



*United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs*

VISA BULLETIN

Number 84 Volume IX

Washington, D.C.

IMMIGRANT NUMBERS FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

A. STATUTORY NUMBERS

This bulletin summarizes the availability of immigrant numbers during September. Consular officers are required to report to the Department of State documentarily qualified applicants for numerically limited visas; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security reports applicants for adjustment of status. Allocations were made, to the extent possible, in chronological order of reported priority dates, for demand received by August 11th. If not all demand could be satisfied, the category or foreign state in which demand was excessive was deemed oversubscribed. The cut-off date for an oversubscribed category is the priority date of the first applicant who could not be reached within the numerical limits. Only applicants who have a priority date earlier than the cut-off date may be allotted a number. If it becomes necessary during the monthly allocation process to retrogress a cut-off date, supplemental requests for numbers will be honored only if the priority date falls within the new cut-off date announced in this bulletin. If at any time an annual limit were reached, it would be necessary to immediately make the preference category "unavailable", and no further requests for numbers would be honored.

2. The fiscal year 2015 limit for family-sponsored preference immigrants determined in accordance with Section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) is 226,000. The fiscal year 2015 limit for employment-based preference immigrants calculated under INA 201 is 144,796. Section 202 prescribes that the per-country limit for preference immigrants is set at 7% of the total annual family-sponsored and employment-based preference limits, i.e., 25,956 for FY-2015. The dependent area limit is set at 2%, or 7,416.

3. INA Section 203(e) provides that family-sponsored and employment-based preference visas be issued to eligible immigrants in the order in which a petition in behalf of each has been filed. Section 203(d) provides that spouses and children of preference immigrants are entitled to the same status, and the same order of consideration, if accompanying or following to join the principal. The visa prorating provisions of Section 202(e) apply to allocations for a foreign state or dependent area when visa demand exceeds the per-country limit. These provisions apply at present to the following oversubscribed chargeability areas: CHINA-mainland born, INDIA, MEXICO, and PHILIPPINES.

4. Section 203(a) of the INA prescribes preference classes for allotment of Family-sponsored immigrant visas as follows:

FAMILY-SPONSORED PREFERENCES

First: (F1) Unmarried Sons and Daughters of U.S. Citizens: 23,400 plus any numbers not required for fourth preference.

Second: Spouses and Children, and Unmarried Sons and Daughters of Permanent Residents: 114,200, plus the number (if any) by which the worldwide family preference level exceeds 226,000, plus any unused first preference numbers:

A. (F2A) Spouses and Children of Permanent Residents: 77% of the overall second preference limitation, of which 75% are exempt from the per-country limit;

B. (F2B) Unmarried Sons and Daughters (21 years of age or older) of Permanent Residents: 23% of the overall second preference limitation.

Third: (F3) Married Sons and Daughters of U.S. Citizens: 23,400, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences.

Fourth: (F4) Brothers and Sisters of Adult U.S. Citizens: 65,000, plus any numbers not required by first three preferences.

On the chart below, the listing of a date for any class indicates that the class is oversubscribed (see paragraph 1); "C" means current, i.e., numbers are available for all qualified applicants; and "U" means unavailable, i.e., no numbers are available. (NOTE: Numbers are available only for applicants whose priority date is **earlier** than the cut-off date listed below.)

<u>Family-Sponsored</u>	All Charge-ability Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
F1	15DEC07	15DEC07	15DEC07	15NOV94	22OCT00
F2A	01MAR14	01MAR14	01MAR14	01FEB14	01MAR14
F2B	22DEC08	22DEC08	22DEC08	15JUL95	08SEP04
F3	08MAY04	08MAY04	08MAY04	22MAY94	15SEP93
F4	15JAN03	15JAN03	15JAN03	15MAR97	01MAR92

*NOTE: For September, F2A numbers EXEMPT from per-country limit are available to applicants from all countries with priority dates earlier than 01FEB14. F2A numbers SUBJECT to per-country limit are available to applicants chargeable to all countries EXCEPT MEXICO with priority dates beginning 01FEB14 and earlier than 01MAR14. (All F2A numbers provided for MEXICO are exempt from the per-country limit; there are no F2A numbers for MEXICO subject to per-country limit.)

5. Section 203(b) of the INA prescribes preference classes for allotment of Employment-based immigrant visas as follows:

EMPLOYMENT-BASED PREFERENCES

First: Priority Workers: 28.6% of the worldwide employment-based preference level, plus any numbers not required for fourth and fifth preferences.

Second: Members of the Professions Holding Advanced Degrees or Persons of Exceptional Ability: 28.6% of the worldwide employment-based preference level, plus any numbers not required by first preference.

Third: Skilled Workers, Professionals, and Other Workers: 28.6% of the worldwide level, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences, not more than 10,000 of which to "*Other Workers".

Fourth: Certain Special Immigrants: 7.1% of the worldwide level.

Fifth: Employment Creation: 7.1% of the worldwide level, not less than 3,000 of which reserved for investors in a targeted rural or high-unemployment area, and 3,000 set aside for investors in regional centers by Sec. 610 of Pub. L. 102-395.

On the chart below, the listing of a date for any class indicates that the class is oversubscribed (see paragraph 1); "C" means current, i.e., numbers are available for all qualified applicants; and "U" means unavailable, i.e., no numbers are available. (NOTE: Numbers are available only for applicants whose priority date is **earlier** than the cut-off date listed below.)

