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Understand the FY2026 H-1B lottery instructions and any changes for this year

FY2026 H-1B Lottery Instructions and Changes

The initial registration period for the fiscal year (FY) 2026 H-1B visa cap will start at noon (ET) on March 7, 2025, and will close at noon (ET) on March 24, 2025.

Beneficiary-Centric Selection Process

Each foreign worker will only be allowed to be entered into the lottery once. USCIS will require registrants to provide valid passport information or valid travel document information and this will be used to ensure that each individual is only entered into the lottery once.

Registration Process and Fee

If an employer wants to apply for an H-1B visa for an employee, there are a few steps to follow. First, the employer must register electronically and pay a \$215 fee for each person being registered. If working with an attorney, the employer will need to coordinate electronically with the attorney. Employers and their attorneys need to create accounts on [my.USCIS.gov](https://my.uscis.gov) to participate in this process.

When registering, it is important to remember that the \$215 fee for each registration is nonrefundable and must be paid online through the pay.gov portal. This registration fee is separate from any other fees that might need to be paid later if the registration is selected in the H-1B visa lottery. If there is an attorney involved in this process, make sure to coordinate with them about how this payment will be made.

The required registration information includes:

- Employer's name, employer identification number (EIN), and address.
- Employer's representative contact details.
- Foreign national's full name, date of birth, country of birth, country of citizenship, gender, and passport number.
- Whether the beneficiary has a master's degree from a U.S. higher education institution.
- Employer's attorney details.

Additional Items to Consider:

- USCIS has set up measures to deny or revoke H-1B visas if the registration contains false information or if the registration fee is not properly paid.
- USCIS confirmed they are willing to accept flexible start dates for certain H-1B visa applications (the employment start date can be later than October 1).

This flyer is intended for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. You should not act or rely on any information in this flyer without seeking the advice of a competent, licensed immigration attorney.

We are closely monitoring the situation and encourage you to contact us at Carter Law Group at 508.532.0795 with specific questions.

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