

Published on *The National Law Review* <https://natlawreview.com>

State Department Extends Revised Interview Waiver Eligibility Criteria Through Dec. 31, 2021

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The Department of State (DOS) has announced that it will extend until Dec. 31, 2021, its expanded visa interview waiver eligibility policy for individuals applying for a nonimmigrant visa in the same classification. Under the expanded policy, nonimmigrant visa applicants whose visas expired within 48 months of applying for a new visa will be eligible for an interview waiver. Previously, interview waiver was only available to applicants whose nonimmigrant visa expired within 24 months. The DOS is taking this step in order to maximize the number of visa applications processed while limiting the number of in-person interactions between consular officers and applicants, thereby reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Although the expanded interview waiver eligibility criteria are applied at all U.S. embassies and consulates, travelers should be aware that many offices remain closed or are processing limited visa types. As such, it is important for travelers to review the website of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for detailed information on what services are currently available as well as eligibility information and instructions for applying for a visa without an interview.

This post was written by Lizbeth Chow.

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National Law Review, Volume XI, Number 74

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/state-department-extends-revised-interview-waiver-eligibility-criteria-through-dec>