

Definition of Certain Immigration Terms

Admission and Departure Card Also referred to as I-94 card. Small white card given to non-US citizens entering the United States. Admission record portion collected at the port of entry, departure record portion is stamped by the immigration officer and is collected at the time when the person leaves the United States. Stamp shows date and place of entry, visa status, limitations of stay, and I-94 number (eleven digits) preprinted on the form.

Asylee A person at a port of entry or in the United States, who is unable or unwilling to return to his/her country of nationality or habitual residence because of persecution or fear of persecution.

COS Change of Status without leaving the United States. Application submitted to USCIS. If request is approved, new visa status is granted.

Dependents Spouse (husband or wife, must be legally married) and unmarried children.

EAD (I-688B) Employment Authorization Document Small, laminated card with photo ID requested by beneficiary on form I-765 and approved by USCIS.

Green Card Small, laminated card with photo ID and fingerprint, issued by USCIS. Treated as U.S. citizen for employment, enrollment and payment purposes.

I-94 Card See Admission and Departure Card

ICE – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement A bureau of the Department of Homeland Security, and the investigative and enforcement arm of immigration (formerly INS). ICE also oversees the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

Immigrant = Greed Card Holder = Resident Alien = Permanent Resident A non-U.S. citizen lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. Essentially has the obligations as a U.S. citizen with the exception of voting.

Non-Immigrant An alien admitt4ed to the United States for a specific purpose. Status will end when its purpose has been accomplished.

OPT (Optical Practical Training) A benefit of legal student F-1 status, an OPT request is submitted by applicant and school's recommendation, and granted by USCIS. Total length is 12 months.

Passport An official document that certifies individual's identity and nationality, as well as granting him/her permission to travel abroad.

Permanent Resident See immigrant

POE (Port of Entry) Airport of border where alien is admitted to the United States.

Visa A stamp in the passport issued by an American Embassy or Consulate abroad allowing the holder to request entry to the United States in a certain visa status within the time period specified on the visa. A visa may allow one, two or multiple entries before the end dates of the visa.

An unexpired visa is necessary for entry to the United States. It is not necessary to hold a valid visa while staying in the United States.

Visas can be obtained or renewed ONLY outside the United States.

Visa Status A status granted by immigration at the port of entry to the United States. Visa status is documented with a stamp on the I-94 card and in the passport. The duration of the visa status appears on the I-94 card. In most cases, visa status can be extended without having to leave the United States.