

2018 Diversity Visa Lottery Program: Cuba, Ecuador, and Guatemala Eligible to Register

September 22, 2016

For the 26th year, the U.S. Department of State (DOS) has issued registration instructions for the annual Diversity Visa (DV) lottery. Registration for the 2018 lottery opens 12 noon eastern daylight time (EDT) on October 4, 2016, and closes 12 noon EDT on November 7, 2016. As in the past, only electronic applications will be accepted by completing the DV form at <http://www.dvlottery.state.gov>, the *only* site to accept the DV lottery applications. There is *no* fee for online submission. There is *no* paper submission to the DOS. The DOS will only accept one entry per person during this registration period. Those who apply more than once will be disqualified. The DOS will issue a confirmation number once the online application has been submitted. It is critical to save this number as the DOS will not re-issue one to the applicant if it is misplaced. Natives of the following countries are ineligible to apply through this year's DV lottery program because their countries sent a total of more than 50,000 immigrants (those issued green cards) to the United States in the previous five years: Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, South Korea, the United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, and Viet Nam. Of special note, persons born in Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan are eligible. Further, persons from Ecuador, Cuba, and Guatemala are eligible this year, a change from last year. The DOS will accept applications from an applicant spouse whose non-applicant spouse is born in an eligible country. To qualify for the DV lottery visa, the applicant must have a high school diploma or its equivalent (GED is *not* an equivalent); *or* within five years of applying, at least two years of work experience in an occupation requiring at least two years' training or experience. The DOS relies on the U.S. Department of Labor listing of occupations requiring two years training or experience. Note the following registration procedure changes: the DOS will only accept photos submitted as part of the DV lottery entry package that are no older than 6 months at the time of the electronic submission; and applicants are prohibited from wearing eyeglasses in the photographs. DV lottery program entrants can check the DV lottery program website in May 2017 by using their DV confirmation number to see if they have been selected. The DOS will not notify entrants of their

selection. For more information on the DV lottery visa program, please feel free to contact Maria Mejia-Opaciuch at mmejia-opaciuch@carltonfields.com or at (305) 539-7319.

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