



News & Types: Client Advisories

FY-2026 H-1B Quota Met

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By: Julie T. Emerick

Practices: Immigration

On July 18th, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY-2026) (October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026) H-1B quota has been reached. Unlike prior years, there will not be subsequent rounds of H-1B quota registration selections.

The congressionally mandated H-1B quota allocates 65,000 H-1B approvals for noncitizens who hold a U.S. bachelor's degree or its equivalent. It also allocates an additional 20,000 H-1B approvals for noncitizens who earned an advanced degree from an accredited U.S. university. The H-1B visa is reserved for noncitizens who will work in a specialty occupation.

While USCIS saw a 26.9% decrease in eligible H-1B quota registrations, 343,981 for FY-2026 compared to 470,342 in FY-2025, more employers, approximately 57,600 compared to 52,700 in FY-2025, submitted registrations. USCIS selected fewer registrations in FY-2026 (120,141) in comparison to FY-2025 (135,137). Because the USCIS has had to have subsequent rounds of H-1B quota registration selections in previous years when it did not select sufficient selections to meet the statutory numerical allocations, it was assumed that the USCIS would have to have another round of selections in FY-2026 because USCIS selected fewer registrations in the initial selection process during FY-2026 in comparison to FY-2025. However, by announcing that the H-1B quota has been met, the USCIS has indicated that it did select a sufficient number of registrations in the initial selection process to meet the statutory numerical allocations without having to conduct subsequent rounds of selections. USCIS will now be updating its on-line system to show those registrations not selected as officially "Not Selected."

USCIS also noted that on average each noncitizen had only one registration submitted on his/her behalf. Under the "beneficiary-centric" registration process implemented last year, a noncitizen may have multiple employers submit a registration on their behalf but each beneficiary will only have one chance in the selection process, regardless of the number of registrations submitted by different unrelated employers. USCIS believes that its increased investigations of fraud in the H-1B program combined with the beneficiary-centric selection process were contributing factors in the lower number of registrations.

The registration period for the FY-2027 (October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027) H-1B quota lottery is anticipated to occur in early March 2026.

Employers are encouraged to contact our firm in early February 2026 for information about the FY-2027 H-1B quota registration process.

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