



*Embassy of the United States of America  
Bridgetown, Barbados*

**Q: How Long Can a Legal Permanent Resident Remain Outside of the United States?**

**A:** U.S. immigration law assumes that a person admitted to the United States as an immigrant will live in the United States permanently. Remaining outside the United States for more than 12 months may result in the loss of your legal permanent resident (LPR) status.

U.S. Government personnel (military and direct-hire civil service employees) and their spouses and minor children who hold legal permanent resident status in the United States may remain outside of the United States for the duration of an official overseas assignment, plus four months, without losing their immigrant status. All other immigrants who hold LPR status and reside out of the United States for more than 12 months without prior approval from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) must obtain a new immigrant visa to return to the United States.

If you plan to stay outside of the United States for more than one year but less than two years, a re-entry permit from USCIS is required for readmission. You must be physically present in the United States when you file the application for a re-entry permit (Form I-131).

Generally, a re-entry permit is valid for two years from the date of issuance. However, a re-entry permit issued to a conditional resident is valid for two years from the date of issuance OR to the date the conditional resident must apply for removal of the conditions on his or her status, whichever date comes first. There are other exceptions; please contact [USCIS](#) for details.