# IABA RESOURCE:

## IRANIAN TEMPORARY IMMIGRATION RELIEF ACT

MAY 14, 2026

# INTRODUCTION

On May 12, 2026, Representative Yassamin Ansari, along with Representative Tom Suozzi, introduced the **Iranian Temporary Immigration Relief Act**[1] in the U.S. House of Representatives. The legislation proposes temporary immigration protections and employment authorization relief for certain Iranian nationals impacted by the USCIS adjudication pause that began in December 2025.[2]

The bill was introduced amid prolonged delays affecting immigration benefit applications filed by certain Iranian nationals. Conditions in Iran have also worsened, including

1 Iranian Temporary Immigration Relief Act, H.R. ___, 119th Cong. (2026), available at: https://ansari.house.gov/imo/media/doc/iranian_temporary_immigration_relief_act_itira.pdf

2 Hold and Review of all Pending Asylum Applications and all USCIS Benefit Applications Filed by Aliens from High-Risk Countries, USCIS PM-602-0192 (December 2, 2025); See Also, Hold and Review of USCIS Benefit Applications Filed by Aliens from Additional High-Risk Countries, USCIS PM-602-0194 (January 1, 2026).

armed conflict, political repression, and concerns regarding the safety of individuals returning to the country.

The legislation would create a narrowly tailored Temporary Protected Status (TPS) framework for certain Iranian nationals already present in the United States, whose immigration status or employment authorization may be impacted by the delayed adjudication of certain pending immigration filings. Unlike traditional TPS designations that apply broadly to nationals of a designated country, the proposed legislation would apply only to individuals who meet specific statutory eligibility requirements.

Among other provisions, the bill would provide temporary protection from removal, access to employment authorization, protections against unlawful presence accrual tied to delayed adjudication, and other safeguards for pending immigration applications.

# TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a temporary humanitarian immigration protection established under Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). TPS allows certain foreign nationals already present in the United States to remain and work lawfully in the country when conditions in their home country temporarily prevent safe return.

Under the INA, the Secretary of Homeland Security may[3] designate a country for TPS if conditions in that country meet certain statutory criteria, including:

- ongoing armed conflict;
- environmental disaster;
- or other extraordinary and temporary conditions preventing safe return.[4]

Individuals granted TPS are generally protected from removal

3 INA § 244, 8 U.S.C. § 1254a.

4 INA § 244(b)(1), 8 U.S.C. § 1254a(b)(1).

and may apply for employment authorization and travel authorization. TPS does not itself provide lawful permanent resident status, citizenship, or a direct pathway to permanent immigration status.

Historically, TPS has been designated for countries experiencing war, humanitarian crises, political instability, or widespread disruption, including Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela, and Haiti.
The Iranian Temporary Immigration Relief Act would not create a traditional countrywide TPS designation applicable to all Iranian nationals. Instead, it proposes a narrower TPS framework limited to individuals physically present in the U.S. that are affected by delayed adjudication of certain pending immigration filings.

# ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility under the proposed legislation would be limited to a defined category of Iranian nationals affected by the adjudication pause.

To qualify, an applicant generally would need to:

- Be a national of Iran;
- Have been lawfully admitted or otherwise lawfully present in the United States;
- Have filed a qualifying immigration benefit application before or during the adjudication pause; and
- Face expiration of lawful status or employment authorization while the application remains pending and unadjudicated due, in whole or in part, to the adjudication pause.

Qualifying filings generally would include those for:

- Change of status;
- Extension of stay;

- Adjustment of status; and
- Employment authorization, including renewals.

Applicants also generally would need to:

- Be physically present in the United States on the date of enactment;
- Have remained continuously physically present in the United States since December 2, 2025; and
- Satisfy applicable admissibility requirements under the INA.

The bill also contains exclusions related to criminal activity, sanctions, corruption, human rights, and national security. These include restrictions tied to certain affiliations with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran or the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

# EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION PROVISIONS

The legislation would provide access to employment authorization for eligible individuals granted relief under the Act.

