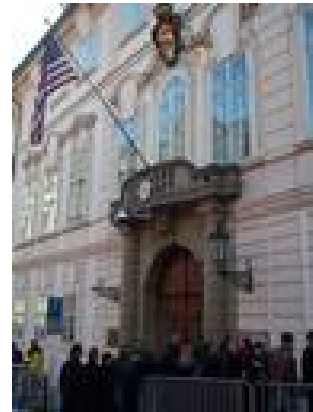




IMMIGRATION ALERT

Department of State Announces End of Visa Revalidations in the U.S.

The Visa Revalidation Unit in Washington, D.C. will discontinue acceptance of visa revalidation applications as of July 16, 2004. The Visa Revalidation Program is a long-standing program created to allow foreign nationals to renew certain visas without leaving the U.S. Those holding E, H, I, L, O, and P series visas within sixty days of expiration are currently able to apply for renewal by mail in lieu of appearing in person for application at a U.S. embassy or consular office abroad.



The Visa Revalidation Program, which generally results in long processing times (10-12 weeks) and a higher rate of denials and rejections, will end due to the Visa Revalidation Division's inability to domestically collect necessary biometric identifiers. Such identifiers, as of October 26, 2004, will be required as a feature of all visas. Despite the program's drawbacks, it is a valuable service for those who, for various reasons, are unable or do not wish to travel to renew their visas.

Originally, the end of the program was announced as July 6, 2004 at the AILA (American Immigration Lawyers Association) annual conference by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Catherine Barry. The date was later changed to July 16, 2004. Additional details regarding the end of this program are expected within the next ten days.

Currently, the Department of State has no plans to reinstate the Visa Revalidation Program. Foreign nationals unable to apply for revalidation prior to July 16th will need to obtain new visas upon their first trip outside of the U.S. by traveling to their home countries to apply in person at a U.S. consular post; the only alternative is application as a third country national (TCN) in a more convenient location, such as Canada. For additional information regarding TCN processing, visit www.immstar.com, click "Resources," and choose "NIV Memoranda," then "TCN Processing."

Seyfarth Shaw's Business Immigration Group provides periodic information alerts about noteworthy developments in the business immigration field. The information that we provide is of a general nature and should not be interpreted as legal advice applicable to a specific factual situation. If you have questions about the information contained in this Immigration Alert or would like to know more about Seyfarth Shaw's Business Immigration Group and our inbound and outbound visa processing capabilities, please visit our website, www.immstar.com, or contact one of the Business Immigration Group Partners: Jim King (jking@seyfarth.com) in Atlanta; Russell Swapp (rswapp@seyfarth.com) or Dyann DeVecchio (ddelvecchio@seyfarth.com) in Boston; Ric Fischer (Rfischer@seyfarth.com) in Chicago; or Cris Weals (cweals@dc.seyfarth.com) in DC. If you would like to receive our Immigration Alerts, please contact Nici Kersey via e-mail at nkersey@seyfarth.com. Thank you.



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