

Philippines off the H-2B eligible list again this year

By **Kevin Kerrigan** - January 22, 2020

H2-B Visa-Eligible Countries

As determined by USCIS, Dept. of Homeland Security & Dept. of State

Andorra	Denmark	Israel	Montenegro	Senegal
Argentina	Ecuador	Italy	Mozambique	Singapore
Australia	El Salvador	Jamaica	Nauru	Slovenia
Austria	Estonia	Japan	The Netherlands	Slovenia
Barbados	Fiji	Kiribati	New Zealand	Solomon Islands
Belgium	Finland	Latvia	Nicaragua	South Africa
Brazil	France	Liechtenstein	Norway	South Korea
Brunei	Germany	Lithuania	Panama	Spain
Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Papua New Guinea	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Canada	Grenada	Macedonia	Peru	Sweden
Chile	Guatemala	Madagascar	Poland	Switzerland
Colombia	Honduras	Malta	Portugal	Taiwan
Costa Rica	Hungary	Mexico	Romania	Thailand
Croatia	Iceland	Monaco	Samoa	Timor-Leste
Czech Republic	Ireland	Mongolia	San Marino	Tonga
	Turkey		United Kingdom	
	Tuvalu		Uruguay	
	Ukraine		Vanuatu	



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The Philippines is off the list of countries eligible to take part in the H-2B program second year in a row.

The list of eligible countries was published in the Federal Register last Thursday. Philippines is again not on it.

According to the statement on the Federal Register, the Secretary of Homeland S

the concurrence of the Secretary of State, have concluded that the Philippines and Dominican Republic and Ethiopia “should no longer be designated as eligible countries because they no longer meet the regulatory standards” for H-2B eligibility.

It’s the same statement as last year when all three countries were first barred from the program. The list remains unchanged from last year.

The Philippines was removed over concerns about human trafficking and compliance jurisdictions that Philippine H-2B workers were staying beyond the term of their visas.

However, the impact on Guam is limited said Gregg Massey, the Alien Labor Certification administrator at the Guam Department of Labor.

“Keep in mind that we’ve got 1,169 H-2B workers from the Philippines on Guam now,” Massey said and there are expected to be up to 2,000 on island by the end of this year.

The exemption granted in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act has allowed contractors to bring in H-2B workers from the Philippines provided that the Defense Department has certified that they are needed for projects related to the ongoing military buildup on island.

However, Massey said “it’s extremely difficult” for those employers petitioning for foreign labor on projects that don’t fall under the NDAA exemption.

“There has been significant progress in getting workers in for military contracts associated with the military realignment,” he said but “projects that are not associated with the military buildup still have an uphill battle.”

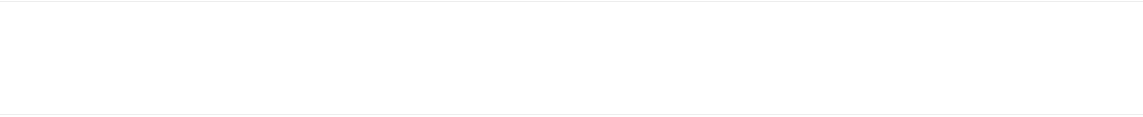
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