

9 FAM 42.33 Notes

(TL:VISA-513; 01-23-2003)
(Office of Origin: CA/VO/L/R)

9 FAM 42.33 N1 Background

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

a. Sec. 131 of the Immigration Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-649) amended INA 203 to provide for a new class of immigrants known as “diversity immigrants” (DV immigrants). The amendment established an annual numerical limitation of 55,000 diversity immigrants effective for fiscal year 1995 and thereafter. Aliens who are natives of countries determined by the Attorney General through application of a mathematical formula specified in INA 203(c)(1)(A) to be “low admission” countries may compete for immigration under this limitation. INA 203(c)(1) requires a separate registration of all competing aliens for each fiscal year.

b. INA 203(c)(1)(A) requires the Attorney General to determine the actual number of immigrant admissions from each foreign country for the previous year and to place each county in one of six geographic regions. The formula identifies both high and low admission regions and high and low admission foreign states. A greater share of the available visa numbers goes to low admission regions. High admission states are excluded from the program.

c. In November 1997, Congress passed Pub. L. 105-100, the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). [With NACARA, Congress stipulated that beginning with DV-99, and as long as necessary, 5,000 of the 55,000 annually-allocated diversity visas will be made available for use under the NACARA program].

9 FAM 42.33 N2 Requirements for Diversity Immigrant Program

(TL:VISA-185; 02-26-1999)

To qualify under INA 203(c) as a diversity immigrant the following requirements must be met:

(1) The alien must be a native of [see 9 FAM 42.33 N4.2] or chargeable to a diversity country [see 9 FAM 42.33 Exhibit I]; and

(2) The alien must have at least a high school education or equivalent [see 9 FAM 42.33 N7]; **OR**

(3) The alien must have, within five years of the date of application for a diversity immigrant visa under INA 203(c), at least two years of work experience in an occupation which requires at least two years of training or experience. [See 9 FAM 42.33 N8.]

9 FAM 42.33 N3 Diversity Countries

9 FAM 42.33 N3.1 Formula

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

a. The Attorney General is required to determine total admissions of preference and immediate relative immigrants over the most recent five-year period for which statistics are available, worldwide total, by region, and by individual foreign state. Using these figures, the Attorney General is to identify both high admission regions and high admission foreign states. A high admissions region is a region whose admission total is greater than one-sixth of the worldwide total. A foreign state whose admissions total is greater than 50,000 is a high admission foreign state.

b. Using available estimates, the Attorney General must then determine the population of each of the six regions (excluding the population of any high admission foreign state) and use those totals to determine the apportionment of the 55,000 worldwide DV limitation. Quotas for the six regions will be established. Natives of these regions compete for that portion of the total established for that region. Any unused portion of a regional quota is distributed proportionally among the other regions. High admission states are excluded entirely from the apportionment. No one country's nationals may receive more than 7% of the available Department's Visas in any one year.

9 FAM 42.33 N3.2 Qualifying Countries

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

INA 203(c) provides that the number of visas made available to natives of high admission countries is zero. Department regulations, therefore, prohibit natives of such countries from competition for diversity visas. INS will determine annually the high admission countries based on the total number of admissions for the most recent five-year period. By application of the formula, most countries of the world have been found to qualify as diversity countries. [See 9 FAM 42.33 Exhibit I.] The INS will annually provide the figures to apply the formula, so the list is subject to change annually. [See list of qualifying countries in the Department's Diversity Visa Bulletin 2002 and Diversity Visa Bulletin 2003].

9 FAM 42.33 N4 Native

9 FAM 42.33 N4.1 Regulatory Definition

(TL:VISA-513; 01-23-2003)

“Native” ordinarily means both someone born within a particular country, regardless of the individual's current country of residence or nationality. “Native” can also mean someone entitled to be “charged” to a particular country under the provisions of INA 202(b).

