

Blog Post

Trump's New Travel Ban: What You Need to Know

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By Zain Abidi

President Donald Trump recently signed a proclamation reinstating and expanding the United States travel ban. The travel ban takes effect Monday, June 9, 2025, and as such, those affected by the ban should ensure they enter the U.S. before this date. This move, echoing the 2017 policy, aims to address national security concerns but has sparked significant debate and legal scrutiny.

Countries Affected

The ban places nineteen (19) countries into two categories:

- **Full Entry Ban:** Citizens from twelve (12) countries are entirely barred from entering the U.S., including Afghanistan, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Myanmar, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, and Haiti.
- **Partial Restrictions:** Seven (7) countries face partial restrictions, limiting certain visa categories, particularly B-1, B-2, B-1/B-2, F, M, and J visas. These include Cuba, Venezuela, Laos, Sierra Leone, Togo, Turkmenistan, and Burundi.

Scope and Exemptions

The ban primarily affects individuals seeking to enter the U.S. from the listed countries. However,

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there are notable exemptions, including, but not limited to:

- **Lawful Permanent Residents (Green Card Holders):** Not affected.
- **Dual Nationals:** If traveling on a passport from a non-designated country, they may enter the U.S.
- **Diplomats and Certain Visa Holders:** Holders of diplomatic visas, NATO visas, and others specified are exempt.
- **Major Sporting Events:** Given the impending start of the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2028 Summer Olympics, a notable exception has been made for “the World Cup, Olympics, or other major sporting event as determined by the Secretary of State.”
- **Immediate Family Immigrant Visas:** This includes IR-1/CR-1, IR-2/CR-2, and IR-5, with clear and convincing evidence of identity and family relationship. DNA is cited as evidence of this relationship, and so there is a question as to whether traditional evidence of familial relationship (birth certificates, marriage certificates) will be sufficient to meet this exception.
- **Afghan Special Immigrant Visas:** Despite Afghanistan being subject to a full entry ban, it appears the government has left some pathways open for individuals who assisted the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan.

Change of Status Within the U.S.

For individuals from the affected countries who are already in the U.S., the situation is nuanced. The current travel ban does not explicitly prohibit petitions or applications for a change of status within the U.S., meaning that those present lawfully may still pursue a change or adjustment of status, such as switching from a student to a work visa or applying for permanent residency. However, while the ban primarily targets the issuance of new visas and entry

from abroad, individuals should be aware that future policy changes or additional restrictions could impact pending or future applications or petitions. Consulting with an Akerman immigration attorney is advisable to navigate these evolving circumstances.

Legal Challenges

Given the precedent set by the 2017 travel ban and the extensive legal battles that followed, it is widely expected that the new travel restrictions will face similar challenges in the courts. The earlier ban was met with immediate lawsuits and judicial scrutiny, resulting in multiple injunctions and policy revisions before a version was ultimately upheld by the United States Supreme Court. This history indicates that the latest travel ban is likely to undergo rigorous legal review and may be subject to temporary blocks or changes as litigation moves forward.

Final Thoughts

While the stated intent is national security, the broad scope and rapid implementation of the ban have raised questions about its efficacy and fairness. Individuals from the affected countries, especially those with pending immigration matters, should carefully review their circumstances. For questions or other assistance regarding the implications of this recent travel ban, consult your Akerman Immigration Planning and Compliance Practice attorney as soon as possible.