

Update on Cancellation of Visa Appointments at U.S. Embassy and Consulates in China, and USCIS Response to the Coronavirus

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As a follow-up to our [Jan. 31 blog post](#), we have yet to see an official announcement from the U.S. Embassy & Consulates in China regarding visa appointment cancellations for the week of Feb. 10 or later. However, this week, we began receiving non-immigrant and immigrant visa appointment cancellations for the week of Feb. 10. Likewise, the U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou informed some EB-5 investors that “Due to the evolving situation with the novel corona virus, and the Chinese government response, the USCIS Consulate Guangzhou is cancelling immigrant visa appointments the week of February 10.” As there is no official announcement at this time, we are unable to confirm whether the cancellation of interview appointments applies to all visa appointments, immigrant and nonimmigrant, and whether this applies to all U.S. Embassy and Consulates in China. However, given the cancellation notices issued so far, and the [authorization by the U.S. State Department](#) that allowed non-emergency U.S.-government employees to evacuate China, we believe that more visa appointments are likely to be cancelled in the coming week. Please contact your GT attorney with any questions regarding interview cancellation and rescheduling. We will continue to monitor the situation and provide you with the updates as we receive them.

Additionally, on Feb. 5, [USCIS published a response to the 2019 Coronavirus](#). According to the news alert, USCIS is temporarily closing its field offices in Beijing and Guangzhou, and will be rescheduling all affected appointments and sending new appointment notices to applicants. (Please note that USCIS field offices in China have limited jurisdictions and do not handle EB-5 and other employment-based cases, which are processed at the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in China). USCIS also suggests that those who are in the United States and are sick or start to feel symptoms of feeling sick, follow instructions to reschedule their USCIS appointments in the United States. As such, we suggest that applicants unable to attend their appointments reach out to their GT attorneys to reschedule. Finally, USCIS indicates that it may take into consideration the coronavirus, which has prevented the departure of certain nonimmigrant visa holders currently in the United States, in adjudicating their applications for extension or change of status due to the situation. For those readers who are nearing the expiration date of their I-94 but are prevented from their planned departure due to the virus, please contact an attorney should you need to file an extension of status.

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