9 FAM 42.33 N4.2 Chargeability

(TL:VISA-513; 01-23-2003)

As stated in the regulatory definition, the normal rules of chargeability apply to INA 203(c) immigrants. Many applicants may seek beneficial treatment from the rules of cross chargeability, as in the following examples:

(1) A spouse or child born in a country which is not among those for which DV visas are available may use the principal registrant's chargeability when they are accompanying or following-to-join.

(2) A child born in a non-qualifying country in which neither parent was born nor resident at the time of the child's birth, may claim the birth-place of either parent.

(3) A DV applicant born in a country which is not among those for which DV visas are available, and the non-applicant spouse who was born in a qualifying country, may be issued DV visas, provided the relationship was established prior to submitting the entry. In such instances, however, both applicants are considered principal applicants for the purpose of cross-chargeability and must be issued visas and apply for admission to the United States simultaneously.

9 FAM 42.33 N5 Petitions/Applications

9 FAM 42.33 N5.1 Required Information

(TL:VISA-374; 02-20-2002)

a. Each summer, the Department of State will publish rules for the next fiscal year's DV program in the Federal Register and also in a special edition of the Department's Visa Bulletin publication. Rules for a DV program in any Fiscal Year stipulate what information must be included on the DV entry, such as name, photo requirement, etc, as well as other requirements for the program and the address(es) to which the DV entry must be sent. As the entry rules generally change each year, these publications as well as the Consular Affairs Website at <http://travel.state.gov> remain the best source of information on entry and eligibility requirements as well as on qualifying countries. Entries lacking any of the required information or photos will be disqualified at any time during processing by the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) which has been given responsibility for stateside processing of the DV program or by an consular post abroad.

b. The DV entrant must personally sign the DV entry using his or her usual and customary signature in his or her native alphabet. (See also 9 FAM 42.33 PN2.1) The DV entry will be disqualified if the signature is missing. Block printing or initials do not constitute a signature for purposes of the DV Program. An entry will be disqualified if the signature is missing or does not conform to the rules stipulated for the DV program for which the entrant is applying.

9 FAM 42.33 N5.2 Petition/Application Validity

9 FAM 42.33 N5.2-1 General

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

Under INA 204(a)(1)(G)(ii)(II), persons registered as diversity immigrants are entitled to apply for visa issuance only during the fiscal year for which the application was submitted. The petition is valid until Midnight of the last day of the fiscal year for which the petition was submitted. There is no carry-over of benefit into another year for persons who do not receive a visa during the fiscal year for which they registered. Following-to-join derivative visas must be issued during the same fiscal year as that of the principal beneficiary.

9 FAM 42.33 N5.2-2 In Death of Principal Beneficiary and/or Applicant

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

The death of the principal beneficiary and/or applicant shall result in the automatic revocation of the application. Thereafter, derivative beneficiaries are no longer entitled to the DV classification.

9 FAM 42.33 N6 Registration

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

Applications for DV immigrants are processed at the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC).

9 FAM 42.33 N6.1 Registration Dates

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

The Department will establish a period for the submission of applications of at least 30 days each fiscal year in which the lottery will be conducted. To ensure wide dissemination of the information both abroad and in the United States, the Department will provide timely notice of both the mailing address and the exact dates of the application period through publication in the Federal Register and by other methods.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.2 Number of Applications

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

a. Only one application by or for each person is allowed during each registration period. Submission of more than one application disqualifies the applicant from registration. Applicants may be disqualified at any time more than one application is discovered.

b. The applicant must personally sign the entry using his or her normal signature.

c. Husband and wife, if otherwise qualified, may each submit one application. If either is registered, the other is entitled to derivative status.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.3 Form of Submission

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

Applications must be submitted by normal surface or airmail. The Department will not consider applications submitted by hand, FAX, telegram or any form of mail requiring special handling such as express, priority or second-day airmail.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.4 Envelope Size

