

FAQs

Priority Date Regression

Why did my priority date retrogress (go backwards)?

Some types of visa categories are numerically limited. The Visa Office in Washington, DC keeps track of the number of immigrants in these categories and sets priority dates on a monthly basis.

Applicants entitled to immigrant status become documentarily qualified at their own initiative and convenience. By no means has every applicant with a priority date earlier than a prevailing cut-off date been processed for final visa action. On the contrary, visa allotments are made only on the basis of the total applicants reported documentarily qualified each month. Demand for visa numbers can fluctuate from one month to another, with the inevitable impact on cut-off dates. Fluctuations can cause cut-off date movement to slow, stop, or even retrogress.

The regression of priority dates for some categories of immigrant visas in January and February 2011 (F1, F2, F3, F4) does not reflect a change to any laws or numerical limitations, but merely an adjustment to the priority dates to reflect a higher than predicted volume of applicants with eligible priority dates who chose to pursue their case, and were determined to be documentarily qualified.

If you are an applicant with a priority date that had been “current” (that is, your priority date was older than the priority date listed in the visa bulletin) in a prior month, but because a priority date has regressed, is no longer current, you are not yet eligible to have your application adjudicated. However, you have not lost your place in line, and as soon the priority date for your visa class changes so that your case is again current, processing of your case will be able to continue.

If the current priority date for my category is earlier than my priority date and I have been scheduled for a visa interview, should I come?

In almost all cases, applicants that have been scheduled for an interview have “current” priority dates (that is, their priority date is older than the priority date listed in the most recent Visa Bulletin) and should come to their scheduled interview time.

There are a few applicants that the Embassy will contact via mail regarding the need to reschedule their interview. Unless you receive mail from the embassy stating otherwise, you should come to your scheduled interview.

I already interviewed, and was temporarily refused. What should I do?

If you have already interviewed, but were temporarily refused for any reason, we are unable to further adjudicate your case until it has a current priority date. Please do not submit any additional information or documentation requested until your priority date is again current. Once your case is current, submit any documentation that we requested and we will review your case.

How will I know when my priority date becomes “current”?

Priority dates are updated monthly. To see the most recent priority dates or read more about what priority dates mean, visit <http://travel.state.gov> and view the Visa Bulletin in the VISAS section of the webpage or visit http://dhaka.usembassy.gov/current_priority_dates.html.