

## **USCIS INCREASES TN VISA VALIDITY TO 3 YEARS**

October 14 2008

On October 14, 2008, USCIS released a press release and an FAQ announcing that effective immediately, requests for initial TN visa admission and extension of stay would be granted in three-year increments. Until this change, TN status was granted in one-year increments. Spouses and dependent children of TN workers will be eligible for dependent TD status for the same amount of time as the principal TN applicant.

In explaining the change, USCIS noted that granting TN status in three-year increments was consistent with other categories of employment visas, such as H-1B and O-1 visas. In addition, USCIS notes that the change will ease administrative burdens and costs on TN workers and their employers, as extensions will be needed much less frequently.

The TN nonimmigrant classification is a visa category available to eligible Mexican and Canadian citizens holding at least a bachelor's degree or appropriate professional credentials who work in certain qualified fields pursuant to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Qualified professions identified within NAFTA include, but are not limited to, accountants, engineers, attorneys, pharmacists, scientists, and teachers.