

One Minute Memo®



Travel Alert: Extensive Visa Wait Times at U.S. Consular Posts in India

By Brian Potter, Jason Burritt, and Michelle Gergerian

Seyfarth Synopsis: Department of State reports extensive wait times for visa appointments at consular posts in India.

Foreign nationals planning to apply for a visa stamp in India this summer should expect wait times ranging from 75 to 100 days to secure a visa appointment for many of the most common nonimmigrant visa categories, including H-1B and L-1 visas.

The current, approximate wait times for all nonimmigrant visas categories other than B (visitor), F (student), and J (exchange visitor) are:

- Chennai - 75 days
- Hyderabad - 93 days
- Kolkata - 96 days
- Mumbai - 88 days
- New Delhi - 100 days

The Department of State (DOS) is aware of the backlog and is working with the Government of India to potentially add more consular positions. DOS has reported that U.S. nonimmigrant visa applications have increased by 80% in the past five years.

Expedited visa appointments are available, but first priority is given to humanitarian issues, such as medical emergencies and ill relatives in the United States. Obtaining expedited appointments for business emergencies are rare and, by nature, receive heightened scrutiny.

Individuals requiring a visa stamp may attempt to schedule an appointment in a different country, assuming they meet the criteria for entry into that country. Many countries, including Canada, greatly restrict the availability of Third Country National (TCN) visa processing during summer months.

Conclusion

Employers should inform their foreign national employees of these extended visa wait times at the consular posts in India and advise them to postpone any unnecessary travel if they require a new visa stamp. Seyfarth Shaw LLP will continue to monitor this situation and will send updates as they occur.

If you would like further information, please contact your Seyfarth attorney, [Brian Potter](mailto:bpotter@seyfarth.com) at bpotter@seyfarth.com, [Jason Burritt](mailto:jburritt@seyfarth.com) at jburritt@seyfarth.com, or [Michelle Gergerian](mailto:mgergerian@seyfarth.com) at mgergerian@seyfarth.com.

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