

FAMILY-BASED IMMIGRATION

Historically, family reunification has been the principal policy underpinning U.S. immigration law.

Family-based immigration, a tightly regulated system, allows for close relatives of U.S. Citizens and Legal Permanent Residents (LPR) to rejoin their families here in America.

Family-based immigrants are admitted to the U.S. either as immediate relatives of U.S. citizens or through the family preference system.

Immediate Relatives are:

- _ Spouses of U.S. citizens;
- _ Unmarried minor children of U.S. citizens; and
- _ Parents of U.S. citizens.

There is no cap on the number of visas available every year for immediate relatives.

The Family Preference System allows into the U.S.:

- _ Adult children (unmarried and married) and brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens; and
- _ Spouses and unmarried children (minor and adult) of LPRs.

There are a limited number of visas available every year under the Family Preference system.

Under current immigration law, visas are allocated as follows:

The Family Preference System

U.S. Sponsor	Relationship	Preference #	Visa Allocated
U.S. Citizen	unmarried adult children	1 st Preference	23,400 visas/yr[1]
LPR	spouses and minor children	2 nd A Preference	87,900 visas/yr
LPR	unmarried adult children(21 yrs or older)	2 nd B Preference	26,300 visas/yr
U.S. Citizen	married adult children	3 rd Preference	23,400 visas/yr[2]
U.S. Citizen	brothers and sisters(21 yrs or older)	4 th Preference	65,000 visas/yr[3]