

# ALERTS

## Diversity Visa ("Green Card Lottery") Registration

09.2016

On October 4, 2016, registration for the Diversity Visa (DV) 2018 Program will begin.

Conducted by the U.S. Department of State (DOS), the DV program provides a limited number of immigrant (permanent) visas each fiscal year for individuals from countries with historically low rates of immigration to the U.S. Diversity visas are distributed among six geographic regions and no single country may receive more than seven percent of the available visas in any one year. Selectees are chosen through a random computer drawing, therefore the process is commonly referred to as the "green card lottery".

Online registration for the DV-2018 Program begins on Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 12:00 noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) and concludes on Monday, November 7, 2016 at 12:00 noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST).

There is no fee to register the program, however applicants must apply online by submitting an Electronic Diversity Visa Entry Form (E-DV Entry Form or DS-5501) via the DOS website.

For DV-2018, natives of the following countries **are not eligible** to apply: Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, South Korea, United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, and Vietnam.

Persons born in Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan **are eligible**. A complete list of countries whose natives are eligible can be found in the DV-2018 Program Instructions found on the DOS website.

Applicants who were not born in a qualifying country may also qualify on the basis of a family relationship, in the following situations:

If the **applicant's spouse** was born in a country whose natives are eligible, the applicant can claim the spouse's country of birth-provided that both the applicant and spouse are named on the selected DV entry, are issued diversity visas, and enter the United States simultaneously;

OR

If the applicant was born in a country whose natives are ineligible, but neither of the **applicant's parents** were born or legally resident in that country at the time of the applicant's birth, the applicant may claim the country of birth of a parent if it is a country whose natives are eligible for the DV-2018 program.

## DIVERSITY VISA ("GREEN CARD LOTTERY") REGISTRATION

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Complete instructions and all DV program requirements can be found on the DOS website. It is important to remember that it is a random process and there is no fee to enter. If you are contacted by any company or individual promising to increase your chance of being selected in the DV program or someone sends you a message saying you were selected and asking for money, this is a scam. You can only submit your Electronic Diversity Visa Entry Form on the DOS website and you will be issued a confirmation number upon submission.

Please contact an MVA Immigration Team Member if you have any questions or concerns regarding the upcoming DV program.