



# GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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## United States - September 2021 Visa Bulletin, Medical Report Validity Extension

The U.S. Department of State released the September 2021 *Visa Bulletin* on August 9, 2021.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has also confirmed that it will accept employment-based Form I-485, *Applications to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status*, next month according to the *Visa Bulletin's* "Final Action Dates" chart.<sup>2</sup>

The U.S. State Department continues its "Chats with Charlie" on YouTube to discuss the monthly *Visa Bulletin*.<sup>3</sup> Charlie Oppenheim is Chief of the Visa Control and Reporting Division of the U.S. Department of State. He has historically made predictions about movement in priority date cut-offs. Mr. Oppenheim is expected to host a live chat related to the September 2021 *Visa Bulletin* soon. As of the date of this publication, the YouTube livestream is not yet available.

Also, USCIS announced that it will temporarily extend the validity period of Form I-693, *Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record*, from two (2) years to four (4) years.<sup>4</sup> More specifically, a Form I-693 will be considered acceptable if: a) the doctor's signature is dated 60 days or less from the date on which the Adjustment of Status application was filed, b) no more than four (4) years have passed since the date of the doctor's signature, and c) the Adjustment of Status application is adjudicated on or before September 30, 2021.

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### WHY THIS MATTERS

Each month, the U.S. Department of State releases a *Visa Bulletin* indicating the availability of statutorily limited visas for prospective immigrants. The cut-off dates reflected in the *Visa Bulletin*, coupled with USCIS' confirmation of which chart will apply, dictate eligibility to file a Form I-485 application in a given month. In addition, the Final Action Dates chart in the applicable *Visa Bulletin* determines whether pending Form I-485 application may be approved.

The live chats hosted by Charlie Oppenheim are an excellent opportunity for visa applicants and employers to ask general questions pertaining to the visa bulletin and anticipated movement in each visa category. Questions may be emailed to [VisaBulletin@state.gov](mailto:VisaBulletin@state.gov) in advance of each live session, or asked via the YouTube live chat feature in real-time.

In the announcement by USCIS regarding the temporary extension of Form I-693 validity, the agency confirmed that it is on track to approve more employment-based Forms I-485 than it has since FY 2005. Every Form I-485 must be

accompanied by a valid Form I-693. By temporarily extending the validity period of Form I-693, USCIS will forgo requesting updated medical reports and vaccination records from many applicants who would otherwise need to provide the same. This change will facilitate faster adjudication before the end of the government's fiscal year, thereby limiting the potential of employment-based immigrant visas going unused.

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## September Cut-Off Dates for Employment-Based Preference Categories

The cut-off dates under the Final Action Dates chart for employment-based immigrant visas under the September 2021 *Visa Bulletin* will be as follows:

EB-1: All countries of chargeability including India and China will remain current.

EB-2: All countries of chargeability except India and China will remain current. China's cut-off date will advance to July 1, 2018, and India's cut-off date will move forward to September 1, 2011.

EB-3: All countries of chargeability except India and China will remain current. China's cut-off date remains unchanged at January 8, 2019, while India's cut-off date advances by six (6) months to January 1, 2014.

EB-3 Other Workers: All countries of chargeability except China and India will remain current. China will advance to February 1, 2010. India's cut-off date will advance six (6) months to January 1, 2014.

EB-4: All countries of chargeability, except El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico, will remain current in September. El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras will advance to March 15, 2019, while Mexico's cut-off date moves to March 1, 2020.

EB-5: All countries of chargeability, except China, will remain current. China's cut-off date will advance to November 22, 2015. The Regional Center program has expired and is listed in the visa bulletin as unavailable. If reauthorized by Congress before the end of next month, the Non-Regional Center final action dates will apply to individuals under the Regional Center program.

### FOOTNOTES:

- 1 U.S. Department of State [website](#).
- 2 See the "[Adjustment of Status Filing Charts from the Visa Bulletin](#)" page on the USCIS website.
- 3 See <https://www.youtube.com/user/TravelGov>.
- 4 See [USCIS Temporarily Extending Validity Period of Form I-693 | USCIS](#).

## Contact us

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