



# GMS Flash Alert

## Immigration Edition

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# United States – Syria Temporary Protected Status Extended and Redesignated

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has both extended the designation and redesignated Syria for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months, from March 31, 2021 through September 30, 2022.<sup>1</sup> This is based on a determination that the ongoing armed conflict and other extraordinary conditions prompting Syria's initial TPS designation continue to pose a serious threat to the safety of its nationals should they be required to return to Syria.

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Employers and current TPS beneficiaries should be apprised of the redesignation and extension of TPS designation for Syria, as it allows for continued work authorization for certain eligible individuals.

This extension allows currently eligible TPS beneficiaries to retain their TPS through September 30, 2022, if they otherwise continue to meet the TPS eligibility requirements. The redesignation of Syria allows new eligible applicants who have been continuously residing in the United States since March 19, 2021, to apply for TPS benefits, including valid U.S. work authorization.

## Background – What is Temporary Protected Status (TPS)?

When conditions in a country temporarily prevent its nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately, DHS may designate such foreign country for TPS. Typically, with respect to countries where there is ongoing armed conflict, an environmental disaster has occurred, or there are other extraordinary and temporary conditions, the DHS may designate such a country for TPS. Under this program, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may grant TPS, including permission to work lawfully, to eligible nationals of TPS-designated countries who are already in the United States.

## Next Steps for Current Syrian TPS Beneficiaries

Individuals who have already been granted TPS under Syria's designation have 60 days, from March 19, 2021 through May 18, 2021, to request an 18-month extension of status and work authorization.

Below is a summary of the reregistration process:

- **Who can register:** Reregistration is limited to individuals who previously registered for and were granted TPS under Syria's designation.
- **When to register:** Current Syrian TPS beneficiaries must submit Form I-821, *Application for Temporary Protected Status*, to USCIS by May 18, 2021.
- **Extending employment authorization:** Beneficiaries who wish to extend their employment authorization for 18 months must also timely submit a Form I-765, *Application for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD)*, with the applicable fees.
- **Automatic EAD extensions:** DHS automatically extends the validity of EADs previously issued under the TPS designation of Syria for 180 days, through September 27, 2021. TPS beneficiaries can present their EAD cards with: (1) a March 31, 2021 expiration date and (2) an A-12 or C-19 category code as proof of continued employment authorization through September 27, 2021. For Form I-9 employment eligibility verification purposes, employers may accept a TPS-related EADs with an expiration date of March 31, 2021, along with a copy of the March 19, 2021 *Federal Register* notice extending Syria's TPS designation.

## Next Steps for New Applicants

New applicants may submit an initial application (Form I-821, *Application for Temporary Protected Status*) during the 180-day initial registration period from March 19, 2021 through September 15, 2021. In addition to demonstrating continuous residence in the United States since March 19, 2021, and meeting other eligibility criteria, first-time applicants for TPS under the redesignation must demonstrate continued physical presence in the United States since March 31, 2021, the effective date of this redesignation of Syria.

New applicants may also apply for employment and travel authorization during the registration period by submitting the corresponding forms and fee or fee waiver requests. Approved TPS applications and related work authorizations will be issued with a September 30, 2022 expiration date.

Note: all individuals applying for TPS must undergo security and background checks as part of determining eligibility. biometrics (i.e., fingerprints) collection is generally required for applicants ages 14 and older.

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### KPMG NOTE

KPMG Law LLP in Canada is closely monitoring immigration matters. We will endeavor to keep readers of *GMS Flash Alert* posted on any important developments as and when they occur.

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## FOOTNOTE:

1 See the March 19, 2021 *Federal Register* Notice, "[Extension and Redesignation of Syria for Temporary Protected Status](#)."

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## Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional\* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Canada:



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*\* Please note the KPMG International member firm in the United States does not provide immigration or labour law services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.*

**The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Canada.**

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