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USCIS Extends Transitional Parole for CNMI Long-Term Resident Status Applicants

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USCIS announced today that it will automatically extend parole, and employment authorization if applicable, for parolees who timely applied for Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) long-term resident status.

This specific extension of parole applies only to current parolees who timely filed [Form I-955, Application for CNMI Long-Term Resident Status](#), and [Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#), and whose applications remain pending on Aug. 17. USCIS will automatically extend their parole (and employment authorization, if applicable) without interruption through Dec. 31, 2020, or the date that USCIS makes a final decision on the parolee's Form I-955 and Form I-765, whichever is earlier.

The CNMI long-term resident status was created by the Northern Mariana Islands Long-Term Legal Residents Relief Act (Public Law 116-24), signed into law on June 25, 2019. The new law specifically gave the Department of Homeland Security the discretion to authorize parole, with work authorization, for these aliens during the time period needed to implement the new law. USCIS [previously extended parole](#) until Aug. 17, in order to ensure that eligible aliens, including parolees who were granted parole under the previous [CNMI categorical parole program](#), had the full opportunity to apply for CNMI long-term resident status without interruption to their parole status.

For eligible parolees whose timely filed Form I-955 and Form I-765 remain pending on Aug. 17, and who have an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), if applicable, expiring on or before Aug. 17, the following documentation will serve as evidence of identity and work authorization for Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, purposes until Dec. 31 (or the date that USCIS makes a final decision on their long-term resident status application, whichever is earlier):

- A copy of this web alert;
- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document, bearing category code “C-11” with an expiration date on or before June 29, 2020; and
- Evidence that the alien filed Form I-955 and Form I-765 on or before Aug. 17. This may be a copy of Form I-797C, Notice of Action, reflecting that the parolee has filed Form I-765 requesting the classification (“class”) code of (c)(37), or if unavailable, a copy of the alien’s Form I-955 and Form I-765 with a mail receipt.

Eligible aliens had 180 days to apply for CNMI long-term resident status. USCIS **announced** the Aug. 17 deadline when it opened the application period on Feb. 19. USCIS will not accept any new applications for CNMI long-term resident status postmarked after Aug. 17.

USCIS recommends that each applicant who is 14 years of age or older obtain a letter from the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that describes any criminal history the alien might have (or lack thereof). Although this information is not required to file Form I-955 and applicants should not delay the filing of any Form I-955, USCIS suggests this information be included with a timely filed Form I-955 to potentially reduce the time it takes for USCIS to make a final decision.

If a parolee does not file Form I-955 and Form I-765 on or before Aug. 17, their parole will end on Aug. 17, and they must depart the CNMI. If USCIS denies their Form I-955 and Form I-765, their parole status (and employment authorization, if applicable) will end and they must depart the CNMI.

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