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State Dept. Revises Reciprocity Schedules for Several Countries – In recent months, the Department of State has revised visa reciprocity schedules for Armenia, Brazil, Albania, and China, among others.

State Dept.'s NVC Is Now Handling All Domestic Visa Inquiries – The National Visa Center (NVC) has begun handling all domestic email and telephone inquiries from the public on nonimmigrant and immigrant visa cases.

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State Dept. Anticipates Visa Number Movement in Some Employment-Based Categories

The Department of State's Visa Bulletin for February 2015 notes that movement is possible in some employment-based categories in the coming months.

In the employment-based "Worldwide" third preference category, the Visa Office expects rapid forward movement "for at least another month or two." The bulletin notes that rapid movement in recent months is expected to generate a significant amount of demand for numbers. "Once such demand materializes at the anticipated rate, it will have a direct impact on this cut-off date," which stands in February at January 1, 2014.

Similarly, the Visa Office expects rapid forward movement in the employment-based third preference category for China. "Such movement is likely to result in a dramatic increase in demand which could require 'corrective' action within the next six months," the bulletin notes. India may move by up to two weeks. On the other hand, Mexico and the Philippines will remain at the Worldwide date, although increased demand in the latter could require "corrective" action at some point later in the fiscal year, the bulletin states.

The bulletin notes that the determination of the monthly cut-off dates is subject to monthly fluctuations in applicant demand and a number of other variables, so trends and estimates are not guaranteed.

The Visa Bulletin for February 2015 is available at <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/law-and-policy/bulletin/2015/visa-bulletin-for-february-2015.html>.

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USCIS Revises Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has revised Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker. The revised Form I-129 is labeled with an October 23, 2014, edition date. It expires on October 31, 2016.

Starting on May 1, 2015, USCIS will accept only the October 23, 2014, edition of the I-129. USCIS will not accept previous editions of the I-129 on or after May 1, 2015.

Among other things, the revised form includes a question on the H classification supplement that asks, "Does any beneficiary in this petition have ownership interest in the petitioning organization?"

Details and a link to the form are available at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-129>.

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Agencies Launch Awareness Campaign on Executive Actions for Mexicans and Central Americans

The Departments of State and Homeland Security have launched the "Executive Action on Immigration: Know the Facts" awareness campaign, a national and international outreach effort detailing the eligibility requirements for requesting deferred action under President Obama's announcement in November 2014. The campaign, aimed at the Mexican and Central American public, explains how Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) will be implemented and who is eligible, "in an effort to dispel potential misinformation."

The campaign, in collaboration with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), is intended to:

- inform undocumented immigrants in the United States and the Mexican and Central American public about DAPA and to whom it applies;
- dissuade family members living in the United States from supporting the unauthorized migration of family members, including by emphasizing that persons currently in the United States who help undocumented family members enter the country will be barred from DAPA; and
- dissuade members of the Mexican and Central American public from migrating to the United States without authorization in the hope of taking advantage of executive actions that do not apply to them, including by reminding them that migrants apprehended at the border or ports of entry while attempting to unlawfully enter the United States fall into the United States' "highest enforcement and removal priority."

The campaign includes:

- running radio and TV public service announcements in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and U.S. metropolitan areas with high concentrations of Mexicans and Central Americans, such as Houston, Los Angeles, the District of Columbia, New York, and Miami;
- placing print products in English and Spanish language outlets in those countries;
- engaging English and Spanish-language media in the United States, Mexico, and Central America;
- providing more information on executive action eligibility on CBP's and USCIS' websites; and
- updating CBP's Information Call Center help lines with the latest information in Spanish and English.

The announcement is available at <http://www.dhs.gov/news/2015/01/05/departments-state-homeland-security-launch-executive-action-immigration-know-facts>. Campaign materials and additional information can be viewed and downloaded at <http://apps.cbp.gov/ea/>. A social media campaign is also being planned.

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DHS Extends TPS for Salvadorans

Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security, has extended temporary protected status (TPS) for eligible nationals of El Salvador for an additional 18 months, effective March 10, 2015, through September 9, 2016.

Current TPS El Salvador beneficiaries seeking to extend their TPS must re-register during the 60-day re-registration period that began on January 7, 2015, and runs through March 9, 2015. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) encourages beneficiaries to re-register as soon as possible.

The 18-month extension also allows TPS re-registrants to apply for a new employment authorization document (EAD). Eligible TPS El Salvador beneficiaries who re-register during the 60-day period and request a new EAD will receive one with an expiration date of September 9,

2016. USCIS recognizes that some re-registrants may not receive their new EADs until after their current ones expire. Therefore, USCIS is automatically extending current TPS EI Salvador EADs that have a March 9, 2015, expiration date for an additional six months. These existing EADs will now be valid through September 9, 2015.

