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**ACT NOW – H-1B FILING DATE APPROACHING RAPIDLY**

In just under four weeks, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (CIS) will begin accepting new H-1B petitions filed under the Fiscal Year 2016 (October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016) H-1B quota. No more than 85,000 new H-1B visa numbers, which include 20,000 Master's exempt numbers, are available for the fiscal year. The annual quota will likely be reached in the first week that new petitions are accepted, and a lottery will be applied to select petitions that will be allocated an H-1B number. Because of the volume of filings anticipated, employers should initiate all new H-1B petitions immediately to ensure time for case preparation and filing on March 31st, for receipt by U.S. CIS on April 1st.

**File April 1st for F-1 Students, TN Professionals, and L-1B Specialized Knowledge Professionals**

Employers should evaluate their current workforce and initiate new H-1B petitions now for qualifying F-1 students, as well as TN and L-1B professionals who will be employed long-term with the company. Because more petitions are expected than visa numbers are available, the CIS will implement a "lottery" to award the visa numbers. Petitions that do not receive an H-1B visa number this year may be filed again next year. By filing in the earliest year possible, employers can increase their odds of getting H-1B visa numbers for existing employees, even if they have several months or even multiple years remaining of their current employment eligibility.

**Initiate New Cases Now**

To initiate a new H-1B petition for April 1st filing, contact your Foster immigration attorney. Your Foster attorney will assist you in evaluating a candidate's eligibility and will be able to provide you with case-specific strategies and document checklists. For additional information and answers to [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#), please visit the Foster website at [www.fosterglobal.com](http://www.fosterglobal.com).