

Scope of Temporary Visa Ban Remains Unclear

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Individuals living and working in the U.S. on temporary visas may still want to hold off on plans for international travel in 2020.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has clarified that [the June 22 executive order](#) will not bar current visa holders from entering and reentering the U.S., as long as their visas were valid before the order.

But it remains unclear if individuals with current H-1B, H-2B, J, and L visas will be able to travel abroad to renew visa stamps that have expired. Foreign workers also face another hurdle in getting renewal stamps from embassies and consulates abroad, due to COVID-19 closures of those facilities. So it remains uncertain whether individuals with expired visa stamps will be permitted to re-enter the U.S. following international travel between now and the end of 2020 when the current executive order expires.

On Monday, the White House amended the executive order's language. That amendment, however, did not resolve the renewal stamp question. Rather, it made plain that individuals with other valid temporary visas, such as a tourist or temporary business visitor visa, are also barred from receiving the suspended work visas.

As uncertainty remains with the developing impacts of COVID-19, employers should advise employees on temporary visas to avoid international travel and reschedule meetings and conferences outside the U.S. if possible, at least until further clarification is provided. We will continue to update readers as clarification becomes available.

In the meantime, businesses or individuals with questions about the executive order should feel free to [contact me](#) or one of the attorneys in [Barley Snyder's Immigration Practice Group](#).

Barley Snyder summer associate Elizabeth Castillo contributed to this alert. She is a rising second-year law student at the Temple University Beasley School of Law.

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