

U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service
Washington, DC 20536



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Media Services
Office of Public Affairs
(202) 514-2648 Fax: (202) 514-1776

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INS Proposes Significant Changes to Rules Governing Visitors and Students

Proposed Rule Would Also Establish Procedures Requiring Aliens to Surrender for Removal Within 30 Days of a Final Order

WASHINGTON, DC – In its continuing effort to enhance homeland security and strengthen and control immigration in the United States, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is immediately implementing rule changes governing an alien's ability to begin a course of study and proposing significant changes to the rules governing the period of time visitors are permitted to remain in the United States. Additionally, INS is proposing procedures that would require an alien with a final order of removal to surrender to the Service within 30 days of the issuance of that order. Under the new proposed rule, aliens disregarding this duty will be prohibited from acquiring future immigration benefits. INS is forwarding all three rules to the *Federal Register* for publication and public comment.

The interim rule prohibiting non-immigrants admitted in B visitor status from pursuing a course of study prior to obtaining approval of a change to student status takes effect immediately upon publication in the *Federal Register*. The change ensures that those aliens seeking to remain in the United States in student status will have received the appropriate security checks before beginning a course of study.

The proposed rule governing B non-immigrant visitors will:

1. eliminate the minimum 6-month admission period for B-2 non-immigrant visitors, and instead base the admission period on the amount of time needed to accomplish the purpose of the trip (in many cases 30 days);
1. reduce the maximum initial admission period for all B non-immigrant visitors from one year to six months;
1. limit the conditions for which an extension of stay in B non-immigrant visitor status can be granted and reduce the maximum length of that extension;
1. prohibit non-immigrants admitted in B visitor status from changing to student status unless they state an intention to study at the time of admission; and
1. deny discretionary relief to persons with a final order of removal who fail to surrender for removal within 30 days of the final order.

“These new rules strike the appropriate balance between INS’ mission to ensure that our nation’s

immigration laws are followed and stop illegal immigration and our desire to welcome legitimate visitors to the United States,” said INS Commissioner James Ziglar. “While we recognize that the overwhelming majority of people who come to the United States as visitors are honest and law abiding, the events of September 11 remind us that there will always be those who seek to cause us harm.”

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