To re-register, current TPS beneficiaries must submit:

- Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status (re-registrants do not need to pay the Form I-821 application fee).
- The biometrics services fee (or a fee waiver request) if they are 14 years old or older.
- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, regardless of whether they want a new EAD.
- The Form I-765 application fee or a fee waiver request, but only if they want an EAD. If the re-registrant does not want an EAD, no application fee is required.

Applicants may ask USCIS to waive the I-765 application fee or biometrics fee based on an inability to pay. To do so, applicants must file Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver, or submit a written request. Fee waiver requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation. USCIS will reject the TPS application of any applicant who fails to submit the required filing fees or a properly documented fee waiver request.

Additional information about TPS for EI Salvador—including guidance on eligibility, the application process, and where to file—is available online at <http://www.uscis.gov/tps>. Further details about the extension of TPS for EI Salvador, including application requirements and procedures, were published in the Federal Register on January 7, 2015, at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-01-07/html/2015-00031.htm>.

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DHS Extends, Redesignates TPS for Syrians

Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security, has redesignated Syria for temporary protected status (TPS) and extended the existing TPS designation for that country from April 1, 2015, through September 30, 2016.

Current TPS beneficiaries from Syria must re-register during a 60-day re-registration period that began on January 5, 2015, and runs through March 6, 2015. Syrian nationals and person without nationality who last habitually resided in Syria, who don't have TPS and who have continuously resided in the United States since January 5, 2015, and who have been continuously physically present in the United States since April 1, 2015, may apply for TPS during a 180-day initial registration period that began on January 5, 2015, and runs through July 6, 2015.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) encourages beneficiaries to re-register as soon as possible. The 18-month extension allows TPS re-registrants to apply for a new employment authorization document (EAD). Eligible Syria TPS beneficiaries who re-register during the 60-day period and request a new EAD will receive one with an expiration date of September 30, 2016. USCIS recognizes that some re-registrants may not receive their new EADs until after their current EADs expire. Therefore, USCIS is automatically extending current TPS Syria EADs with a March 31, 2015, expiration date for an additional six months. These existing EADs are now valid through September 30, 2015.

To re-register, individuals must submit:

- Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status (re-registrants do not need to pay the Form I-821 application fee).
- The biometric services fee (or a fee-waiver request) if they are 14 years old or older.

- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, regardless of whether they want a new EAD.
- The Form I-765 application fee or a fee waiver request, but only if they want an EAD. If the re-registrant does not want an EAD, no application fee is required.

Eligible Syrian nationals (and persons having no nationality who last habitually resided in Syria) who do not currently have TPS may apply for TPS if they meet the continuous physical presence requirements noted above. In addition, applicants must meet all other TPS eligibility and filing requirements.

To apply for the first time, individuals must submit:

- Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status.
- The Form I-821 application fee.
- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, regardless of whether they want a new EAD.
- The Form I-765 application fee, but only if they want an EAD and are 14 to 65 years old (those who are under age 14 or are age 66 or older do not need to pay the I-765 fee with their initial TPS applications).
- The biometric services fee if they are age 14 or older.

Those who still have a pending initial Syria TPS application do not need to submit a new I-821. However, if such individuals currently have a TPS-related EAD and want a new EAD, they must submit the I-765 with application fee, regardless of their age, and a copy of the receipt notice for the initial I-821 that is still pending.

DHS anticipates that approximately 5,000 individuals will be eligible to re-register for TPS under the existing designation of Syria and that approximately 5,000 additional individuals may be eligible for TPS under the redesignation.

Applicants may ask USCIS to waive any fees based on inability to pay by filing Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver, or by submitting a written request. Fee waiver requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation. USCIS will reject the TPS application of any applicant who fails to submit the required filing fees or a properly documented fee waiver request.

For more information, see <http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status-deferred-enforced-departure/tps-designated-country-syria/temporary-protected-status-designated-country-syria>. The related Federal Register notice is available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-01-05/pdf/2014-30871.pdf>.

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State Dept. Revises Reciprocity Schedules for Several Countries

In recent months, the Department of State has revised visa reciprocity schedules for Armenia, Brazil, Albania, and China, among others.

For temporary visitors (nonimmigrants) to the United States, reciprocity tables show applicable visa issuance fees by country and by visa classification type, and the maximum period of visa validity and number of applications, or entries, that may be authorized.

The latest updates are available at <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/law-and-policy/visa-policy-update.html>. Reciprocity tables by country are available at

<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/fees/reciprocity-by-country.html>. Additional updates are available at <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/fees/reciprocity-whats-new.html>.

