

Changes to H-1B Policies

To::

Campus Community

Names and titles:

Office of Global Initiatives

Date::

March 8, 2017

On March 3, 2017, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that, effective April 3, 2017, it will **temporarily suspend premium processing for all H-1B petitions** [1]. This suspension may last up to six (6) months and will apply to all H-1B petitions filed on or after April 3, 2017.

Although USCIS will continue to premium-process petitions filed before April 3, 2017, the agency announced that it will refund the premium processing fee if:

- The petitioner filed the request for premium processing before April 3, 2017, and
- USCIS did not take adjudicative action on the case within the 15-calendar-day processing period.

This may indicate that USCIS anticipates a surge of premium-processed H-1B petitions prior to April 3, 2017, in reaction to the suspension announcement and will not guarantee that every premium-processed H-1B petition will be adjudicated within 15 calendar days if that occurs. It is important to note that a refund will only be issued if USCIS failed to take adjudicative action on a case. In other words, a refund will not be issued if a case is not processed within 15 calendar days as a result of delays caused by the issuance of a Request for Evidence.

As the regular processing time for H-1B petitions submitted to the USCIS California Service Center currently stands at approximately eight (8) months, the suspension of premium processing will likely affect the UA's business processes. To further complicate the issue, H-1B petitions cannot be submitted to USCIS more than six months in advance of the requested start date. UA International Faculty and Scholars staff will do their best to seek timely approval of all H-1B petitions. However, as these processing times and limitations are set by the US government, it is critical to submit all H-1B petition requests to International Faculty and Scholars as early as possible to minimize delays to and/or gaps in employment authorization.

Please contact International Faculty and Scholars at 520-626-6289 at your earliest convenience if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Source URL: <https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/uannounce/changes-h-1b-policies>

Links:

[1] <https://www.uscis.gov/news/alerts/uscis-will-temporarily-suspend-premium-processing-all-h-1b-petitions>