



Immigration update

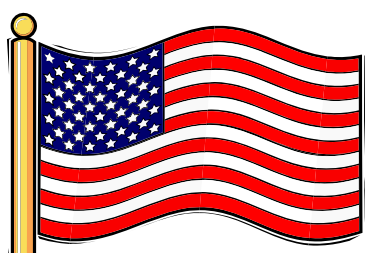
June 2011

As you are probably aware retrogression continues to affect processing times and we do all we can to update you as soon as we hear any news. We would like to thank everyone for being so patient whilst waiting for their Green Cards to be processed.

During the last few months most of our candidates with job offers will have listened in to a telephone conference call given by our US immigration attorney. They also had an opportunity to ask specific questions relating to their own situation.

We thought it would be useful to prepare a list of the points that were raised together with the regular questions we receive and we hope you find this useful.

The number of US hospitals currently interviewing overseas nurses has reduced as a result of the long processing times for Green Cards. However as the US economy is now recovering from the recent recession we expect that demand for nurses will start to grow towards the end of this year. Hospitals will then resume their overseas recruitment on a larger scale.



When this happens candidates need to be in a position to respond quickly to interview requests. Nurses who are thinking of moving to the US who have delayed completing US nurse registration and NCLEX should therefore be planning to do so as soon as they can.

Immigration – Frequently Asked Questions

What is the process involved in getting to the US?

After you have a job offer from a hospital, your I-140 is filed. Once your application has been approved (approx 6 months) you are given a priority date and it is sent to the visa centre where it sits until your priority date becomes current. Once your date is current your application is then sent to the US consulate in the appropriate country ready for your immigration interview.

What is retrogression?

Retrogression is the name given to the situation when there are more applicants than there are visas available. Currently once your I-140 (Green Card Application) is filed you are given a priority date –the filing date, and your case is then held in a file pending availability of visas.

Visas are expected to start to move quicker in the coming months, as fewer cases have been filed in recent years, but there is still around a 5 year wait from start to finish. It is unlikely that any new legislation will be introduced in the short term but the situation may change in the next few years as the US economy improves.

When can I apply for my Green Card?

You can only apply for your Green Card when you have passed your NCLEX exam and have a job offer from a US hospital. Once you have these we will let you know what paperwork the lawyers will need from you in order to file your application.

Why a Green Card?

A green Card allows the nurse, spouse and their children to move, live and work in the US permanently. It is sponsored by the hospital that will be employing the nurse.



Immigration - FAQs continued

There is still a net backlog of visa applications because the visa quota is low, that is only a set number of visa's can be issued each year.

As of the June 2011 Visa Bulletin they are currently processing I-140 applications with priority dates of September 20th 2005 and earlier for most of the world. This means that there is currently about a 5 year wait from when you file your I-140 to when your Green card will be issued.

If you were born in India, Mexico or Mainland China the dates are different so please contact us for the dates.

Is an H1B visa an option?

No it is not an option for nurses. H1B visa's are very rare and are linked to qualifications. As nursing positions don't normally require you to have a Bachelor's degree they are rare to come across for nurses. If it was an option we would be using them.

When do I need a visa screen?

Your visa screen is not required to file your I-140 application but will be required for when you have your immigration interview. If you haven't already applied you don't have to unless you want to, just ensure you start the process when the priority date is about 18 months off becoming current especially if you need to sit IELTS.

What about the Lottery visa?

If you are eligible to apply for a lottery visa you are able to without it effecting any other application you may have.

My NCLEX is due to expire – what do I need to do?

We are coming across more state boards saying that they will not extend files for nurses without a social security number, the most common being California. They keep changing the rules and each state is different but we believe that they will just resurrect your file once you have your SSN but if you would prefer you can endorse to another state. If you are unsure about how to do this please contact us for more information.

PS Don't forget to tell any friends or colleagues who might be interested in working in the US about us.

Whenever you refer a nurse to us, and they subsequently receive a job offer from a US hospital through AtlasMR we will pay you £150. Just ask any of your friends or colleagues who are interested to email a copy of their CV to katharine.necrews@atlasmr.com - and don't forget to ask them to mention your name!

Facebook

We have set up a Facebook page to enable us to keep in regular touch with our nurses. You can find us by simply entering 'AtlasMR' into the search box on the Facebook home page.

We post regular news and updates about US nurse recruitment and immigration issues to Facebook and welcome comments or questions from nurses.

To ensure you see these updates and to allow you to chat with other nurses in similar situations, make sure you 'Like' our page. If you have any ideas on how we can improve this, or anything else you would like us to do please let us know either through Facebook or by emailing us.