

Highlights of the 2025-2026 Edition

The 2025-2026 Edition of the *Immigration Procedures Handbook* contains:

- Latest information on developments impacting visa processing at consular posts abroad, including new travel bans, interview waiver program requirements, bars on out-of-district visa applications, visa bond pilot program for B visas, and processing trends
- Analysis of new guidance on foreign students, including June 2025 DOS cable on vetting the social media accounts of student visa applicants and SEVP guidance outlining policy framework for SEVIS terminations
- Report on new USCIS guidance requiring officers to consider applicants' support for "anti-American" or antisemitic ideologies or organizations when adjudicating applications requiring exercise of discretion (including I-485 adjustment applications, I-539 change of status and extension of stay requests, and most I-765 EAD applications)
- New discussion of "Gold Card" program allowing foreign nationals to obtain permanent residence through a \$1 million payment to the U.S. government and permitting corporate sponsors to qualify a foreign national for permanent residence through a payment of \$2 million
- Analysis of significant regulatory proposals that would replace the current "duration of status" policy for F and J students and exchange visitors with a finite expiration date, establish new restrictions on F-1 practical training, establish new extensions and re-statement requirements for exchange visitors, eliminate the current deference policy for prior I-129 approvals involving the same parties, redefine concepts and eligibility criteria pertaining to the EB, EB-2, and EB-3 categories, and outline DHS authority to conduct site visits for the employment-based petitions
- Latest processing trends impacting adjustment applicants, including elimination of interview waivers for family-based cases, cancellation of interview waivers for many employment-based cases, more Stokes (fraud) reviews in spousal cases; more advance parole denials, elimination of EAD auto-extension policy for adjustment applicants seeking EAD renewals, and increased enforcement actions against applicants (including arrests, detentions, and issuance of notices to appear)
- Report on new USCIS guidance on TN professionals addressing prohibition on self-employment and clarifying eligibility for TN status in specific occupations, including Engineer, Economist, Scientific Technician/Technologist, Physicians, Management Consultant, and Computer Systems Analyst
- Discussion of new naturalization policies, including implementation of new 2025 civics test, new good moral character memo which places greater emphasis on showing positive applicant attributes to support approval of the naturalization application, resumption of personal (neighborhood) investigations of certain applicants, and new guidance on submission and processing of disability exceptions form (Form N-648)
- Analysis of new USCIS guidance addressing I-130 spousal petitions and marriage fraud, policies associated with the vetting and adjudication of I-130 petitions (including interview requirements and issuance of NTAs), and age-out policies under the CSPA (return to more restrictive interpretation of CSPA)
- Latest information on revised USCIS payment options (all filing fees to be paid by credit card or ACH debit), expanded PDF filing options through USCIS Online, and new filing locations for certain paper-based applications
- UPDATE SERVICE FOR WESTLAW USERS—interim electronic updates to *Immigration Procedures Handbook* via Fragomen Business Alerts ("Fragalerts") database (see Preface for details)