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## **USCIS Announces Work Permits for Qualifying Spouses of H-1B Employees**

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U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) announced on February 24 that certain qualifying spouses of H-1B workers will be allowed to apply for a work permit beginning on May 26, 2015.

To qualify, the H-1B employee must have an approved I-140 immigrant petition from USCIS or a company sponsored PERM labor certification pending with the U.S. Department of Labor for more than one year.

The rationale behind this policy change is that many H-1B employees are sponsored by their employers for permanent residency, but are subject to long delays due to annual quota limitations. Since the H-4 spouse has not been authorized to work, this causes economic hardship to their family and motivates some H-1B employees to take their talent to another country. This policy change will help alleviate some of these pressures.

For more information, see <http://www.uscis.gov/news/dhs-extends-eligibility-employment-authorization-certain-h-4-dependent-spouses-h-1b-nonimmigrants-seeking-employment-based-lawful-permanent-residence>

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