

UPDATE ON DOMESTIC VISA OPERATIONS

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect our workforce and customers, we significantly reduced operations in March 2020 for domestic renewals of diplomatic and official visas. Our reduced diplomatic reception hours have been updated to Mondays and Thursdays from 10 to 11 am, and wait times remain at 25 working days (plus 10 additional days for mailed-in visa applications). We ask for your patience as we process your application.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the current status of the Diplomatic Liaison Division?

The Diplomatic Liaison Division remains open and is processing visa applications. Our reduced diplomatic reception hours have been updated to Mondays and Thursdays from 10 to 11 am. Our wait times remain at 25 working days minimum (plus 10 additional days for mailed-in visa applications).

2. What can I expect?

Applications are being processed on a first in, first out basis, beginning with the oldest applications received. We will continue to prioritize services for customers with emergencies, but please keep in mind that because a visa is not required to exit the United States, visa holders may exit with an expired visa if their travel plans cannot be postponed.

Messengers delivering visa applications must wear cloth face coverings in all common areas, including our lobbies, and observe strict social distancing.

3. Why can't employees work on visa applications from home?

Visa applications must be adjudicated at our office to protect customers' personally identifiable information and ensure the integrity of the application process. We maintain the highest standards of security and privacy protection for our customers and must secure sensitive documents like passports in our office. Also, visas can only be printed at our office.

4. What qualifies as an emergency?

If travel is scheduled within three weeks after the application is submitted, if it cannot be rescheduled, and if the applicant will travel to a location where a U.S. embassy or consulate is not easily accessible.

You must:

- Send an email to diplomaticvisas@state.gov requesting your visa to be expedited and provide your travel itinerary.
- Mark the envelope containing your visa application as "URGENT"

5. What happens if my visa is not ready before my departure date?

You may send an email to diplomaticvisas@state.gov requesting your passport back. Your passport will be made available on the Monday or Thursday following your request.

6. What happens if my visa expires while I am in the United States?

The duration of your legal stay in the United States is not determined by the validity of your visa. Holding a valid U.S. visa allows you to travel to a port of entry in the United States and request permission to enter. Upon entry to the United States, the CBP officer stamps passports with a seal that has the initials "D/S" (duration of status) for A-1, A-2 and G-1, G-3, G-4, NATO and TECRO visa holders (regardless of their position). These visa holders can legally remain in the United States as long as they are employed by a diplomatic mission or international organization and are registered through the Office of Foreign Missions, even if their visa has expired. For members of the military stationed at a U.S. military base, the duration of your legal status is matched to your military orders.

7. I've heard that U.S. Consular Sections abroad are not processing routine visa applications. Can I apply for a diplomatic or official visa overseas?

Yes, nearly all of our consular sections continue processing A, G, NATO, and TECRO visa applications.

8. How do I check if my visa is ready to be picked up?

To check if the visa is ready, please wait 25 business days after the visa is submitted, and then visit the CEAC website at: <http://ceac.state.gov>. Click on NONIMMIGRANT "Check My Visa Application Status" and use your CEAC Application ID from the confirmation page (example: AA0020AKAX) and the location where you applied (example: WASHINGTON, DC - USA). If the CEAC website shows "ISSUED", the new visa is complete and is ready for pick up. If the website shows "REFUSED", the case may require additional documentation or administrative processing.