

# ALERTS

## Coming Soon: In-Person Interviews for Employment-Based Green Card Applicants

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On August 28, 2017, USCIS announced that it will begin expanding in-person interviews for certain permanent residency applicants, a change being implemented in response to Executive Order 13780, which pushed for more "uniform screening and vetting standards" in visa issuance.

Effective October 1, 2017, USCIS will begin to phase in interviews for individuals whose adjustment of status (green card) applications are based on employment, as well as for family members of refugees/asylees applying to join a principal refugee/asylee applicant. Beyond these categories, USCIS is planning an incremental expansion of interviews to other benefit types as well, but did not specify which other types of applications would require an interview, nor when it planned to implement any further expansion.

According to annual statistics from the Department of Homeland Security, approximately 122,000 immigrants obtained lawful permanent residency through employment-based applications in fiscal year 2015. It is expected that the implementation of the in-person interviews for such a large number of applicants will only further lengthen current green card processing times. Accordingly, we encourage employers to begin the green card process for employees they wish to sponsor at least two years in advance of the individual's max out date to ensure adequate time for green card processing.

We urge any company representative or foreign national seeking guidance on this issue to contact an MVA team member.