



UW

Human Resources



Expanded Screening and Vetting for H-1B and Dependent H-4 Visa Applicants and Travel Implications

Dear Foreign National Employees and Colleagues that support Foreign National Employees,

As the holiday break draws near, many of you are planning to travel internationally for the break. If you are a foreign national, please be aware of the recent updates in visa processing:

As always, we recommend all foreign nationals reach out to Human Resources beforehand if you plan on traveling internationally.

The State Department has announced that, "As of December 15, the Department will expand the requirement that an online presence review be conducted for all H-1B applicants and their dependents, in addition to the students and exchange visitors already subject to this review. To facilitate this vetting, all applicants for H-1B and their dependents (H-4), F, M, and J nonimmigrant visas are instructed to adjust the privacy settings on all of their social media profiles to "public.""

The State Department's recent decision to expand social-media and online-presence reviews to H-1B and H-4 visa applicants has created significant operational strain at certain consular posts, particularly in India. Posts with a high volume of H-visa interviews—such as Chennai and Hyderabad—have begun postponing large numbers of appointments to avoid unmanageable processing backlogs. We are seeing individuals who previously had December 2025 appointments being rescheduled to Spring and Summer 2026.

For most applicants, there are limited options beyond waiting for rescheduled appointments. If no rescheduling notice is received, applicants should assume their original interview date remains valid. Emergency expedited appointment requests are granted only in limited situations—typically when delays would significantly impact U.S. business operations, contracts, or the national interest.

Recommendations:

While travel is a personal choice, if you do not have a valid H-1B visa, it is recommended that you consider postponing international travel.

- If you do have a valid H-1B visa, please understand that circumstances can change quickly, and we cannot guarantee reentry if unexpected changes occur.
- Avoid altering your social media accounts (beyond any change to make your profile(s) "public")
- Contact Human Resources before you travel to discuss your current travel plans

To read the entire announcement, click here: [Announcement of Expanded Screening and Vetting for H-1B and Dependent H-4 Visa Applicants.](#)