



## U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

# USCIS Issues Guidance on Discretionary Employment Authorization for Parolees

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**WASHINGTON**—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today issued [policy guidance \(PDF, 305 KB\)](#) in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to address its discretion to grant employment authorization to foreign nationals who are paroled into the United States, including those who are otherwise inadmissible.

Certain foreign nationals may be paroled into the United States for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit. Parolees are not entitled to employment authorization solely because they are paroled into the United States, but instead must establish eligibility and apply for employment authorization. USCIS will only consider employment authorization for parolees when, based on the facts and circumstances of each individual case, USCIS finds that a favorable exercise of discretion is warranted.

“Directly addressing loopholes that encourage the exploitation of our immigration system is the only way forward,” said Acting Director Ken Cuccinelli. “Responsible stewardship of our discretionary authorities enhances our ability to provide relief to those who lawfully qualify for it. With that in mind, USCIS is taking action within its discretionary authority by only granting employment authorization to parolees after consideration of all relevant factors on a case-by-case basis. This decision is in response to the national emergency at the southern border where foreign nationals are entering the United States illegally, as well as based on a review of USCIS adjudicatory practices over the past few years.”

USCIS is taking action to strengthen affected programs, such as parole, within its discretionary authority. Through this update, USCIS is providing adjudicators with guidance specific to parole-based employment authorization focusing on officers’ discretion and responsibility to grant employment authorization only after careful consideration of all relevant factors on a case-by-case basis. The policy update aligns USCIS’ guidelines for issuing discretionary employment authorization based on parole with current immigration enforcement priorities.

USCIS continues to adjudicate all petitions, applications, and requests fairly, efficiently, and effectively on a case-by-case basis to determine if they meet all standards required under applicable laws and regulations.

This policy update does not affect individuals paroled into the United States under the International Entrepreneur Rule. Such parolees are authorized to work based on their parole under current Department of Homeland Security regulations governing the International Entrepreneur parole program.

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