligible for interview waiver. This authority is in place until further notice.

Consular officers may still require an in-person interview on a case-by-case basis, taking into account local conditions. We encourage applicants to check embassy and consulate websites for more detailed information about this development, as well as current operating status and services.