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## NEW VISA APPLICATION PROCEDURES IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Beginning January 6, 2013, the U.S. Embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has transitioned to a [new appointment service](#) for individuals applying for a non-immigrant visa. This service appears to be part of the eventual global rollout of the program, which is now being implemented at [several select consulates](#). Visa applicants will be able to complete the form DS-160, schedule an interview, pay the visa application fee, and arrange for the return of their passports through a single interface available on the service's website or by phone. Previously, a visa applicant was required to complete and coordinate each step of the process independently, without a single point of reference or interface to facilitate the various steps in the process. Applicants can now coordinate and track the progression of the required visa application steps from within the service's interface.

Another impact of the change in procedures is that the U.S. Embassy in the U.A.E. will allow applicants to schedule a visa interview up to six months in advance of travel plans. Allowing interviews well in advance of travel should reduce the impact of visa issuance delays which occur when an application is subjected to "additional administrative processing" for the purpose of completing more comprehensive background checks. The ability to schedule visa appointments six months in advance should also allow for greater certainty and avoid disruptions in travel flexibility for applicants with advance travel plans who may be subject to the additional background checks.

As always FosterQuan will continue to monitor global immigration regulations and procedures and will provide additional information in future Immigration Updates®, and on our firm's website at [www.fosterquan.com](http://www.fosterquan.com).