

Immigration Alert

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New Bond Requirement for B-1/B-2 Visa Applicants

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As the Trump Administration continues to make changes to U.S. immigration policy, a new requirement for B-1/B-2 visa applicants to post bonds for short stays in the U.S. has raised questions. From August 20, 2025 to August 5, 2026, the U.S. Department of State will run a Pilot Program that requires B-1 temporary business or B-2 tourist visa applicants from Malawi, Zambia, and potentially other countries, to post a bond in the amount of \$10,000 U.S. Dollars (as adjusted or waived at the consular officer's discretion) in order to be issued the B-1/B-2 visa. The stated purpose of the bond is to discourage B-1/B-2 visa holders from overstaying their allowed stays in the U.S., which are indicated on the I-94 admission record accessible [here](#). Subject to government determination, the bond will be refunded if the B-1/B-2 visa holder:

1. complies with all terms of the B-1 or B-2 visa status and, if applicable, any subsequent nonimmigrant visa status; *and*

2. timely departs from the U.S. through a designated airport or does not travel to the U.S.

The temporary final rule implementing the pilot program is accessible [here](#).

Who Needs to Comply?

- The consular officer will advise B-1/ B-2 visa applicants from Malawi, Zambia, and any other countries that may be listed at [Travel.State.Gov](#), who are subject to the Pilot Program of the bond requirement. Current B-1/B-2 visa holders from Malawi, Zambia, and any other country that may be listed are not subject to the Pilot Program of the bond requirement. This Pilot Program only applies to applicants of new B-1/B-2 visas during the 12-month period beginning on August 20, 2025.
- Newly added countries and changes to the current countries on the list will be posted to [Travel.State.Gov](#) no fewer than 15 days before the bond requirement will be applied.
- After the Pilot Program ends, consular officers will no longer require new bonds. However, any existing visa bonds under the Pilot Program will remain in place until either breached or cancelled, even after the Pilot Program has ended.

What to Know

The Bond

- The default bond amount is \$10,000 U.S. Dollars. The consular officer may lower the bond to \$5,000 or increase the bond to \$15,000 (or, in rare circumstances, recommend the bond be waived), depending on the visa applicant's circumstances, such as ability to pay and likelihood of overstaying the visa.

- If a consular officer informs a visa applicant that they are subject to the bond requirement, the visa applicant will have 30 days from the visa interview to pay the bond. The visa application will be temporarily denied during such period so that the visa applicant may pay the bond.
- If the B-1/B-2 visa is denied, the bond will be cancelled.
- If the B-1/B-2 visa is approved but the government determines the visa holder did not travel to the U.S., the bond will be refunded upon expiration of the visa.
- The payor of the bond will be informed if the bond is forfeited due to the visa applicant's failure to comply with the terms of the bond.

Travel

- In most cases under the Pilot Program, an approved B-1/B-2 visa will grant the visa holder a single entry to the U.S. within a maximum 3-month period following visa issuance for an admission period limited to 30 days.
- Arrival and departure must be through a designated airport listed at [Travel.State.Gov](https://www.travel.state.gov), which as of the date of this alert are: Boston Logan International Airport (BOS), John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), and Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD). This list is subject to change, so it is necessary to check the list prior to booking the flight.
- If the B-1/B-2 visa holder applies to extend or change nonimmigrant visa status with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) once inside the U.S., and USCIS denies that application, then the visa holder must depart the U.S. within 10 days of such denial.

- Any B-1/B-2 visa holder who extends their stay beyond 30 days must comply with the Alien Registration Act. Please see our [prior immigration alert](#).
- If after admission to the U.S. on B-1/B-2 visa status, the visa holder remains in the U.S. pursuant to an approved change of nonimmigrant status, the visa holder must comply with the terms of such new nonimmigrant visa status and timely depart the U.S. Under the Pilot Program, filing to adjust out of nonimmigrant visa status (i.e. applying for a green card/U.S. Permanent Residency) is not permitted and will be deemed a breach of the bond requirements.

Working

- B-2 tourist visa holders are not permitted to work in the U.S. Working in the U.S. while on a B-2 tourist visa, including remote work for a business entity outside of the U.S., violates the terms of the B-2 visa.
- B-1 temporary business visa holders are permitted to engage in limited business activities such as negotiating a contract, attending or presenting at conferences/ meetings, or participating in short-term training not intended to lead to employment in the U.S. Providing actual services or accepting employment with a U.S. employer violates the terms of a B-1 visa.

CONTACT

If you would like guidance on applying for a B-1 or B-2 visa, have questions regarding the bond requirements or would like to discuss immigration matters, please contact [Allison Ahern Fillo](#) or [Emily Tanji](#) in our [Immigration Law Practice](#).