

Information on Fiscal Year 2018 Diversity Visa Lottery Registration

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The State Department will accept electronic applications for the 2016 Diversity Visa (DV) lottery **from Tuesday, October 4, 2016, at 12 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time until Monday, November 7, 2016, at 12 p.m. Eastern Standard Time**. Individuals may submit only one application, which *must* be filed electronically at dvlottery.state.gov during this period. Paper entries will not be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply as early as possible.

There are no costs to register for the lottery. All applications must be accompanied by a passport-style digital photograph of the applicant, the applicant's spouse and each unmarried child under the age of 21 (who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident). In order to qualify, an applicant must have EITHER a high school education or its equivalent OR two years of work experience within the past five years in an occupation requiring at least two years of training or experience to perform. Each spouse in a family may submit a separate application that will cover both spouses and any dependent children.

Starting May 2, 2017, through at least September 30, 2018, applicants may enter their unique confirmation number and personal information by going to dvlottery.state.gov and selecting *Entrant Status Check* to find out whether they were selected in the DV lottery. This will be the only way of finding out whether you were selected in the lottery. Further, being selected in the diversity lottery does not guarantee permanent residence status. Instead, selected applicants are merely eligible to *apply* for permanent residence if their assigned rank number becomes current. Even then, the selected applicant must complete an extensive application process and satisfy national security and criminal background checks. Because the number of individuals selected in the lottery far exceeds the number of actual permanent visas available, it is critical that selected applicants be prepared to act quickly upon accessing the government notification online.

Individuals in F-1, J-1 or other status requiring nonimmigrant intent who are selected in the lottery are advised to consult an immigration attorney *before* submitting a permanent residence application in order to assess any potential consequences to their nonimmigrant status.

The Diversity Visa Lottery Program was created to encourage people from countries with low immigration rates to immigrate to the U.S. Therefore, foreign nationals from countries with high levels of immigration to the United States are ineligible for the program. For DV-2018, citizens from the following countries are not eligible to apply:

- Bangladesh
- Brazil

- Canada
- People's Republic of China (mainland-born)*
- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- El Salvador
- Haiti
- India
- Jamaica
- Mexico
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Peru
- Philippines
- South Korea
- U.K. and its dependent territories
- (except Northern Ireland)
- Vietnam

* Persons born in Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan are eligible.

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