

## USCIS Expands Premium Processing to E-3 Petitions

On February 24, 2021, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that E-3 visa petitions will now be eligible for premium processing. Beginning on February 24, 2021, petitioners filing Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker, requesting a change or extension of status for E-3 classification will have the option to request premium processing service. The E-3 classification applies only to nationals of Australia who are coming to the United States solely to perform services in a specialty occupation.

An Australian national who is outside the United States may apply for an E-3 nonimmigrant visa directly through the Department of State at a U.S. Consulate or, in the case of an individual already in the United States, by filing Form I-129 with USCIS. In order to qualify for the E-3 classification, the applicant must demonstrate the following:

- They are a national of Australia;
- They have a legitimate offer of employment in the United States;
- They possess the necessary academic or other qualifying credentials; and
- They will fill a position that qualifies as a specialty occupation.

The USCIS premium processing service allows petitioners to pay an additional filing fee of \$2,500 to expedite the adjudication of certain forms within 15 business days.



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