

Publications

U.S. Will Require COVID-19 Vaccinations for Green Card Applicants Starting October 1, 2021

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Starting October 1, 2021, applicants for Lawful Permanent Resident status in the U.S. (commonly known as Green Cards) are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. The requirement will be enforced through an addition to the vaccination portion of the Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record, which all Green Card applicants must submit before their Green Cards can be approved. The form and underlying medical exam must be completed by a civil surgeon or panel physician approved by the U.S. government. This medical exam is required for both individuals who are applying to adjust status through the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in the U.S. and those who are applying for an immigrant visa at a U.S. consulate or embassy abroad.

The new vaccination requirement will apply to all medical exams **completed on or after October 1, 2021**. Forms I-693 completed prior to October 1, 2021 will remain valid – even if they are submitted after that date – as long as they are filed within 60 days of being completed.

Although the medical exam is required for all Green Card applicants, USCIS and the Department of State have historically recognized limited exceptions to certain vaccination requirements. In line with these, waivers for the COVID-19 vaccination are available for applicants who are too young to receive the vaccine, have a medical condition that prevents taking the vaccine, or do not have access to one of the approved vaccines in their countries. In addition, applicants may apply for an individual waiver based on religious or moral objections to vaccinations.

If you have any questions about the new vaccination requirement in connection with your adjustment of status application or immigrant visa application, we encourage you to contact your Vorys attorney.