

PUBLICATION

H-1B CAP Alert – Key Dates for This Year's H-1B Registration Process

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It's that time of year again: H-1B CAP season! The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) initial registration period for H-1B CAP will open at 12:00 p.m. ET, on March 7, 2025, and run through 12:00 p.m. ET, on March 24, 2025. During this period, prospective employers and representatives must use a USCIS online account to register each beneficiary electronically for the selection process and pay the associated \$215 registration fee for each beneficiary.

If you are an H-1B petitioning employer who does not have a USCIS online account, you will need to create an organizational account. If you are an H-1B petitioning employer who had an H-1B registrant account for FY2021-FY2024 H-1B CAP Registration seasons, but you did not use the account for FY2025, your existing account will be converted to an organizational account after your next login. If you are a first-time registrant, please contact your Baker Donelson Immigration Team to create an account as soon as possible.

Representatives may begin adding clients to their accounts at any time, but both representatives and registrants must wait until **March 7, 2025**, to enter beneficiary information and submit the \$215 registration fee. The USCIS also confirms that there is no requirement to register a beneficiary on the first day of the registration period as selections take place after the period closes on March 24, 2025.

The FY2026 H-1B CAP will utilize the "**beneficiary-centric**" selection process launched in FY2025. A foreign national's **passport or valid travel document** will be required for an H-1B CAP Registration submission on their behalf and will be used as the **beneficiary's unique identifier** for selection in the H-1B CAP lottery. Each beneficiary will only be entered into the H-1B CAP lottery selection process once, regardless of how many registrations were submitted on their behalf. We urge employers to begin gathering the below-listed information and documentation for each prospective H-1B registrant:

- Full legal name;
- Gender;
- Date of birth;
- Country of birth;
- Country of citizenship;
- **Valid passport information beneficiary must use the same passport or travel document for all registrations filed on their behalf); and**
- Copy of university degree(s) and transcript(s) to determine whether the Beneficiary is eligible for the U.S. advanced-degree cap or will be eligible for the advanced-degree cap at the time an H-1B cap petition is filed on the Beneficiary's behalf.

If the USCIS receives enough registrations by **March 24, 2025**, the agency will randomly select unique beneficiaries and send selection notifications via users' USCIS online accounts. If not enough registrations are received, all registrations for unique beneficiaries that were properly submitted in the initial registration period will be selected. By **March 31, 2025**, the USCIS intends to notify prospective petitioners and representatives whose accounts have at least one registration selected.

Updates to Transactions and Organizational Account Enhancements for FY2026

The USCIS also announced that the U.S. Department of Treasury has approved a temporary increase in the daily credit card transaction limit from \$24,999.99 to \$99,999.99 per day of the FY2026 registration period. The increase is due to the volume of previous registrations that exceeded the daily credit card limit. If your transaction is over \$99,999.99, payment may be made via Automated Clearing House (ACH).

The USCIS confirmed some enhancements for organizational and representative accounts for H-1B filing, including the ability to prepare a spreadsheet of H-1B beneficiary data and upload the information to pre-populate data in H-1B registrations.

The USCIS intends to update their website with updated FAQs before the start of the initial registration period.

Our immigration team is prepared and well-equipped to guide, assist, and represent employers through the H-1B process. If you have any questions or would like more information on the issues discussed, please contact a member of Baker Donelson's [Immigration team](#).