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State Dept.'s NVC Is Now Handling All Domestic Visa Inquiries

The Department of State's Visa Office has established one point of contact for all domestic inquiries regarding nonimmigrant and immigrant visa cases. The National Visa Center (NVC) has begun handling all domestic email and telephone inquiries from the public on nonimmigrant and immigrant visa cases as of January 12, 2015.

The notice is available at <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/contact.html>.

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New Publications and Items of Interest

[Conference call on PERM](#). On Thursday, January 22, 2015, from 4:30 pm until 5:30 pm EST, the Department of Labor (DOL) will host a stakeholder listening session on the Permanent Labor Certification Program (PERM) via conference call. DOL's Deputy Chief of Staff, Seema Nanda, and Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Portia Wu, will lead the session. The agency is interested in "beginning a dialogue and receiving feedback" about the PERM program's role in employment-based immigration, its current regulatory framework, and any general areas of concern to the stakeholder community.

To participate in the listening session, register by January 19, 2015, at <http://webapps.dol.gov/DOLEvents/Event/View/347/PERM-Public-Listening-Session>. If you have questions, email DOL's Office of Public Engagement at PublicEngagement@dol.gov.

[E-Verify updates on Twitter](#). [Twitter.com/EVerify](https://twitter.com/EVerify) is a new official source of Form I-9, E-Verify, myE-Verify, Self Check, and other employment eligibility verification information. Featured information includes Form I-9 changes, news about the Self Lock expansion, E-Verify enhancements, and employee rights resources. The Twitter news updates are for employers, human resources professionals, workers, and worker advocates.

[CIA assessment on surviving secondary inspection while maintaining cover](#). Wikileaks has released a document produced by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA's) CHECKPOINT Identity and Travel Intelligence Program to advise CIA operatives on how to deal with secondary screening at airports, as they travel to and from covert CIA operations using false identification, including into and out of Europe. The document details specific examples of operatives being stopped under secondary screening at various airports around the world; how and why the person was stopped; and advice on how to deal with such circumstances and minimize the risks if stopped to continue maintaining cover. The document was created for distribution within the CIA and to other officials who hold appropriate clearances at executive branch departments and agencies of the U.S. government. Although created for CIA operatives, the document is useful for anyone going through secondary inspection.

The document is available at https://wikileaks.org/cia-travel/secondary-screening/WikiLeaks_CIA_Assessment_on_Surviving_Secondary_Screening.pdf.

[Revamped USCIS careers website](#). USCIS has redesigned <http://www.uscis.gov/careers>. The website is for job seekers wanting to learn about vacancies, special hiring programs, benefits, career development opportunities, and the hiring process. A new "Life at USCIS" section features first-person perspectives of employees across the agency. This section will rotate

profiles to highlight the variety of positions and backgrounds of USCIS personnel and the skills the agency seeks.

The announcement is available at <http://www.uscis.gov/news/revamped-uscis-careers-website-and-job-seeker-resources-employees>.

USCIS page on Obama executive actions. Two fliers on President Obama's executive actions on immigration are now available on <http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction>. USCIS encourages stakeholders to use these fliers when communicating with the public about these actions. The fliers explain:

- The importance of avoiding scams and not submitting requests until the new initiatives are available.
- Eligibility requirements for the expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the new Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA).

The fliers are available in English, Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese. A Chinese version will be available soon. The page also includes other related information and links.

The latest edition of the *Global Business Immigration Practice Guide* has been released by LexisNexis. Dozens of members of the Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers (ABIL) co-authored and edited the guide, which is a one-stop resource for dealing with questions related to business immigration issues in immigration hotspots around the world.

The latest edition adds a chapter on Singapore. Other chapters cover Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, the European Union, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Latchi Delchev, a global mobility and immigration specialist for Boeing, called the guide "first-rate" and said the key strong point of the book is its "outstanding usability." She said she highly recommends the book and notes that it "is helpful even to seasoned professionals, as it provides a level of detail which is not easily gained from daily case management."

Mireya Serra-Janer, head of European immigration for a multinational IT company, says she particularly likes "the fact that the [guide] focuses not just on each country's immigration law itself but also addresses related matters such as tax and social security issues." She noted that the India chapter "is particularly good. The immigration regulations in India have always been hard to understand. Having a clear explanation of the rules there helps us sort out many mobility challenges."

Charles Gould, Director-General of the International Co-operative Alliance, said the guide is "an invaluable resource for both legal practitioners and business professionals. The country-specific chapters are comprehensive and answer the vast majority of questions that arise in immigration practice. Its clear and easy-to-follow structure and format make it the one volume to keep close at hand."

This comprehensive guide is designed for:

- Human resources professionals and in-house attorneys who need to instruct, understand, and liaise with immigration lawyers licensed in other countries;
- Business immigration attorneys who regularly work with multinational corporations and their employees and HR professionals; and

- Attorneys interested in expanding their practice to include global business immigration services.

