

Client ALERT

Fall Colors Include Green – Annual Green Card Lottery Registration to Begin October 3rd

September 2017

The U.S. Department of State (DOS) has announced key details regarding the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program for Fiscal Year 2018 (DV-2019). This is an annual, Congressionally-mandated program that allows participants to enter a lottery and potentially win a “green card”.

QUICK FACTS:

Who CAN enter the lottery?

Individuals from countries with historically low rates* of immigration to the United States who have either a high school education or its equivalent OR two years of work experience within the past five years in an occupation that requires at least two years of training or experience to perform** are eligible to apply. Persons already lawfully in the United States, even those in the lawful permanent resident application process under a different category, may still apply if they meet all other conditions.

**Meaning fewer than 50,000 natives of those countries immigrated to the United States in the previous five (5) years.*

***Determined by information available in the U.S. Department of Labor’s O*Net Online Database Reasons for Charter*

Who CANNOT enter the lottery?

Natives of the following countries are NOT eligible:

Bangladesh; Brazil; Canada; China (mainland-born – individuals born in Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan ARE eligible); Colombia; Dominican Republic; El Salvador; Haiti; India; Jamaica; Mexico; Nigeria; Pakistan; Peru; Philippines; South Korea; United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories; and Vietnam.

What does it cost to enter?

There is no cost to register for the DV Program.

NOTE: If the application is selected and the individual chooses to apply for a Diversity visa, s/he must pay all required visa application fees at the time of the visa application / interview.

What information must be provided?

Biographic data such as: name; gender; date and place of birth; digital photograph for applicant, spouse and dependent children listed on entry; contact information (mailing and email address, country of residence; highest level of education; current marital status; and information about spouse and unmarried children under 21 included on application.



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When and where can entries be submitted?

Between noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on Tuesday, October 3, 2017 to noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST) on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 at <https://dvlottery.state.gov>. No late entries or paper entries will be accepted. Applicants are assigned a unique confirmation number that will be the only way to check the status of the entry.

When and where will the results be announced?

Starting May 1, 2018, applicants can check the status of their entry by logging on to <https://dvlottery.state.gov> and entering their unique confirmation number and other personal information at the Entrant Status Check section.

Why would a selected applicant not be able to immigrate?

DV selectees must be admissible to the United States under current immigration law. Selectees can be disqualified based on criminal and security-related grounds.

Those selected must complete all steps in the immigrant process (i.e., have an immigrant visa issued abroad or have an adjustment of status application approved in the United States) no later than September 30, 2019.

Contact Information

Jennifer Cory, head of Womble Carlyle's Business Immigration Solutions practice, advises that employers may have nonimmigrant staff who would be eligible to enter the DV lottery even though they would not qualify for an employment-based immigrant visa. Her team can answer questions about the DV registration process or assist with the immigrant process if an individual is selected.

If you have any questions about the green card lottery or about the immigrant visa process in general, please feel free to contact Jennifer Cory at jcory@wcsr.com or 704.350.6337.

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