

DOS Significantly Scales Back Interview Waivers

Effective 9/2/25

What's Changing:

- In-person interviews will be required for most visa categories (including E-1, E-2, F-1, H-1B, J-1, L-1, O-1 and all others not listed below). The interview waiver will no longer be available, even for repeat applicants or renewals.
- Applicants under age 14 or over 79 will also be required to interview in-person.

What Remains:

- Interview waivers remain available for applicants renewing a full validity B-1, B-2, B1/B2 visa or a Border Crossing Card/Foil, provided they:
 - Apply within 12 months of the prior visa's expiration;
 - Were at least 18 years old at the time of the prior visa's issuance;
 - Apply in their country of nationality or residence;
 - Have never been refused a visa (unless such refusal was overcome or waived); and
 - Have no apparent or potential ineligibility.
- Interview waiver remains for applicants of A-1, A-2, C-3, G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, NATO-1 through NATO-6, or TECRO E-1, and applicants for diplomatic- or official-type visas.
- Consular officers may still require in-person interviews on a case-by-case basis for any reason.

Practice Implications:

- Expect longer visa appointment backlogs and processing delays at many consulates, especially in high-volume posts.
- In-person interviews will once again become the norm, even for repeat applicants with a clean history.
- Consular shopping will be riskier: eligible B-1/B-2 visa applicants must now apply in their country of nationality/residence to qualify for a waiver, in addition to existing criteria.