



How to Check Visa Availability in a Family-Based Case

An Immigrant Visa Number must be available for the beneficiary to get a green card. (This is the most basic requirement, but many other issues can also stop a beneficiary from getting a green card.)

To find out whether a visa number is available:

Step 1: Determine your priority date--Look on the I-130 approval notice. Find the box near the top labeled "Priority Date". This is your priority date. If that box is empty, then you can use the "Received Date" as your priority date.

Step 2: Determine whether or not your priority date is current.

- A. Find the most recent "Visa Bulletin" from the Dept. of State.
Go to http://travel.state.gov/visa/bulletin/bulletin_1360.html
- B. Determine what category you fall under—F1, F2A, F2B, F3, F4 (See bottom of page)
- C. On the Visa Bulletin, find the 1st chart labeled "Family-Sponsored". On this chart, find the box that corresponds with your category and country.
- D. If your priority date is PRIOR to the date in the box, then your priority date is current for that month. If your priority date is the same date as what is in the box or if your priority date is later than what is in the box, then your priority date IS NOT current.
- E. If your priority date is current and your I-130 is approved, then a visa number is available.

Be advised that the dates on this chart can go backwards without any warning. The dates can also jump forward significantly without any warning.

Family-sponsored chart from the May 2011 Visa Bulletin

Family-Sponsored	All Chargeability Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
F1	01MAY04	01MAY04	01MAY04	01MAR93	15JUL95
F2A	08JUN07	08JUN07	08JUN07	01JAN07	08JUN07
F2B	15APR03	15APR03	15APR03	01AUG92	01MAR00
F3	01MAY01	01MAY01	01MAY01	15NOV92	15FEB92
F4	08MAR00	22JAN00	08MAR00	15FEB96	08APR88

Family-based categories

- F1—Unmarried sons and daughters 21 and over of US Citizens
- F2A—Unmarried children under the age of 21 of Lawful Permanent Residents
- F2B—Unmarried sons and daughters 21 and over of Lawful Permanent Residents
- F3—Married sons and daughters of US Citizens
- F4—Brothers and Sisters of US Citizens

Notes about these categories:

- Children turning 21 automatically move to the 21 or older category unless they are protected by the Child Status Protection Act (many children are protected).
- When the child of a Lawful Permanent Resident gets married, the petition is terminated automatically by operation of law.
- When the child of a US Citizen gets married, the child moves to Category F3.