



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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www.nyc.gov/immigrants

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS REMINDS NEW YORKERS OF U.S. DIVERSITY VISA LOTTERY

FREE APPLICATION ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE AT NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

New York, NY – Deputy Mayor Carol Robles-Roman announced today the 2011 U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery is now accepting applications. Deputy Mayor Robles-Roman was joined by Dionne Mack-Harvin, Executive Director, Brooklyn Public Library and The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Fatima Shama at The Brooklyn Public Library to encourage immigrants to use the free assistance being offered by all three City public library systems: Brooklyn, Queens and New York (Manhattan, Bronx and Staten Island). The annual U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery began accepting applications on October 2, 2009, and only accepts electronic application submissions. This year's deadline for applications is November 30, 2009.

The Diversity Visa Lottery, a computer-generated random lottery drawing, selects individuals to receive permanent immigrant visas (green cards). The Diversity Visa program is administered by the U.S. Department of State and can provide a maximum of 50,000 Diversity Visas to people who come from countries with low immigration rates to the United States. The online applications and a list of eligible countries of origin are available through the official State Department Web site, at www.dvlottery.state.gov.

"The Diversity Visa Lottery is a powerful and positive example of how our nation is made stronger by new comers who bring their talents and dreams to the American collective," said Deputy Mayor Carol Robles-Roman. "And, in New York City we are proud to partner with our libraries to ensure that immigrants eligible to participate in the lottery have the necessary assistance to do so."

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“New York City’s library systems have always been an important tool for all New Yorkers and especially to our newest New Yorkers. We urge all who are eligible to take advantage of the excellent services offered at the public libraries and participating community organizations,” said Commissioner Shama. “Remember -- you have to apply to have a shot -- the Diversity Lottery, for many, has been and can be the ticket to the American Dream.”

“Brooklyn Public Library is pleased to participate in the 2011 Diversity Visa Lottery,” said Dionne Mack-Harvin, Executive Director, Brooklyn Public Library (BPL). “Providing free application assistance is one of the many ways that BPL is proud to serve new Americans. We also offer lectures and workshops on citizenship, bilingual computer courses, literacy instruction, information on local social services, job training and financial help, and many other invaluable resources to help new Americans navigate their new home.”

Individuals and their family members who receive a Green Card through the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program will be authorized to live and work permanently in the United States. A Green Card allows foreign nationals to live, work legally, travel abroad and return, and bring both a spouse and children to the United States. Green Card holders are also entitled to apply for U.S. citizenship.

Applicants can also call 311, the city’s 24-hour service information line, to learn how they can file their applications. Representatives at 311 can provide assistance in over 170 languages and are available seven days a week, 24-hours a day.

WHAT APPLICANTS SHOULD KNOW:

- **Be careful of deceptive advertisements.** Some ads may claim the service provider is a Notary Public or “Notario” and will promise to represent you in the immigration process or provide legal advice. Notaries are not authorized to do this unless they are also a licensed attorney.
- No business or service provider can guarantee success. Selection is random. Filers do not get a better chance by paying a higher fee or by using a particular service provider.

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- Never leave **original documents** such as passports or other identity documents with an immigration service provider.
- Don't pay to use web sites selling services or claiming they are "accredited" providers. **Free filing is available by going online to the U.S. Department of State web site at www.dvlottery.state.gov .**
- Always keep a copy of the application. **If someone else files for you, be sure to get a copy as well as an acknowledgement of receipt.**
- Avoid doing business with providers using a **P.O. Box**.
- There is **no application fee** for the U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery.
- The period to apply for the 2011 lottery is between **noon, Eastern Daylight Time, on October 2, 2009 – and noon, Eastern Standard Time, on November 30, 2009.**
- **Applications will only be accepted electronically.** Mail-in and delivered applications will not be accepted, and multiple applications will be disqualified.
- Not all countries of origin qualify. **If a person is from any of the following countries, they will NOT qualify for the lottery this year:** Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, South Korea, United Kingdom and its dependent territories (except Northern Ireland), and Vietnam.

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