

## MEMORANDUM

---

### **Important Notice: New Visa Processing Delays & Travel Risks for H-1B/H-4 Employees**

Dear H-1B holders,

We are writing to inform you of significant new developments in H-1B and H-4 visa processing that may impact any international travel you are considering. If you do **not** currently have a valid H-1B visa stamp in your passport, we strongly recommend postponing nonessential, international travel currently at this time, especially to India.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of State has begun implementing expanded social-media and online-presence screening for H-visa applicants. This change has led to widespread administrative delays, cancellations and rescheduling of visa appointments.

Some appointments that were originally scheduled for December have now been moved to **Spring or Summer 2026**, including one example where a December appointment was rescheduled to **March 2026**.

Many applicants are having their appointments postponed far into the future. If you do not receive a rescheduling notice, you should assume your original appointment is still valid. Emergency expedited appointments are only being granted in very limited circumstances. Consular posts handling the highest volumes of H-visas, especially Chennai and Hyderabad, are under severe strain due to the new screening requirements. As a result, many applicants are seeing their interview appointments canceled and automatically rescheduled many months or even more into the future.

If you have **not** received an explicit rescheduling or cancellation notice, you should assume your original appointment date and time remain valid. Please note that emergency or expedited appointments are currently being approved only in extremely limited, life-or-death circumstances.

If you are planning travel, please be aware of the following recommendations:

- **Reconsider international travel.** If you do not have a valid H-1B visa stamp, you may face long delays returning to the United States. Employees without H-1B passport designations should strongly consider rescheduling travel plans.
- **Do not make sudden changes to your social media accounts.** DOS is now reviewing online presence for all H-1B/H-4 applicants.
- **Stay in close communication with HR.** Report any appointment changes immediately and providing documentation if an expedited request is needed.
- **Expect continued delays.** Consular posts, particularly in India, are seeing delays until new vetting systems and automation tools are fully implemented.

If you have questions about your specific situation or need guidance before making travel plans, please contact Joe Vitale, Chief Human Resources Officer at [jvitale@oberlin.edu](mailto:jvitale@oberlin.edu). We are here to support you.