

Obtaining a USA Visa

The US permanent residence **Visa** is known as the "**Green Card**", which identifies the holder as a permanent resident of the USA.

What is a Green Card?

A Green Card, officially known as a Permanent Resident Card, is evidence of your status as a lawful permanent resident. A Green Card gives you the right to live and work permanently in the United States. You can obtain a Green Card through Family, Employment or by business investment. This is the first step towards becoming a citizen of the United States. The card is in fact pink!

How do I obtain a Green Card?

You can obtain a Green Card through family, general employment, or a **Business Visa** via a qualifying business investment.

General Employment

You can qualify for a Green Card through employment, although all categories are limited by quotas. The USA Employment-Based Immigration Visas category is divided into five preference groups ranging from professionals to investors. You'll need a job offer from a US employer and the correct background in terms of experience, training and education for the job you have been offered. The US government will also need to be satisfied that there are no qualified American workers available and willing to take the specific job that has been offered to you. Certain occupations - such as Nursing - may have special categories of visas which lead to Green Cards. Most people find the process of completing a request for a Green Card through employment can be both costly and confusing and is a four-step process.

1. Prevailing Wage Determination from the State Work Force Agency.
2. Labour Certification which proves that there are no qualified American citizen suitable for the position that has been offered to you.
3. Petition that proves that you do qualify for both Green Card and for the job offered to you.
4. Green Card Employment Application itself.

The general concept is that you'll make a valuable contribution to the American economy. There are special entry routes for applicants seeking temporary entry in a "specialty occupation" which needs special professional skills. "Specialty Occupations" are for example accounting, computer analysts, programmers, database administrators, web designers, engineers, financial analysts, doctors, nurses, scientists, architects and lawyers etc.

Green Card through Investment

You could also qualify for a Green Card through investment, if you are prepared to invest funds in creating a new US business or expanding one that already exists. Green Cards through investment (also called the Fifth Preference) are available to anyone who invests a certain minimum amount of money in the USA by creating a business or expanding one that already exists.

Sponsorship or existing USA relationship

There are also family migration Visa classes for America where sponsorship or relationship with a USA citizen (eg. spouse) will be the deciding factor. Some family based visa applications can be subject to very long delays without specialist help. However, if you have family connections with the US, this will certainly help.

Temporary Visas

An alternative route is to obtain a temporary visa first and then reconsider your long-term objectives once you are in the USA. You can then make a Green Card application if you want to stay permanently. There are numerous kinds of non-immigrant, or temporary, visas. Unlike Green Cards, which are identical once allocated, temporary visas differ from each other in the benefits they offer, as well as how long they last. Note that importantly, your application will be processed much faster if your intention is not to take up permanent residence right from the start.

Applying for Green Cards

Green Cards in certain categories can be obtained fairly quickly. In other categories, even if you have the strongest qualifications possible, it can still take months or years to obtain one because of quotas. The United States immigration legislation is complex with many different categories, rules and quotas providing legal entrance and residence, all of which are dependent on an applicant's individual circumstances. The documentation can also be daunting. Even carefully prepared visa applications are routinely rejected for seemingly the slightest of reasons and Embassy officials are under no obligation to explain why an application has been rejected.

Most would-be migrants find applying for US residency a bewildering experience faced with over 100 different kinds of visa to choose from - only one of which is likely to be exactly right. Furthermore, most classes of visa are restricted by a quota, which limits the number of people that will be accepted each year.

This is why many families wishing to live and work in The United States turn to us. We know US immigration legislation back to front. Not just as it relates to employment, but as it relates to all the categories of migration permitted - many of which are not public knowledge. So our recommended route may not be one you had contemplated - or even thought possible. Why not take the next step to find out if you qualify? Simply complete our full **Assessment Appraisal** so that we can evaluate your options and best route to success.