



## The 2014 Diversity Visa Program - A Low-Cost, Potentially High-Return Opportunity is Available Again as of October 2, 2012

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Since the mid-1990's, aspiring immigrants from around the world have been given the opportunity to enter a "lottery" to "win" an opportunity to become U.S. lawful permanent residents. That opportunity is available once again, but only for a very short time. Although the Diversity Visa (DV) Program is not available to the traditional high visa use countries such as India, China, Mexico, and the Philippines, it should nevertheless be kept in mind as a low-cost, potentially high-return opportunity for persons from other eligible countries.

The DV Program is administered each year by the Department of State pursuant to the terms of Section 203(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The INA makes available 55,000 permanent resident visas annually to natives of countries determined to have low rates of immigration to the United States. Since 1999, of the 55,000 available DV permanent resident visas, 5,000 have been set aside for use under the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), and the remaining 50,000 have been distributed pursuant to a lottery process.

The 2014 Diversity Visa Program (DV-2014) officially opened at noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) (GMT-4), Tuesday, October 2, 2012, and will close at noon, EDT, Saturday, November 3, 2012. Applicants are required to submit entries electronically during this registration period using the electronic DV entry form (E-DV), which may be accessed at [www.dvlottery.state.gov](http://www.dvlottery.state.gov). Paper entries are not accepted. It is important to note that entries will not be accepted after noon, EDT, on November 3, 2012.

The annual DV program makes visas available to persons meeting specific eligibility requirements. DV entrants must be eligible to receive a visa by qualifying based on education, work, and other

requirements. Every DV entrant must have at least: (i) a high school education or its equivalent; or (ii) two years of work experience within the past five years in an occupation requiring at least two years' training or experience.

A computer-generated, random drawing selects those who may then seek Diversity Visas. The visas are distributed among six geographic regions, with a greater number of visas going to regions with lower rates of immigration, and with no visas going to nationals of countries sending more than 50,000 immigrants to the United States over the last five years. No single country may receive more than seven percent of the available Diversity Visas in any one year. For DV-2014, "natives" of the following countries have been determined to be ineligible to apply: Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, South Korea, United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, and Vietnam. This year, natives of Guatemala are now eligible to enter the program. A "native" means a person born within a particular country, regardless of the individual's current country of residence or nationality. Persons born in Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, and Taiwan are eligible.

After the application period closes, the Department of State will use an online process to notify entrants of their selection and to provide information about the immigrant visa application and interview. Beginning May 1, 2013, DV-2014 entrants will be able to use their unique confirmation number provided at registration to check online through Entry Status Check at <http://www.dvlottery.state.gov> to see if their entry has been selected. Successful entrants will receive instructions for how to apply for immigrant visas for themselves and their eligible family members. Confirmation of visa interview appointments will also be made through the Entry Status Check system. More information about the 2014 DV program is available at [http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types\\_1318.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types_1318.html).

*For more information about this topic or other immigration related matters, please contact the author or any member of the Williams Mullen Immigration Group.*

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