

## United States | State Department Creates New C-4 and D-3 Visa Categories

Article By:

BAL U.S. Practice Group

---

The [State Department announced](#) that it has implemented the new C-4 and D-3 visa classifications for noncitizens traveling to join vessels engaged in foreign trade and lightering activities.

### Key Points:

- Lightering activities involve the ship-to-ship transfer of cargo.
- The new C-4 visa allows noncitizens to transit the U.S. to join a lightering vessel.
- The new D-3 visa allows noncitizen crewmembers to temporarily perform lightering activities.
- A combined C-4/D-3 visa may be issued to eligible applicants.
- C-4, D-3 and C-4/D-3 visa holders will be allowed to stay in the U.S. for up to 180 days.

**Additional Information:** The new visa classifications, proposed under the [Energy Security and Lightering Independence Act of 2022](#), amend the C and D visa categories of the Immigration and Nationality Act. “This will end the need for individual grants of parole for members of these important crews to ensure they are able to properly transport vital energy supplies into and out of the U.S. without overburdening the administrative process,” said U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.), who co-authored the [2022 bipartisan bill](#) with U.S. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas).

©2025 Berry Appleman & Leiden. All Rights Reserved.

---

National Law Review, Volume XIV, Number 253

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/united-states-state-department-creates-new-c-4-and-d-3-visa-categories>