



# Employer Best Practice: Preparing Employees on Work Visas for Risks of International Travel

As businesses continue global operations throughout the beginning of the new Presidential administration, employers should think about how travel abroad for employees may look different now than it once did. Especially for employees born outside the US, it's crucial for businesses to understand the potential risks associated with international travel and take proactive steps to ensure employee safety and compliance with legal requirements. This bulletin provides a framework for businesses to support their employees traveling internationally on work visas while addressing potential risks.

It is important for employers to consider the implications of President Trump's [executive order](#) indicating all immigrants should be vetted and screened "to the maximum degree possible." The manifestations of this order are multi-faceted:

- During travel itself and in interactions with Customs and Border Protection (CBP), employees may be subject to longer waiting times while clearing customs and a higher likelihood of in-depth questions; and,
- During visa interviews with the Department of State (DOS), it is reasonable to anticipate more requests for visa placement will be subject to administrative processing, where consular officers perform additional background checks to ascertain eligibility for the visa to be placed, even when US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has already given its approval for the individual to work for the business.

We are providing the following guidelines to help employers prepare their employees with work visas for the risks they may face during international travel:

## Policies for Communicating Travel Plans and Itinerary

- **Open Dialogue:** Foster an open line of communication between employees and management. Employees should feel comfortable reporting concerns regarding international travel risks or visa issues. Employers should consider whether sending employees on international business travel is strictly necessary.
- **Document and Share Itinerary:** It is prudent to have a policy in place for employees to share business-related travel plans with their direct supervisor and HR. To ensure employer awareness in the event there are delays stemming from enhanced



screening at airports or consular posts abroad, it may also be worthwhile to welcome employees to share details for personal travel plans.

- **Regular Communication:** Encourage employees to check in while traveling and establish emergency contact points for employees to reach out to if needed. Our GYH team is glad to provide support services that may facilitate these goals.

## Provide Legal Resources

- **Review Visa and Travel Restrictions:** Ensure that employees are aware of any travel restrictions; recent news reports indicate a travel ban may be imminent and could restrict immigration from up to 43 countries.
- **Consult with Legal Counsel:** Work with our team to clarify the legal implications of sending employees with work visas to foreign countries, especially if travel is proposed to any places that could be affected by a travel ban.
- **Contingency Plans for Visa Issues:** Be prepared for potential visa-related complications or delays. Ensure employees know the process to follow if they experience visa-related challenges while abroad. If your business needs help establishing a process, our GYH team is happy to provide support services.

## Conclusion

By taking these proactive steps, employers can help minimize risks and ensure that employees on work visas are well-prepared for international travel. The safety, compliance, and well-being of your employees are of utmost importance, and as employers, it is your responsibility to help them navigate these challenges effectively.

If you need further guidance or assistance regarding international travel policies and work visas, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team!