

## EB-3 Visas: A Guide for Skilled, Unskilled, and Professional Workers

If you're pursuing a long-term opportunity in the U.S. workforce, the **EB-3 visa** can be a life-changing path. Designed for skilled workers, unskilled workers, and professionals, the EB-3 category falls under the employment-based green card system and opens doors for permanent residency.

At my **immigration law office in Los Angeles, California**, I've seen how this visa supports business immigration and strengthens the U.S. economy by meeting critical labor demands across industries.

This visa isn't limited to high-tech or executive roles. Whether you're an experienced carpenter, entry-level caregiver, or college-educated engineer, there's room for you under the EB-3 classification.

With sponsorship from a U.S. employer, you can build a stable future in the country and bring your talents to the workforce. Let's walk through what each EB-3 subcategory includes, the requirements, and how the process works from start to finish.

### Breaking Down the EB-3 Visa Categories

The EB-3 visa is designed to meet the needs of employers who can't fill job roles with U.S. workers. It splits applicants into three distinct subcategories—skilled workers, professionals, and unskilled workers—based on education, experience, and job requirements.

Though each group has different criteria, all EB-3 applicants must be sponsored by a U.S. employer and obtain a permanent full-time job offer. That employer must also prove there are no qualified U.S. workers available to fill the position.

### Categories under the EB-3 visa:

- **Skilled workers:** Jobs that require at least two years of training or work experience
- **Professionals:** Jobs that require a U.S. bachelor's degree or foreign equivalent
- **Unskilled workers:** Jobs that require less than two years of training or experience

Now that we've outlined the subcategories, let's explore each one more closely and see how they apply to real-world job opportunities.

### Skilled Workers: Who Qualifies and What's Required

Skilled workers are in high demand in industries like manufacturing, construction, healthcare, and transportation. To qualify for the EB-3 as a skilled worker, we must have at least two years of relevant training or experience. Academic degrees aren't required, but we need to show that we've developed a skill through job experience or vocational training.

We also must demonstrate that our skills are not readily available in the U.S. labor market. This involves our employer going through a process called labor certification, which proves there's no qualified U.S. worker able and willing to take the job.

### **Examples of skilled worker positions:**

- Electricians and plumbers
- Automotive technicians
- Metal fabricators and welders
- Chefs and commercial bakers
- Licensed practical nurses

This category is often a good fit for tradespeople and technicians whose training or certifications make them essential in day-to-day operations across industries.

### **Professionals: Degree-Based Opportunities**

If we've earned a bachelor's degree and want to use that education in the U.S., the EB-3 professional subcategory may be ideal. Here, the key requirement is that the job must require a degree—and we must already have that degree or its foreign equivalent when the petition is filed.

The job also must match the degree in scope and responsibility. So, if we studied engineering, our job should involve engineering functions—not unrelated clerical work. The employer must still obtain labor certification and prove that qualified U.S. workers are unavailable.

### **Common professional-level EB-3 roles:**

- Civil, electrical, and mechanical engineers
- Accountants and financial analysts
- Teachers and university instructors
- Software developers and IT professionals
- Architects and urban planners

We've helped many professionals use the EB-3 path to secure employment and gain permanent residency through strategic business immigration planning.

### **Unskilled Workers: A Path for Labor-Based Jobs**

Even if we don't have a degree or years of training, the EB-3 category still offers a route for long-term legal residency. The unskilled worker subcategory covers jobs that require less than two years of training or experience, but still play a vital role in the U.S. economy.

These positions often involve manual labor or personal care and are critical to sectors like agriculture, hospitality, elder care, and food service. The process still involves labor certification, and the job offer must be permanent and full-time.

### **Types of unskilled worker roles:**

- Housekeepers and custodians
- Landscaping and grounds maintenance workers
- Farm laborers and harvesters
- Elder care and nursing home aides
- Food processing plant workers

For many, this category offers one of the most realistic routes to business immigration when other visa types aren't accessible.

### **What Labor Certification Means for EB-3 Applicants**

No matter the category, all EB-3 petitions require a certified labor application through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). This step, known as PERM (Program Electronic Review Management), confirms that hiring a foreign worker won't negatively impact U.S. workers.

