

Image not found or type unknown

Student Visas, Criminal Convictions and Country Bans Drive Sharp Rise in U.S. Visa Revocations

Federal data show roughly 85,000 visas revoked in 2025, with large numbers linked to DUI, assault and theft convictions, expanded social media vetting, student violations, and a looming suspension of visa issuance for 19 nations.

Federal / **Published On December 22, 2025 07:05 AM /**

Staff Consortium **December 22, 2025**

Image not found or type unknown



Visa enforcement has accelerated sharply under the Trump administration, with the U.S. State Department revoking roughly 85,000 visas across all categories since January 2025, more than double the total from the previous year, according to a senior official. Officials say the increase reflects a broader push centered on public safety, national security, and stricter compliance with visa conditions, with revocations continuing to climb into early December.

The cancellations span nonimmigrant visas issued to tourists, business travelers, students, and temporary workers. Data through early December show the upward trend has persisted throughout the year. A substantial share of the revocations is tied to criminal convictions, which account for nearly half of the total. About 16,000 were linked to driving under the influence, 12,000 to assault, and 8,000 to theft, according to officials familiar with the figures.

Other revocations stem from visa overstays, determinations that a visa holder poses a public safety risk, or activities deemed contrary to U.S. interests, including alleged support for terrorism or political activity viewed as conflicting with U.S. policy. The administration has also expanded vetting practices, incorporating social media reviews and enhanced background checks to identify individuals considered hostile or non-compliant with visa terms.

Student visas have been notably affected. By September, more than 6,000 student visas had been revoked, most commonly for overstays or other legal violations. Officials say a smaller number involved national security concerns. The issue drew added attention after Marco Rubio confirmed that hundreds, and possibly thousands, of visas—including student visas—were canceled due to positions taken on U.S. foreign policy, such as criticism of Israel's actions in Gaza. Educators and advocacy groups have raised concerns about the potential impact on international academic exchange.

The revocations are occurring alongside a separate policy move announced December 19, when the administration issued a proclamation suspending visa issuance to nationals of 19 countries deemed security risks. The suspension—partial or full depending on the country—includes Afghanistan, Iran, and Venezuela and is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2026. State Department officials have said the measure is intended to bolster U.S. security and complements the ongoing wave of visa cancellations.

For affected individuals, the consequences can be immediate. Revocations typically trigger travel bans, with notifications delivered by email or discovered during attempts to re-enter the United States. Options to appeal are limited. Critics argue the enforcement approach disproportionately affects certain nationalities, citing high denial and revocation rates for Nigerians as an example, while administration officials maintain that decisions are data-driven and impartial.

Reaction to the policy shift has been mixed. Supporters point to enhanced safety and national security, while detractors warn of strained diplomatic relations and potential economic consequences for U.S. institutions that rely on foreign students and skilled workers. No end date has been announced, as officials say the administration continues to refine its approach amid broader immigration reforms.

State Department spokespersons have declined to provide detailed breakdowns by nationality or visa category beyond aggregate figures, citing privacy concerns. Annual reporting with additional data is expected in early 2026.