<u>Employment-Based</u>	All Charge-ability Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
1st	C	C	C	C	C
2nd	C	01JAN06	01JAN06	C	C
3rd	15AUG15	22DEC04	22DEC04	15AUG15	22DEC04
Other Workers	15AUG15	01JAN04	22DEC04	15AUG15	22DEC04
4th	C	C	C	C	C
Certain Religious Workers	C	C	C	C	C
5th	C	22SEP13	C	C	C
Targeted Employment Areas/ Regional Centers and Pilot Programs					

*Employment Third Preference Other Workers Category: Section 203(e) of the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) passed by Congress in November 1997, as amended by Section 1(e) of Pub. L. 105-139, provides that once the Employment Third Preference Other Worker (EW) cut-off date has reached the priority date of the latest EW petition approved prior to November 19, 1997, the 10,000 EW numbers available for a fiscal year are to be reduced by up to 5,000 annually beginning in the following fiscal year. This reduction is to be made for as long as necessary to offset adjustments under the NACARA program. Since the EW cut-off date reached November 19, 1997 during Fiscal Year 2001, the reduction in the EW annual limit to 5,000 began in Fiscal Year 2002.

6. The Department of State has a recorded message with the cut-off date information which can be heard at: (202) 485-7699. This recording is updated on or about the tenth of each month with information on cut-off dates for the following month.

B. DIVERSITY IMMIGRANT (DV) CATEGORY FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

Section 203(c) of the INA provides up to 55,000 immigrant visas each fiscal year to permit additional immigration opportunities for persons from countries with low admissions during the previous five years. The NACARA stipulates that beginning with DV-99, and for as long as necessary, up to 5,000 of the 55,000 annually-allocated diversity visas will be made available for use under the NACARA program. **This resulted in reduction of the DV-2015 annual limit to 50,000.** DV visas are divided among six geographic regions. No one country can receive more than seven percent of the available diversity visas in any one year.

For September, immigrant numbers in the DV category are available to qualified DV-2015 applicants chargeable to all regions/eligible countries as follows. When an allocation cut-off number is shown, visas are available only for applicants with DV regional lottery rank numbers BELOW the specified allocation cut-off number:

Region	All DV Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed Separately		
AFRICA	50,000		
ASIA	7,650	Except: Nepal	7,150
EUROPE	43,050		
NORTH AMERICA (BAHAMAS)	8		
OCEANIA	1,490		
SOUTH AMERICA, and the CARIBBEAN	1,350		

Entitlement to immigrant status in the DV category lasts only through the end of the fiscal (visa) year for which the applicant is selected in the lottery. The year of entitlement for all applicants registered for the DV-2015 program ends as of September 30, 2015. DV visas may not be issued to DV-2015 applicants after that date. Similarly, spouses and children accompanying or following to join DV-2015 principals are only entitled to derivative DV status until September 30, 2015. DV visa availability through the very end of FY-2015 cannot be taken for granted. Numbers could be exhausted prior to September 30.

C. THE DIVERSITY (DV) IMMIGRANT CATEGORY RANK CUT-OFFS WHICH WILL APPLY IN OCTOBER

For October, immigrant numbers in the DV category are available to qualified DV-2016 applicants chargeable to all regions/eligible countries as follows. When an allocation cut-off number is shown, visas are available only for applicants with DV regional lottery rank numbers BELOW the specified allocation cut-off number:

Region	All DV Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed Separately		
AFRICA	9,100	Except: Egypt	8,000
		Ethiopia	8,000
ASIA	2,800	Except: Nepal	2,400
EUROPE	9,150		
NORTH AMERICA (BAHAMAS)	2		
OCEANIA	275		
SOUTH AMERICA, and the CARIBBEAN	475		

D. DETERMINATION OF THE NUMERICAL LIMITS ON IMMIGRANTS REQUIRED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT (INA)

The State Department is required to make a determination of the worldwide numerical limitations, as outlined in Section 201(c) and (d) of the INA, on an annual basis. These calculations are based in part on data provided by U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) regarding the number of immediate relative adjustments in the preceding year and the number of aliens paroled into the United States under Section 212(d)(5) in the second preceding year. Without this information, it is impossible to make an official determination of the annual limits. To avoid delays in processing while waiting for the USCIS data, the Visa Office (VO) bases allocations on the minimum annual limits outlined in Section 201 of the INA. On July 28th, USCIS provided the required data to VO.

The Department of State has determined the Family and Employment preference numerical limits for FY-2015 in accordance with the terms of Section 201 of the INA. These numerical limitations for FY-2015 are as follows:

Worldwide Family-Sponsored preference limit:	226,000
Worldwide Employment-Based preference limit:	144,796

Under INA Section 202(a), the per-country limit is fixed at 7% of the family and employment annual limits. For FY-2015 the per-country limit is 25,956. The dependent area annual limit is 2%, or 7,416.

F. OBTAINING THE MONTHLY VISA BULLETIN

The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs publishes the monthly Visa Bulletin on their website at www.travel.state.gov under the Visas section. Alternatively, visitors may access the Visa Bulletin directly by going to:

<http://www.travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/law-and-policy/bulletin.html>.

To be placed on the Department of State's E-mail subscription list for the "Visa Bulletin", please send an E-mail to the following E-mail address:

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To be removed from the Department of State's E-mail subscription list for the "Visa Bulletin", send an e-mail message to the following E-mail address:

listserv@calist.state.gov

and in the message body type: **Signoff Visa-Bulletin**

The Department of State also has available a recorded message with visa cut-off dates which can be heard at: **(202) 485-7699**. The recording is normally updated on/about the 10th of each month with information on cut-off dates for the following month.

Readers may submit questions regarding Visa Bulletin related items by E-mail at the following address:

VISABULLETIN@STATE.GOV

(This address cannot be used to subscribe to the Visa Bulletin.)

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