USCIS Update
April 14, 2008

USCIS RUNS RANDOM SELECTION PROCESS FOR H-1B PETITIONS

WASHINGTON - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today conducted the computer-generated random selection processes on H-1B petitions, to select which H-1B petitions for fiscal year 2009 (FY 2009) would continue to full adjudication. If approved these H-1B petitions will be eligible to receive an H-1B visa number.

USCIS conducted two random selections, first on petitions qualifying for the 20,000 "master's or higher degree" (advanced degree) exemption, and second on the remaining advance degree petitions together with the general H-1B pool of petitions, for the 65,000 cap.

The approximately 163,000 petitions received in the first five days of the eligible filing period for FY 2009 (April 1 through April 7, 2008) were labeled with unique numerical identifiers. USCIS has notified the appropriate service centers which numerical identifiers have been randomly selected, so each center may continue with final processing of the petitions associated with those numerical identifiers.

Petitioners whose properly filed petitions have been selected for full adjudication should receive a receipt notice dated no later than June 2, 2008. USCIS will return unselected petitions with the fee(s) to petitioners or their authorized representatives. As previously announced, duplicate filings will be returned without the fee. The total adjudication process is expected to take approximately eight to ten weeks.

For cases selected through the random selection process and initially filed for premium processing, the 15-day premium processing period begins today (April 14), the day of the random selection process.

USCIS has "wait-listed" some H-1B petitions, meaning they may possibly replace petitions chosen to receive an FY-2009 cap number, but that subsequently are denied, withdrawn, or otherwise found ineligible. USCIS will retain these petitions until a decision is made whether they will replace a previously selected petition. USCIS will send a letter to the wait list petitioners to inform them of their status.

USCIS expects that for each of these wait-listed petitions, it will either issue a receipt notice or return the petition with fees within six to eight weeks.

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