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United States – Consular Services Fees to Change

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Effective September 12, 2014, the U.S. Department of State will adjust processing fees for some services offered by U.S. Consulates around the world.¹ The State Department is changing the fees for most categories of immigrant visas; however, the fees for nonimmigrant visas will remain unchanged for the most part. It is important to note that individuals who wish to file an application for Renunciation of U.S. Citizenship will be charged a significantly higher fee.

Why This Matters

As the below charts indicate, the majority of the services show a slight decrease in consular fees, which will mean modestly lower costs for some employment-based and immigrant visa services. There will be a decline in certain employer and employee costs tied to the acquisition of E visas, employment-based immigrant visas, and the waiver of 2-year residency requirement applications. But in certain cases, which we note below, fees will rise, especially in the case of individuals renouncing their U.S. citizenship.

According to the State Department's Media Note of August 28, 2014, although most categories of nonimmigrant visa processing fees will remain the same, the fee for E visas (treaty-traders and treaty-investors) will decrease and the fee for K visas (for fiancé(e)s of U.S. citizens) will increase. Moreover, a fee increase of \$1 will apply to Border Crossing Cards for Mexican citizen minor applicants under the age of 15.

For immigrant visa processing, the fee for family-sponsored immigrant visas is going up, as well as the fee for domestic review of an Affidavit of Support. Reduced fees will apply to all other immigrant and special visa processing fees that are changing.

The most significant fee increase is for Renunciation of U.S. Citizenship. The fee for this service is being increased from \$450 to \$2,350.

Just below and on the next page are the fee changes affecting employers and immigrant visa applications²:

Nonimmigrant Visa Processing Fees

Type of Visa	Previous Fee	New Fee
Treaty Investor and Trader visas (E)	\$270	\$205
Fiancé(e) visas (K)	\$240	\$265
Border Crossing Card (under age 15)	\$15	\$16

Immigrant Visa Processing Fees

Type of Visa	Previous Fee	New Fee
Immediate Relative and Family Preference Applications	\$230	\$325
Employment-Based Applications	\$405	\$345
Other Immigrant Visa Applications	\$220	\$205
Determining Returning Resident Status	\$275	\$180
Waiver of Two-Year Residency Requirement	\$215	\$120
Affidavit of Support Review (only when reviewed domestically)	\$88	\$120

Citizens' and Administrative Services

Type of Service	Previous Fee	New Fee
Renunciation of Citizenship	\$450	\$2,350
Charge for Consular Time (for fee services performed outside of normal business hours or away from the office)	\$231	\$135

Source: U.S. Department of State

KPMG Law Note

The most significant increase is in the service for Renunciation of Citizenship, which has increased by \$1,900. The Department of State contends that this service "... is extremely costly, requiring U.S. consular officers overseas to spend substantial amounts of time to accept, process, and adjudicate cases. The fee for processing renunciation of citizenship, which had previously been subsidized, is now reflective of the true cost."³

Employers that assume the costs for such consular services on behalf of their employees taking assignments overseas, should be prepared to factor in the changes in costs (which will vary (higher or lower) depending on the circumstances at hand), when budgeting for international assignments.

Footnotes:

1 Please refer to U.S. Department of State Press Release:
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/231128.htm> .

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

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