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

Envelopes used for application submissions must be between 6 and 10 inches (15 cm to 25 cm) in length and between 3½ and 4½ inches (9 cm to 11 cm) in width. KCC will not process envelopes not conforming to these size restrictions.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.5 Information on Application Envelope

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-22002001)

a. The upper left-hand corner on the front of the envelope must contain the following information (as shown on the entry application):

- (1) Country of chargeability, as shown on the application;
- (2) Applicant's full name; and
- (3) Applicant's complete mailing address;

b. The KCC will not process envelopes that do not bear the above information.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.6 Registration Process

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

a. Mail received during the designated registration period for DV program will be separated into one of six geographic regions at the KCC. KCC staff will then number each envelope individually. At the end of the application period, numbers will be randomly selected by computer. Within each region, the first letter randomly selected will be the first case registered, the second letter selected the second registration, etc. All applications received within the mail-in period will have an equal chance of selection within the respective region.

b. When a case is registered, the KCC will immediately send the selected applicant a notification letter with instructions on how to make a formal visa application. [See 9 FAM 42.33 PN3.3.] Only registered applicants will be notified.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.7 Principal Registrants Under Age 16

(TL:VISA-185; 02-26-1999)

Although there is NO minimum age for submission of an application for registration, the requirement for a high school education or work experience will effectively disqualify most persons under age 18.

9 FAM 42.33 N6.8 Derivative Status

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

The KCC will disqualify entries of registrants who list on their Form DS-230 (Application for Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration) a spouse or child(ren) who was not included in their initial entry. The spouse of a principal alien, if acquired prior to the principal alien's admission, or the child of a principal alien, if the child is the issue of a marriage which took place after registration and prior to the principal alien's admission to the United States, although not named on a application, is entitled to derivative DV status.

9 FAM 42.33 N7 “High School Education or Equivalent”

(TL:VISA-97; 10-20-1994)

The consular office shall adjudicate the applicant's qualifications under this requirement. In order to gain registration, the alien need not prove that this requirement is met. The applicant must, however, meet this requirement at the time of visa application.

9 FAM 42.33 N7.1 Regulatory Definitions

(TL:VISA-513; 01-23-2003)

The Department's interpretation of the term “high school education or its equivalent” means successful completion of a:

- (1) Twelve-year course of elementary and secondary study in the United States; or
- (2) Formal course of elementary and secondary education comparable to completion of 12 years elementary or secondary education in the United States.

9 FAM 42.33 N7.2 Education Requirements

(TL:VISA-97; 10-20-1994)

The Department interprets the phrase “high school education or its equivalent” to apply only to formal courses of study. Equivalency certificates (such as the G.E.D.) are not acceptable. To qualify, an alien must have completed a 12-year course of elementary and secondary education in the United States or a comparable course of study in another country. Evidence might consist of a certificate of completion equivalent to a U.S. diploma, school transcripts, or other evidence issued by the person or organization responsible for maintaining such records which specify the completed course of study.

9 FAM 42.33 N7.3 Education Evaluation

(TL:VISA-191; 05-07-1999)

In an effort to ensure worldwide uniform implementation of the education requirements, the Department has provided posts with "Foreign Education Credentials Required for Consideration of Admission to Universities and Colleges in the United States."

9 FAM 42.33 N8 “Work Experience”

9 FAM 42.33 N8.1 No Labor Certification

(TL:VISA-185; 02-26-1999)

The labor certification requirement of INA 212(a)(5) does not apply to applicants applying as diversity immigrants. Applicants, however, who do not meet the education requirement must meet the work experience requirement of two years of experience in an occupation which requires at least two years training or experience within the five-year period immediately prior to application.

9 FAM 42.33 N8.2 Work Experience Evaluation

(TL:VISA-185; 02-26-1999)

a. If an applicant does not have the equivalent of a high school education, consular officers will evaluate work experience. Beginning with 2003 registrants, consular officers must use the Department of Labor’s O*Net OnLine to determine qualifying work experience. For registrants for earlier years, consular officers shall use the O*Net OnLine unless the O*Net OnLine-determination differs from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)-determination and the applicant would be disadvantaged by the use of the O*Net OnLine.

