



## **Trump Fulfills His Goal to Slash Family Immigration & Diversity and Prioritize White Immigrants By Presidential Decree**

On Wednesday, April 22, 2020, President Trump signed a [Presidential Proclamation](#) that bans the processing of most immigrant visas for 60 days. The proclamation could be extended for another 60 days. The ban went into effect at midnight on April 23rd.

Every time President Trump is criticized by the media or experiences dips in approval ratings, he pivots to his anti-immigrant agenda. In keeping with the President's longstanding priority to end family-based immigration and the diversity visa program, this Family Immigration Ban furthers a major goal of the President's white nationalist agenda. He failed to get Congress to slash immigration, so he has been effectively reducing immigration and separating families through the Muslim, Refugee and African Bans and erecting barriers to the green card, visa and naturalization processes as well as inciting racism and violence to make immigrants feel less welcome.

### **Whom Does this Impact?**

The **immigrant ban** prevents the granting of green cards to most immigrant visa applicants who are outside the country. According to [Boundless Immigration](#) last year 358,000 green cards were issued to people outside the country in the impacted categories. Due to annual caps in most of the family-based categories and the diversity visa program, many of these green cards will be lost and further aggravate visa backlogs.

The proclamation would **stop the issuance of green cards for the following family-based immigrant categories for people who are currently outside of the country:**

- Parents of U.S. citizens
- Spouses & children of lawful permanent residents
- Married and unmarried (adult) sons & daughters of U.S. citizens
- Unmarried sons & daughters of U.S. citizens
- Siblings of U.S. citizens

**The Diversity Visa Program is Suspended:** The Diversity Visa Program grants around 50,000 immigrant visas per year to people from countries with low rates of immigration to the U.S. Diversity visas account for approximately 5% of immigration to the U.S. in any given year. This allows a small number of people who have the grit and desire to make a better life for themselves and their families to come to the U.S.

The diversity visa was designed to correct historical discrimination in our immigration system and has been a main pathway for Africans to immigrate to the U.S. along with smaller and lower-income Asian and Pacific Islander nations.

**Employment-based Green Cards:** Employment-based green cards for people outside of the country will not be processed except for the employment-based investor visa program. Most employment-based green cards are granted to people who are already in the U.S. in different statuses so these green cards are less affected.

**The proclamation does *NOT* affect:**

- People outside the U.S. who already have a valid visa or travel document
- People applying for green cards from *inside* the U.S.
- Spouses and children (under 21) of U.S. citizens and prospective adoptees
- The EB-5 Immigrant Investor Visa Program
- People eligible for Special Immigrant Visas from Iraq & Afghanistan
- Non-immigrant visas which include the H, L, B, J categories along with other temporary visas
- People (and their spouses and children) coming to the U.S. to work in healthcare, research related to COVID-19 or other essential work related to the COVID-19 pandemic; people that are important to law enforcement or the national interest; members of the U.S. military and their spouses & children
- Refugees and Asylees

**What is the real goal of this proclamation?**

**Distraction from Negative Press:** The proclamation serves to distract from the administration's failed efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Change Future Demographics:** It furthers his policy agenda to slash immigration and end family-based immigration which Congress refused to pass. It lowers the number of immigrants and people of color that are welcomed into the U.S. and become citizens.

**Aren't Immigrants Already Prevented from Coming to the U.S.?**

While it is true that there are currently many restrictions on travel, the administration is preparing to open up government offices and using this proclamation to prevent normal visa processing. This proclamation can very easily be extended, and we anticipate that the Trump Administration will do so.

**What about unemployment?**

The President justified this action by pointing to rising unemployment and arguing that the U.S. should not be welcoming immigrants into the U.S. to compete with Americans. The Immigration and Nationality Act contemplates the impact of immigration on the U.S. labor market through the employment green card and guestworker programs. Family-based immigrant visas are designed to reunify family members. Yet, perversely, the President is continuing to allow guest

workers to work in the U.S. for low wages and poor working conditions, who have no opportunity to become citizens. This reveals his true goal of limiting immigration.