

Global Immigration alert

July 2026

United States

DOS announces details for new visitor visa appointment expedite pilot program

Executive summary

On 22 July 2026, the US Department of State (DOS) confirmed that the B-1/B-2 visitor visa expedited appointment pilot program announced last month is now in effect. This pilot program, which is scheduled to run through 31 December 2026, allows eligible applicants to pay an additional \$750 fee to schedule a visa interview within 10 business days, subject to appointment availability.

The US embassy and all consular posts in Mexico are currently participating in the program and additional locations may be added during the pilot period. Applicant participation in the program is voluntary and does not guarantee visa issuance or expedited adjudication.

Background and Analysis

Under the pilot program, eligible applicants (those making new appointments or holding existing appointments with unexpired Machine Readable Visa (MRV) fee receipts) for B-1/B-2 visitor visas may choose to pay an additional \$750 fee to secure an earlier appointment. Applicants must first complete the regular visa scheduling process before accessing the option to request an expedite and pay the fee.

Key features of the program include:

- Available only to B-1/B-2 visitor visa applicants with a scheduled future interview appointment and a valid MRV fee receipt
- Additional expedited appointment fee of \$750 per applicant, separate from the standard MRV fee
- Access to interview appointment dates within 10 business days, subject to availability

- Does not guarantee visa issuance, expedited adjudication, or faster administrative processing
- Cannot reschedule once appointment date scheduled
- Missed or cancelled appointments result in forfeiture of the expedited appointment fee
- Available to applicants who had previously requested but not been granted an emergency appointment
- Not available through the interview waiver process for faster processing

What this means

The pilot program provides an additional option for business travelers and visitors who require an earlier visa interview appointment but may not qualify for a traditional emergency appointment. While the program may help reduce appointment wait times for eligible applicants, it does not alter existing visa eligibility requirements, security screening procedures, or adjudication standards. Applicants who utilize the expedited appointment option remain subject to the same vetting, screening, and eligibility requirements as all other visa applicants.

DOS has emphasized that payment of the expedited fee does not increase the likelihood of visa approval, accelerate administrative processing, or guarantee visa issuance. Employers and business travelers therefore ought to continue to build flexibility into US travel plans, particularly where administrative processing or other post-interview delays may be a possible or likely.

We will continue to monitor and share future developments. For additional information, or if you wish to discuss this further, please contact your EY Law LLP professional or Mehlman Jacobs LLP professional.

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