

Diversity Lottery for Green Card Deadline Approaches

Jaensch Immigration Law Firm has been supporting diversity lottery entrants since the first year of the program, DV-1995.

The law firm distinguishes its services from lottery agencies and websites in several ways:

First, the lottery agencies and websites are not licensed attorneys and are not subject to duties of loyalty, confidentiality and competence, which are required of licensed attorneys.

Second, the law firm evaluates the qualifications of lottery entrants prior to submission of the application to ensure that if the entrant is selected, he or she will meet the lottery requirements and the requirements for admissibility into the U.S.

Finally, the law firm ensures that the lottery submission is performed correctly, particularly the digital photo requirement, and sends confirmation of the completed submission to each lottery entrant.

On Monday, November 30th 2009 at noon, all online entries for the DV-2011 green card lottery must be submitted. Immigration authorities anticipate participation this year to reach a record 17 million.

Mandated by Congress and administered by the Department of State, the Visa Lottery allow people from countries that are under-represented in the United States toss their names into a virtual hat and with a little luck...presto!---they hit the visa jackpot. They then can step around those already waiting in line and get on the fastest plane, boat, train or canoe to their new home in the US. If they are already in the US, immigration may help change their status.

Since government computers can get overloaded, it is best to not wait until the last minute to enter.

The list of countries whose native qualify has not changed since last year. Only natives of the following countries cannot enter the DV-2011 lottery:

Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Peru, Poland, South Korea, United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, and Vietnam. Persons born in Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taiwan are eligible.

More information can be found at the [U.S. Department of State's website on the Lottery](#).

Jaensch Immigration Law Firm replies to some of your questions about the diversity lottery:

Q: What qualifies me to be a "native" of a qualifying country?

A: The lottery regulations define native in a particular way. Under these rules, you are a native of a qualifying country if you were born in a qualifying country, your spouse was born in a qualifying country, your parent was born in a qualifying country and you were born in a nonqualifying country in which neither parent was born nor resident at the time of your birth.

If you win the lottery, your spouse and unmarried children under 21 may also qualify for lottery green cards.

Q: May I submit green card lottery applications for family members living outside the United States?

A: Yes, you may submit lottery entries for your family and friends overseas. You'll need to submit digital photos of each family member. We recommend having an agent help, to make sure they qualify.

Q: I'm unemployed. If I win the lottery, can I still get a green card?

A: If you prove that you can live in the United States without requiring public assistance, you may get a lottery green card despite being unemployed. One approach is to have a close friend or relative submit an affidavit of support for you. You can use the nonbinding U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services form I-134 Affidavit of Support. Nonbinding implies that the affidavit doesn't legally obligate your friend or relative to support you monetarily. Another way of proving that you won't become a public charge is by having an offer of employment. Finally, you can supply proof that you have adequate savings and other assets to subsist in the United States without working.

Q: I have seen several online services for diversity green card lottery entry. If I pay them to help, will that increase my chances of getting selected?

A: Any agency who implies that they will increase your chance of winning the lottery is a scam and should be avoided. However, half of the applicants who receive a winning notification don't have all their proper paperwork in order, making them ineligible. Also, the process is complicated by stringent photo requirements. The applicant must submit a digital passport photo that adheres to various specifications, such as a minimal color depth (24-bit) and resolution (150 dpi).

Q: How will I hear whether I have won the lottery?

A: Sometime between late Spring and early Summer, the State Department will notify winners by postal mail. You will not receive notice by e-mail. In recent years, immigrants were inundated by email scams claiming they won the lottery and asking for money. Do not be fooled by these con artists!