



Stateside Visa Renewal Pilot Program Begins

In December, the Department of State (DOS) [announced](#) the beginning of its stateside visa renewal pilot program, which will begin on January 29, 2024, and end on April 1, 2024.

Who is eligible?

Participation is voluntary and limited to principal H-1B applicants:

- Seeking to renew an H-1B visa between January 29, 2024, and April 1, 2024;
- Renewing a prior H-1B visa issued by Mission Canada with an issuance date from January 1, 2020, through April 1, 2023, or by Mission India with an issuance date from February 1, 2021, through September 30, 2021;
- Not subject to a nonimmigrant visa issuance (reciprocity) fee;
- Eligible for an in-person interview waiver;
- Who submitted ten fingerprints to DOS in connection with the prior visa application.
- Whose prior visa doesn't include a "clearance received" annotation;
- Who do not have a visa ineligibility that would require a waiver prior to issuance;
- Who have an approved and unexpired H-1B petition, were most recently admitted to the U.S. in H-1B status, and are maintaining H-1B status in the United States;
- Whose period of authorized admission in H-1B status has not expired; and
- Who intend to reenter the U.S. in H-1B status after a temporary period abroad.

What is the application period?

DOS will begin accepting online applications for this pilot beginning on January 29, 2024 here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/employment/domestic-renewal.html>. Each week, DOS will release approximately 2,000 application slots.

What is the process?

Applications may be submitted here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/employment/domesticrenewal.html>.

Eligible applicants will complete and submit the electronic Form DS-160 and pay a non-refundable, non-transferable Machine-Readable Visa (MRV) fee online by major debit or credit card (if an application is refused, DOS will not refund the MRV fee). Applicants will receive instructions through the online portal concerning how to send their passports and other documents via the U.S Postal Service or another courier service to the DOS.

What are the required documents?

- DS-160 online nonimmigrant visa application
- One photograph meeting [these specifications](#)
- A valid passport
- Form I-797 Notice of Action
- I-94 Arrival-Departure Record

How are applications processed?

- Average processing time is six to eight weeks. Applications are processed in the order they are received.
- The only application status provided will be the returning of the application, or issuance or refusal of the visa.
- There is no option available for expedited processing.

Once the application is adjudicated, issued visas, passports, and documents submitted will be returned to the applicant via USPS or a courier service.

Contact us to learn more at: info@grossmanyoun.com or 301-917-6900.