During PERM, our sponsoring employer must advertise the job and prove that no qualified U.S. citizen has applied. This step can take several months and must be handled with precision.

### **What labor certification includes:**

- Placing job ads in local newspapers or online platforms
- Reviewing and documenting all applicants
- Providing wage data and proving that pay meets prevailing standards
- Filing a detailed application through the DOL's system

We work closely with employers to handle this process properly, helping both sides meet legal requirements and move forward with confidence.

### **Filing the Immigrant Petition (Form I-140)**

Once the labor certification is approved, the employer must file Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker. This form establishes that the job is legitimate and that the worker meets all qualifications.

The USCIS reviews the petition, along with documentation such as resumes, degrees, work experience letters, and the labor certification approval. In many cases, this step takes several months unless premium processing is used.

### **Documents typically required for Form I-140:**

- Approved labor certification from DOL
- Worker's diplomas, transcripts, or training records
- Letters from past employers confirming experience
- Job offer letter with duties, salary, and work hours
- Proof of employer's ability to pay the offered wage

Once the I-140 is approved, we can move on to the final step—adjusting our status or applying for a visa through consular processing.

## **Adjustment of Status or Consular Processing**

If we're already in the U.S. and eligible, we can apply for a green card through Adjustment of Status by filing Form I-485. If we're outside the country, we'll go through consular processing at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad.

In either case, this is where we officially become a lawful permanent resident. It's also where our family members—spouses and unmarried children under 21—may apply for green cards under the same petition.

## **Final steps to complete the process:**

- Submit Form I-485 (if adjusting status in the U.S.)
- Attend a biometrics appointment and interview
- Submit medical examination results from a certified physician
- Provide financial documents and proof of legal entry (if required)
- Await final decision from USCIS or consulate

This is a life-changing moment, and we support clients through every step to make it as smooth as possible.

## **Priority Dates and Visa Bulletin Delays**

The EB-3 visa is subject to annual limits and country-specific quotas. Because of this, there's often a waiting period between I-140 approval and the availability of a green card. This waiting period depends on our "priority date," which is the date the labor certification was filed.

Each month, the U.S. State Department publishes a Visa Bulletin showing which priority dates are eligible to move forward. Some countries, like India and China, face longer backlogs due to high demand.

## **What affects our visa wait time:**

- Country of birth (not country of residence)
- Number of EB-3 petitions filed that year
- USCIS processing times and government backlog
- Changes in immigration policy or allocation

We monitor the Visa Bulletin closely and help clients decide when to file and how to remain in lawful status while waiting.

## **Benefits of the EB-3 Visa Path**

For those seeking a permanent path to the U.S. workforce, the EB-3 visa offers many advantages. It provides stability for both the worker and the employer and includes a direct route to green card status.

Once we're green card holders, we can live and work anywhere in the U.S., travel more freely, and eventually apply for citizenship. We can also bring our immediate family, giving them the same permanent status and benefits.

### **Why the EB-3 is a valuable business immigration option:**

- Access to permanent legal residency
- Work authorization without visa renewals
- Dependents may also receive green cards
- Opportunity to apply for U.S. citizenship after five years
- Employer gains a long-term, skilled, and dedicated team member

For employers, the EB-3 helps solve hiring shortages and brings stability to growing businesses. For workers, it creates a foundation for long-term success.

### **How We Help Throughout the Process**

At Paul D. Cass, Attorney at Law, we've helped countless individuals and employers in Los Angeles, California, build stronger futures through business immigration. Whether we're applying as a nurse from the Philippines, a software engineer from India, or a hospitality worker from Mexico, the EB-3 visa opens doors.

Paul D. Cass brings years of legal experience and a personalized approach to every case. From the initial consultation to the final green card approval, we handle the details, solve problems, and protect our clients' futures.

### **How we support clients through the EB-3 process:**

- Evaluate eligibility and help select the right visa category
- Assist employers with recruitment and labor certification
- Prepare and file I-140 and supporting evidence
- Coordinate with family members and handle dependent visas
- Respond to USCIS or DOL inquiries or Requests for Evidence (RFEs)

We don't just process paperwork—we advocate for our clients and treat every case like it matters. Because it does.