On April 22, President Trump issued a presidential proclamation titled “Proclamation Suspending Entry of Immigrants Who Present Risk to the U.S. Labor Market During the Economic Recovery Following the COVID-19 Outbreak” (Proclamation).

Who does the proclamation prevent from entering the U.S.?

Any immigrant will be barred from entry to the U.S. if:

- They are outside of the U.S. as of April 23rd
- They do not have a valid immigrant visa that is valid on April 23rd
- They do not have an official travel document other than a visa that is valid on April 23rd

What people will be most impacted?

- Certain family members who are looking to reunify with family living in the U.S. including, children of lawful permanent residents, siblings and parents of U.S. citizens
- Religious workers who are living outside of the U.S. looking to come as lawful permanent residents

Who does the Proclamation not apply to?

- Immigrants with Lawful Permanent Residence Status
• Any immigrant seeking to enter the US as:
  
  • A physician, nurse, or other healthcare professional
    
    • A person is performing medical research or other research intended to combat the spread COVID-19
    
    • A person who is going to be performing work essential to combating, recovering from, or otherwise alleviating the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak.
    
    • The spouse of any of the above or unmarried child of any of the above who is under 21, if they accompanying or following to join the immigrant in question.
  
  • Any immigrant applying for a visa to enter the U.S. under the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program
  
  • Any immigrant who is the spouse of a U.S. citizen
  
  • Any immigrant who is under 21 years old and is the child or prospective adoptee of a U.S. citizen
  
  • Any member of the U.S. Armed Forces and any spouse and children of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces
  
  • Any immigrant seeking to enter the U.S. pursuant to a Special Immigrant Visa in the SI or SQ classification
  
  • Any immigrant whose entry would be in the national interest, as determined by the Secretaries of State or Homeland Security

Are religious workers outside the United States impacted by this Proclamation?

Yes. Religious workers looking to the U.S. to serve the Church as lawful permanent residents will be prohibited from arriving at this time.

Are refugees and asylum-seekers impacted by this Proclamation?

No. The Proclamation does not limit the ability of an individual to seek asylum, refugee status, withholding of removal, or protection under the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Are refugee and asylees families impacted by the Proclamation?

Yes these families are impacted. The Proclamation does not bar refugees/asylees and their families already in the U.S. from applying for green cards (when the U.S. offices open). They can still bring their spouse and minor children within the two-year window from arrival through an I-730. However, under the Proclamation, refugees and asylees who adjust their status to Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) will not be able to bring their family including children and spouses to the US through the regular family-based immigration process (through an I-130).

How long is the Proclamation to be in place?

The Proclamation’s restrictions are set to stay in place for 60 days and will be revisited on June 22, 2020.
What is the estimated impact of the Proclamation upon immigrants?

The Migration Policy Institute estimates that the Proclamation could effect up to 660,000 people. This number includes many who typically have strong claim to entry, such as the family members of the current green card holders.1

What has the USCCB stated about this?

In response to the Proclamation, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of USCCB, Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington, Chairman of USCCB Committee on Migration and Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, Chairman of CLINIC noted there concern regarding impacts to religious workers and immigrant families. The Bishops further urged the Administration to focus on unity rather than divisiveness. On religious workers and families they stated:

“We are extremely concerned about how the proclamation will impact immigrant families looking to reunify, as well as religious workers. The proclamation prevents certain immigrant family members from reuniting with their loved ones living in the United States. Additionally, it bars religious workers seeking to come to the United States as lawful permanent residents from supporting the work of our Church, as well as many other religions, at this time. This will undoubtedly hurt the Catholic Church and other denominations in the United States, diminishing their overall ability to minister to those in need.

Endnotes