



The Ryan, Swanson & Cleveland Seattle Immigration Group is committed to providing excellent service and efficient communication to our clients.

February 2010

Opening Day for Specialty Occupations: April 1

On April 1, 2010, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service will once again accept petitions for less than 60,000 specialty occupations, know as H-1B visas. The H-1B employment classification is granted to foreign workers who have the equivalent to a college degree and will be working in the U.S. in a position which requires that degree.

Last year because of the economic depression, the USCIS did not receive 60,000 petitions until December. In the previous two years the USCIS received in the first week of April almost twice as many petitions as it had numbers available. Thus USCIS allotted the numbers by using a lottery. We do not know what to expect this year, but our educated guess is that the numbers will not be gone in April yet they will not last until December. If you have any foreign worker who you want to hire or change status as of October 1, 2010 or later, you should [contact us](#) immediately to start [preparing for the filing](#). The Department of Labor can take weeks to approve the Labor Condition Application which has to be filed with the petition. You do not want to be caught short handed.

Are You Eligible for Citizenship? Act Now to Vote in November

Our office handles many naturalization applications for clients from all over the world. It is now taking approximately 3-4 months to become a U.S. Citizen. Act now so that your application can be processed in a timely manner to enable you to vote in the upcoming November elections. Contact us and complete our [General Immigration Questionnaire](#) to determine your eligibility.

Taking a Break in the Sun This Winter? Will You Make It Back?

There has been a change in requirements for entry to the U.S. perhaps since your last Winter vacation. Beginning June 1, 2009, U.S. and Canadian Citizens are required to present one of the following documents for entry into the United States by land or sea from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean or Bermuda:

- U.S. Passport
- U.S. Passport Card
- Enhanced Driver's License
- Canadian Passport
- Trusted Traveler Program Card - NEXUS, SENTRI and FAST

Tougher Attitude by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service is a Sign of the Times

Our office and other seasoned immigration firms throughout the U.S. have noticed a tougher attitude by USCIS in approving petitions for initial non immigration classifications and for extensions of status. At a recent immigration conference here in Seattle, the immigration lawyers were able to confront USCIS officials with samples of extensive unreasonable requests for evidence and denials, especially for H-1B and L-1 applications. For your new petitions and extensions you will be asked for more information than normal in order to try to overcome their higher standards.

Attorneys in the News

Joel Paget recently spoke on the USCIS California Service Center Panel and the Nebraska and Vermont Service Center Panel at the American Immigration Lawyers Association Pacific NW Regional Conference held in Seattle on February 11 and 12. He and Janet were also asked by the American Immigration Lawyers Association to speak at its Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. in June. While both of them will be unable to present this time, Joel was asked to speak on U.S. Citizenship (one of his favorite topics) and Janet was asked to speak on Marketing for Immigration Lawyers.

Please contact us if you have any questions:

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