



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Announces Implementation of H-1B Electronic Registration Process for Fiscal Year 2021 Cap Season

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WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services today announced that it has completed a successful pilot testing phase and is implementing the registration process in the next H-1B lottery. Employers seeking to file H-1B cap-subject petitions for the fiscal year 2021 cap, including those eligible for the advanced degree exemption, must first electronically register and pay the associated \$10 H-1B registration fee.

The electronic registration process will dramatically streamline processing by reducing paperwork and data exchange, and will provide an overall cost savings to petitioning employers.

Under this new process, employers seeking H-1B workers subject to the cap, or their authorized representatives, will complete a registration process that requires only basic information about their company and each requested worker. USCIS will open an initial registration period from March 1 through March 20, 2020. The H-1B random selection process, if needed, will then be run on those electronic registrations. Only those with selected registrations will be eligible to file H-1B cap-subject petitions.

Historically, employers filed their full, and often voluminous, H-1B cap-subject petitions with USCIS, after which USCIS would select eligible petitions through a random selection process. This process resulted in unnecessary paperwork and incurred mailing costs for both petitioners and the agency.

“By streamlining the H-1B cap selection process with a new electronic registration system, USCIS is creating cost savings and efficiencies for petitioners and the agency, as only those selected will now be required to submit a full petition,” said USCIS Deputy Director Mark Koumans. “The agency completed a successful pilot testing phase, which included sessions with industry representatives, and implementation of the registration system will further the goal of modernizing USCIS from a paper-based to an online-filing agency.”

USCIS will post step-by-step instructions informing registrants how to complete the registration process on its website along with key dates and timelines as the initial registration period nears. USCIS will also conduct public engagements and other outreach activities to ensure registrants and interested parties are familiar with the new registration system. The agency may determine it is necessary to continue accepting registrations, or open an additional registration period, if it does not receive enough registrations and subsequent petitions projected to reach the numerical allocations.

DHS formally created the H-1B registration requirement in the final rule, [Registration Requirement for Petitioners Seeking To File H-1B Petitions on Behalf of Cap-Subject Aliens \(PDF\)](#), published on Jan. 31, and effective on April 1, 2019. DHS intends to publish a notice in the Federal Register in the coming weeks to formally announce implementation of the H-1B registration system and provide additional details on the process.

On Nov. 8, 2019, DHS published a final rule establishing a \$10 H-1B registration fee. The registration fee final rule is effective on Dec. 9, 2019, and will apply to registrations submitted during the initial and future registration periods.

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