

**Update on Policies and Restrictions for Nationals of
Designated Travel Ban Countries**

January 2026

By Nikki Carrion, last rev. January 2026

Since the new President took office in January 2025, he and members of his administration have announced several changes to immigration and refugee policies and procedures particularly regarding nationals of certain designated countries known collectively as “Travel Ban” countries [[Presidential Proclamation \(PP\) 10998](#), “Restricting and Limiting the Entry of Foreign Nationals To Protect the Security of the United States”, issued on December 16, 2025].

On January 1, 2026, the government issued another [policy memorandum](#) further restricting nationals from the Travel Ban countries and also provided additional clarification that the government is going to: (1) conduct a comprehensive review of all policies, procedures, and screening and vetting processes for benefit requests, (2) re-review of approved benefit requests implicated in PP 10998 that were approved on or after January 20, 2021, and (3) place an indefinite hold on all pending benefit applications pending a comprehensive review, regardless of entry date, for the foreign nationals from the designated Travel Ban countries.

In practical terms, the effect of these policy changes and restrictions mean that if you or a family member is from one of the countries designated as a “Travel Ban” country, you can file applications for immigration benefits, but you will not have a decision on your application until further notice from the government. If you receive a notice of interview for an immigration benefit outside of the United States, you should try to get the interview de-scheduled or rescheduled if possible. Additionally, if you are outside of the United States without a valid visa or Lawful Permanent Resident card, you may not enter the United States until further notice. Furthermore, it is important that you return to the United States as soon as possible before any valid visa expires because your visa will not be renewed.

If you are in the United States, you should not travel outside of the United States unless absolutely necessary. Finally, you can act now to prepare for any re-interview by the government of any of your already acquired immigration benefits. You should

gather any documents you have from prior immigration or refugee applications and file a Freedom of Information Act Request (FOIA) online to obtain copies of all the documents that the government may have in your immigration file. You should make sure you update your address with USCIS and check your mail and [myUSCIS](#) account often for any notices for re-interview.

You can find more information on the Travel Ban here [IRAP Travel Ban Kit](#)

You can find more information on how to file a FOIA here [How to Request a FOIA](#)