

MARCH VISA AVAILABILITY

The bulletin issued by the Visa Office of the Bureau of Consular Affairs of the U.S. Department of State gives the following availability position for issuance of immigrant visas during March 2006:

Persons Chargeable to India

Family-Sponsored Preferences

1st Preference	Apr 22, 2001
2nd Preference	
2A	Feb 22, 2002
2B	Jul 08, 1996
3rd Preference	Jul 22, 1998
4th Preference	Mar 22, 1994

Employment-Based Preferences

1st Preference	Jul 01, 2004
2nd Preference	Jan 01, 2002
3rd Preference	Jan 01, 2001
Schedule A Workers	Current
Other Workers	Oct 01, 2001
4 th Preference	Current
Certain Religious Workers	Current
5th Preference	Current
Targeted Emp Areas	Current

Persons Chargeable to Other Countries

For other chargeability areas, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and the nations of Africa, the cut-off dates for March 2006 are:

Family-Sponsored Preferences

1st Preference	Apr 22, 2001
2nd Preference	
2A	Feb 22, 2002
2B	Jul 08, 1996
3rd Preference	Jul 22, 1998
4th Preference	Oct 01, 1994

Employment-Based Preferences

1st Preference	Current
2nd Preference	Current
3rd Preference	May 01, 2001
Schedule A Workers	Current
Other Workers	Oct 01, 2001
4th Preference	Current
Certain Religious Workers	Current
5th Preference	Current
Targeted Emp Areas	Current

President Advocates for H1B Cap Increase

Here are relevant excerpts from a speech President Bush gave on Feb. 2, 2006 at the 3M Corporate Headquarters:

Now, in the meantime, there's another issue that I want to discuss right quick. . . . There are more high-tech jobs in America today than people available to fill them. And if that's -- so what do we do about that? And the reason it's important, and the American citizen has got to understand it's important, is if we don't do something about how to fill those high-tech jobs here, they'll go somewhere else where somebody can do the job...

And so one way to deal with this problem, and probably the most effective way, is to recognize that there's a lot of bright engineers and chemists and physicists from other lands that are either educated here, or received an education elsewhere but want to work here. And they come here under a program called H1B visas. And the problem is, is that Congress has limited the number of H1B visas that can come and apply for a job -- a H1B visa holder can apply for a job at 3M. I think it's a mistake not to encourage more really bright folks who can fill the jobs that are having trouble being filled here in America -- to limit their number. And so I call upon Congress to be realistic and reasonable and raise that cap. [Emphasis added].