



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Approves 10,000 U Visas for 6th Straight Fiscal Year

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has approved the statutory maximum of 10,000 petitions for U-1 nonimmigrant status (U visas) for fiscal year 2015. This marks the sixth straight year that USCIS has reached the statutory maximum since it began issuing U visas in 2008.

Each year, 10,000 U visas are available for victims of certain qualifying crimes who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse and are willing to help law enforcement authorities investigate or prosecute those crimes. A U visa petition requires certification that the victim has been helpful to law enforcement.

Although USCIS has reached the statutory cap of 10,000 U visas, it will continue to review pending petitions for eligibility. For eligible petitioners who cannot be granted a U-1 visas solely because of the cap, USCIS will send a letter notifying them that they are on a waiting list to receive a U visa when visas become available again. The letter will also inform the petitioners of options available to them while they are on the waiting list. Petitioners and qualifying family members must continue to meet eligibility requirements at the time the U visa is issued.

USCIS will resume issuing U visas on Oct. 1, 2015, the first day of fiscal year 2016, when visas become available again.

Congress created the U visa program to strengthen the law enforcement community's ability to investigate and prosecute cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other crimes, while also offering protection to victims. More than 116,471 victims and their family members have received U visas since the program began in 2008.

Visit www.uscis.gov for more information about the U visa on our Victims of Criminal Activity Web page.

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