

**2016 Diversity Visa Registration: "If You Are Not In It, You Cannot Win It - By: David Nachman, Esq., Michael Phulwani, Esq. and Rabindra Singh, Esq.**

The 2016 Diversity Visa Lottery Program (DV-2016) will commence at noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) (GMT-4), Wednesday, October 1st, 2014, and will close at noon, EDT, Monday, November 3rd, 2014. Applicants must submit entries electronically during this registration period using the electronic DV entry form (E-DV) at [www.dvlottery.state.gov](http://www.dvlottery.state.gov). Paper entries will not be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the last week of the registration period to enter. Heavy demand may result in website delays. No entries will be accepted after noon, EDT, on November 3rd, 2014.

By way of background, the Congressionally mandated Diversity Immigrant Visa Lottery Program is administered on an annual basis by the Department of State (DOS) and conducted under the terms of Section 203(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). Section 131 of the Immigration Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101-649) amended INA 203 and provides for a class of immigrants known as "diversity immigrants." Section 203(c) of the INA provides a maximum of 55,000 Diversity Visas each fiscal year to be made available to persons from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States.

The annual DV Lottery Visa program makes visas available to persons meeting the simple, but strict, eligibility requirements. A computer-generated, random drawing chooses from among the applicants for the 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 period of the past five years. No single country may receive more than seven percent of the available Diversity Visas in any one year.

Please note that for DV-2016, Nigeria is no longer on the eligible countries list.

**The complete list of ineligible countries includes:**

Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, South Korea, the United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, and Vietnam.

These countries are ineligible for the DV- 2015 program because they met the 50,000 threshold for immigrant entries to the United States in the past five years.

(Note: Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan remain eligible).

The DOS implemented the electronic registration system beginning with the DV-2005 program in order to make the Diversity Lottery Visa process more efficient and secure. DOS utilizes special technology and other means to identify those who commit fraud for the purposes of illegal immigration or those who submit multiple entries.

For DV-2016, the DOS will, once again, implement an online process to notify entrants of their selection, and to provide information about the immigrant visa application and interview. Beginning May 5th, 2015, DV-2016 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 was selected. Selectees 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 Entry Status Check.

For detailed information about entry requirements, along with frequently asked questions about the DV program, please see the instructions for the DV-2016 Diversity Visa program available at <http://www.visaserve.com/Diversity-Lottery/DV-2016.pdf> . For additional information about your eligibility for the DV Program or about other U.S. or Canadian immigration-related matters, please feel free to contact the Immigration Lawyers and Attorneys at 201-670-0006 (x107) or by e-mail at [info@visaserve.com](mailto:info@visaserve.com).