This publication provides:

- An overview of the immigration law requirements and procedures for over 20 countries;
- Practical information and tips for obtaining visas, work permits, resident status, naturalization, and other nonimmigrant and immigrant pathways to conducting business, investing, and working in those countries;
- A general overview of the appropriate options for a particular employee; and
- Information on how an employee can obtain and maintain authorization to work in a target country.

Each chapter follows a similar format, making it easy to compare practices and procedures from country to country. Useful links to additional resources and forms are included. Collected in this Practice Guide, the expertise of ABIL's attorney members across the globe will serve as an ideal starting point in your research into global business immigration issues.

The list price is \$299, but discounts are available. Contact your Lexis/Nexis sales representative; call 1-800-833-9844 (United States), 1-518-487-3385 (international); fax 1-518-487-3584; or go to <http://www.lexisnexis.com/store/promotions/promolanding.jsp?couponId=GLOBAL15>.

[ABIL on Twitter](#). The Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers is now available on Twitter: @ABILImmigration. Recent ABIL member blogs are available at <http://www.abilblog.com/>.

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Member News

Robert Loughran (bio: <http://www.abil.com/lawyers/lawyers-loughran.cfm>) presented "Employment Authorization Hot Issues: ICE Subpoenas, Discrimination Claims, Form I-9, and E-Verify" to the South Texas Human Resources Symposium on Thursday, January 15, 2015, in San Antonio, Texas.

Cyrus Mehta (bio: <http://www.abil.com/lawyers/lawyers-mehta.cfm>) has co-authored a new blog entry. "The Laboratories of Democracy: State Initiative and Promotion of Immigration Reform" is available at <http://blog.cyrusmehta.com/2015/01/the-laboratories-of-democracy-state.html>.

Angelo Paparelli (bio: <http://www.abil.com/lawyers/lawyers-paparelli.cfm>) was featured in an article on LXBN, The Lexblog Network, "LXBN Leaders: Through Blogging, Angelo Paparelli Brings Passion and Personality to Immigration Law." The article is available at <http://www.lxbn.com/2015/01/08/lxbn-leaders-blogging-angelo-paparellis-personal-law-library/>.

Mr. Paparelli's latest blog entry, "The Immigration Year in Review: The 2014 IMMI Awards," is available at <http://www.nationofimmigrants.com/immi-awards/the-immigration-year-in-review-the-2014-immi-awards/>.

Bernard Wolfsdorf (bio: <http://www.abil.com/lawyers/lawyers-wolfsdorf.cfm?c=US>) will present a free webinar, "Worldwide Citizenship and Residency Options for Investors," on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, from 12:30 to 1:45 pm (PST). This webinar will be presented with Henley & Partners. Topics include the latest developments in alternative citizenship and residency options for numerous countries and a comparison with United States investor options. For more

information or to register, see
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4502979866020737538>.

Stephen Yale-Loehr (bio: <http://www.abil.com/lawyers/lawyers-loehr.cfm?c=US>) was quoted in the *Dallas Morning News* on December 30, 2014. He said that the EB-5 visa category can be a tricky funding mechanism because it incorporates immigration and securities law and overseas marketing. "It's akin to a Rubik's Cube. It's very difficult, but if you can do it, then it works out very well for everyone involved." The article is available at <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/metro/20141230-vote-on-grand-prairie-indoor-ski-resort-coming-as-soon-as-january.ece>.

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Government Agency Links

Follow these links to access current processing times of the USCIS Service Centers and the Department of Labor, or the Department of State's latest Visa Bulletin with the most recent cut-off dates for visa numbers:

USCIS Service Center processing times online:
<https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/processTimesDisplay.do>

Department of Labor processing times and information on backlogs:
<http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/times.cfm>

Department of State Visa Bulletin: http://travel.state.gov/visa/bulletin/bulletin_1360.html

Visa application wait times for any post: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait_4638.html

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About ABIL

The Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers (ABIL) offers a single point of contact for customer needs, news alerts, staff training, and other programs that benefit clients through the collaboration of more than 400 member lawyers and their 1,000 staff. Corporate counsel, human resource professionals, in-house immigration managers, and other corporate decision-makers turn to ABIL lawyers for outstanding legal skills and services. ABIL's work also includes advocating for enlightened immigration reform, providing speakers and media sources, presenting conferences, publishing books and articles on cutting-edge immigration topics, and sharing best practices, all with the ultimate goal of offering value-added services to business immigration clients.

The Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers' Web site is at <http://www.abil.com/>. ABIL is also available on Twitter: @ABILImmigration.

Disclaimer/Reminder

This e-mail does not constitute direct legal advice and is for informational purposes only. The information provided should never replace informed counsel when specific immigration-related guidance is needed.

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