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Immigration

USCIS Announces H-1B Lottery Conducted for FY 2016

Legal Update

04.14.2015

By Immigration Group

On April 13, 2015, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) conducted a random, computer-generated lottery to determine which H-1B cap-subject petitions would be formally received for adjudication by the service center. USCIS has begun the process of issuing receipt notices for those petitions that were selected and returning the petitions that were not. Below is additional processing information on the H-1B applications filed for fiscal year 2016:

- There were about 233,000 H-1B petitions filed this year during the first five business days in April. The cap was reached by April 7, 2015. There is a cap of 65,000 new H-1B approvals issued per fiscal year. An additional 20,000 will be issued to H-1B beneficiaries who have earned a master's degree or higher from a U.S. institution of higher education.
- Because of the high volume of applications, it will be a slow process for USCIS to issue receipt notices for selected H-1B petitions and return unselected petitions.
- USCIS has advised that it will begin premium processing for H-1B cap cases no later than April 27, 2015. If your case was filed with premium processing, a decision or request for additional evidence should be issued by May 11. It is likely that USCIS will not issue the receipt notices for non-premium processing cases until mid-May.