

Department of State Releases March 2012 Visa Bulletin

DOS Visa Bulletin includes forward movement of four months in the EB-2 category for China and India and a continued backlog in the EB-3 category.

February 9, 2012

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) has released its March 2012 Visa Bulletin. The Visa Bulletin sets out per country priority date cutoffs that regulate the flow of adjustment of status (AOS) and consular immigrant visa applications. Foreign nationals may file applications to adjust their status to that of permanent resident, or to obtain approval of an immigrant visa application at an American embassy or consulate abroad, provided that their priority dates are prior to the cutoff dates specified by the DOS.

What Does the March 2012 Bulletin Say?

EB-1: All EB-1 categories remain current.

EB-2: Priority dates remain current for foreign nationals in the EB-2 category from all countries except China and India.

The relevant priority date cutoffs for Indian and Chinese nationals are as follows:

China: May 1, 2010 (forward movement of four months)

India: May 1, 2010 (forward movement of four months)

EB-3: There is continued backlog in the EB-3 category.

The relevant priority date cutoffs for foreign nationals in the EB-3 category are as follows:

China: January 1, 2005 (forward movement of one month)

India: August 22, 2002 (forward movement of one week)

Mexico: March 15, 2006 (forward movement of three weeks)

Philippines: March 15, 2006 (forward movement of three weeks)

Rest of the World: March 15, 2006 (forward movement of three weeks)

How This Affects You

Priority date cutoffs are assessed on a monthly basis by the DOS, based on anticipated demand. Cutoff dates can move forward or backward, or remain static and unchanged. Employers and employees should take the immigrant visa backlogs into account in their long-term planning, and take measures to mitigate their effects. To see the March 2012 Visa Bulletin in its entirety, please visit the DOS website at http://travel.state.gov/visa/bulletin/bulletin_5664.html.

For more information, or if you have any questions regarding the issues discussed in this Immigration Alert, please contact any of the following attorneys:

Washington, D.C.

Eleanor Pelta
Eric S. Bord

202.739.5050
202.739.6040

epelta@morganlewis.com
ebord@morganlewis.com

San Francisco

A. James Vázquez-Azpiri
Lance Nagel

415.442.1343
415.442.1345

ajvazquez@morganlewis.com
lnagel@morganlewis.com

Boston

Lisa Stephanian Burton

617.341.7725

lburton@morganlewis.com

Now Available: AILA's Focus on Immigration Practice Under AC21

Written by Eleanor Pelta and A. James Vázquez-Azpiri, *AILA's Focus on Immigration Practice Under AC21* provides invaluable insight on the effect AC21 has had on the H-1B visa category. For more information, please visit www.ailapubs.org/ac21.html or call 1.800.982.2939 to order a copy.

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