

State Department Expands Interview Waiver Program for Certain Nonimmigrant Visa Applicants Through End of 2022

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In response to the ongoing COVID-19-related circumstances that have significantly hampered visa processing, the State Department has announced that it will expand and extend the nonimmigrant visa interview waiver program through Dec. 31, 2022.

Accordingly, U.S. consular officers are now authorized to waive in-person interviews for certain individual petition-based nonimmigrant work visas and their qualifying derivatives in the following categories through Dec. 31, 2022: H-1B Persons in Specialty Occupations, H-3 Trainee/Special Education Visitors, L Intracompany Transferees, O Extraordinary Ability/Achievement, P Athletes/Artists/Entertainers, and Q Participants in International Cultural Exchange Programs. Additionally, consular officers also may waive in-person interviews for the following other categories of nonimmigrant visas: H-2 Temporary Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Workers, F and M Students, and J Student Exchange Visitors.

The authorization to waive the in-person interview for applicants renewing a visa in the same visa class within 48 months of the prior visa's expiration has also been extended indefinitely.

However, embassies and consulates still may require an in-person interview on a case-by-case basis and based on local conditions. Therefore, applicants should check embassy and consulate websites for more detailed information about current operating status and services.

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