



Fact Sheet: U.S. Has Expanded Labor Visa Opportunities

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U.S. businesses in industries as varied as hospitality, tourism, landscaping, seafood processing, and more depend on seasonal workers and temporary work visas allow noncitizen workers to enter the U.S. to help meet that need. The U.S. Government is working diligently to maintain economic growth and meet the strong labor demand in the United States, while strengthening worker protections for U.S. and foreign workers.

This year, the United States increased the number of available H-2B temporary work visas, which also help fulfill this Administration's commitment to expanding access to lawful pathways and to working with our partners throughout the hemisphere to reduce irregular migration. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of State (DoS), made available nearly 65,000 additional H-2B visas for temporary nonagricultural workers to come to the U.S. in Fiscal Year 2023, including 20,000 visas allocated for workers from Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Of these, 57,000 have already been issued.

Expanding Opportunities for Temporary Workers

The H-2B program permits employers to temporarily hire foreign workers to perform nonagricultural labor or services in the United States. The employment must be for a limited period, and the petitioner must have a temporary need for the labor or services to be performed.

The H-2B visa expansion advances the Biden Administration's pledge, under the Los Angeles Declaration for Migration and Protection, to expand lawful pathways as an alternative to irregular migration.

As of July 20, 2023, H-2B visas reserved for nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti remain available. More information on applying for these visas is available online.

Protecting Domestic and Foreign Workers

The U.S. Government seeks to protect U.S. and foreign workers alike, by ensuring that employers first seek out and recruit American workers for job vacancies, as the visa program requires, and that foreign workers hired are not exploited by unscrupulous employers.

To strengthen these efforts, DHS and DOL announced the creation of a new White House-convened Worker Protection Taskforce dedicated to exploring (1) threats to H-2B program integrity, (2) H-2B workers' fundamental vulnerabilities, and (3) the impermissible use of the program to avoid hiring U.S. workers.

In January 2023, DHS announced that noncitizen workers who are victims of, or witnesses to, the violation of labor rights, can now access a streamlined and expedited deferred action request process. So far this year, DHS has accepted over 450 deferred action requests through this process.

Learn more about how to apply for a seasonal worker visa: Labor@minoritychamber.net



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