9 FAM 42.33 N9 Ineligibility Grounds

(TL:VISA-191; 05-07-1999)

With the exception of INA 212(a)(5), applicants are subject to all grounds of ineligibility specified in the Immigration and Nationality Act. There are no special provisions for a waiver of any ground of visa ineligibility other than those ordinarily provided in the INA.

9 FAM 42.33 N9.1 INA 221(g) Refusals

(TL:VISA-351; 01-29-2002)

a. Interviewing officers should verbally impress on the applicants at the time of refusal the importance of returning to the Embassy quickly, preferably within the same month, with the necessary information to overcome the refusal. Officers should advise applicants that failure to return within the month may mean that visa numbers will no longer be available for them and they may miss their opportunity to obtain a visa.

b. Posts should prepare a stamp, to be stamped on the Form OF-194, The Foreign Service of the United States America, refusal letters of DV applicants refused under 221(g), with the following message:

ATTENTION: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN A VISA BE
ISSUED OR AN ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS OCCUR IN
YOUR CASE AFTER SEPTEMBER 30, ____.

VERY IMPORTANT: BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED NUMBER
OF VISAS THAT MAY BE ISSUED UNDER THIS PROGRAM,
VISAS MAY CEASE TO BE AVAILABLE EVEN BEFORE THIS
DATE. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE THE CLOSER TO
SEPTEMBER 30 AN APPLICATION OR RE-APPLICATION IS MADE.

9 FAM 42.33 N9.2 Public Charge

(TL:VISA-374; 03-20-2002)

While Congress has imposed new stringent public charge requirements on many categories of immigrants, including the need to use the new legally binding Form I-864, Affidavit of Support, the DV category is not one of them. DV applicants must meet the public charge category by demonstrating that they:

- (1) Are self-supporting;
- (2) Have sufficient skills and/or education to find employment with relative ease; or
- (3) Have family and/or friends, in the United States or elsewhere, who will support them upon their arrival in the United States.

9 FAM 42.33 N9.3 Waivers

(TL:VISA-185; 02-26-1999)

Unlike applicants eligible for immigrant visas under other programs involving random selection, no special provisions have been made for a waiver of any ineligibility grounds for applicants entitled to DV registration. The regular ineligibility waiver provisions of the INA, including 212(e), all apply.

9 FAM 42.33 N10 Fee

(TL:VISA-185; 02-26-1999)

There is no fee for submitting the initial request for registration in the DV program. However, those applicants who are selected and processed for DV visas will be required to pay a special DV processing fee. [See 9 FAM 42.33 N10.1 below.]

9 FAM 42.33 N10.1 Collection of Fee

(TL:VISA-332; 11-15-2001)

Section 636 of Pub. L. 104-208, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, authorized the Department to collect a fee for the processing of diversity immigrant visas. This fee is in addition to the normal immigrant visa processing and issuance fees, and the amount is specified in the Schedule of Fees. [See 9 FAM Appendix C, for the country concerned.] Posts shall collect the processing fee at the time of the applicant's formal interview.

9 FAM 42.33 N10.2 Processing Cases to Conclusion

(TL:VISA-191; 05-07-1999)

The Department can appreciate posts' efforts to prescreen applications allowing unqualified applicants to withdraw their applications to avoid paying the required fee. Nevertheless, it is important to process such cases to conclusion and not to simply allow the candidate to withdraw the application. Instances have arisen where DV winners who were advised not to make an application at a post abroad have then entered the United States and requested adjustment of status processing at INS.

9 FAM 42.33 N11 Numerical Control

(TL:VISA-158; 11-25-1996)

Centralized control of the DV numerical limitation shall be with the Department. [See 9 FAM 42.51.]