DHS would be required to issue interim employment authorization within 30 days of filing unless the applicant is determined to be ineligible. Interim employment authorization would remain valid for 180 days.

For individuals ultimately granted relief, employment authorization would remain valid for the duration of the TPS designation period. The bill also would extend certain automatic EAD extension periods tied to pending applications for the duration of the adjudication pause, plus an additional 180 days.

The legislation additionally seeks to prevent gaps in work authorization caused by adjudication delays. Eligible individuals granted relief under the Act would be deemed continuously authorized for employment during covered gap periods, and employers would be protected from liability during those periods of employment.

# REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT REQUIREMENTS

The legislation would impose ongoing reporting obligations on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) relating to both the adjudication pause and the implementation of the proposed relief framework.

DHS would be required to submit reports to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees within 90 days after enactment and every 90 days thereafter until all affected applications have been adjudicated.

Required reporting would include:

- The number of applications subject to the adjudication pause;
- Adjudication, approval, denial, and pending case statistics;
- Processing times; and
- Data related to TPS applications filed under the Act, including approval and denial categories.

These provisions appear intended to provide congressional oversight over both the scope of the adjudication pause and DHS implementation of the program.

# IMPLEMENTATION

The bill would require DHS to implement the proposed program through expedited rulemaking procedures.

DHS would be required to publish an interim final rule within 30 days after enactment, with immediate effectiveness upon publication. A final rule would be required within 180 days following an opportunity for public comment.

The legislation also establishes adjudication timelines requiring DHS to:

- Commence adjudication within 30 days after enactment;
- Adjudicate applications within 90 days of receipt; and
- Issue interim employment authorization within 30 days of filing unless the applicant is determined to be ineligible.

The bill additionally directs DHS to establish a process through which qualifying individuals may apply for advance parole for temporary travel outside the United States.

The Secretary of Homeland Security must extend the designation of TPS pursuant to this legislation in six-month increments if, at least 60 days before the current period expires, the Secretary determines that either :

- The adjudication pause is still in effect, in whole or in part, or
- The underlying conditions continue to prevent eligible individuals from receiving timely decisions on their pending applications.

If the Secretary does not make this determination at least 60 days before the designation expires, the designation is automatically extended for an additional six months.

# LEGAL AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The legislation raises legal and policy questions related to immigration processing delays, humanitarian protections, and national security screening.

A central premise of the bill is that individuals who timely filed requests for immigration benefits and complied with existing immigration laws should not face immigration penalties resulting from prolonged government-caused adjudication delays. The legislation also reflects broader humanitarian concerns regarding current conditions in Iran, including armed conflict, political repression, and risks faced by individuals perceived to have ties to the United States or involvement in diaspora activism.

At the same time, the bill incorporates significant exclusions, including restrictions relating to certain affiliations with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the IRGC. The

legislation further highlights the economic and workforce impact of prolonged adjudication delays on students, researchers, physicians, engineers, entrepreneurs, and other professionals working in sectors critical to the U.S. economy, including healthcare, technology, and scientific research.

More broadly, the bill represents a novel use of the TPS framework because it would apply only to a narrower category of individuals affected by delayed adjudication rather than to all nationals of a designated country.

# PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR AFFECTED INDIVIDUALS

If enacted, the legislation could provide temporary immigration and employment protections for certain Iranian nationals affected by the adjudication pause.

Potentially affected individuals may include:

- Students and exchange visitors;
- Employment-based nonimmigrants;
- Adjustment of status applicants;
- Individuals with pending change or extension of status filings; and
- Applicants with pending employment authorization applications.

For eligible individuals, the legislation could provide temporary protection from removal, continued employment authorization, protections against unlawful presence accrual tied to delayed adjudication, and safeguards for certain pending immigration

applications.

The bill would not create permanent immigration status or provide a direct pathway to lawful permanent residence or citizenship. Instead, it proposes temporary protections tied to the duration of the TPS designation established under the Act.

As of the date of this report, no application process exists under the proposed legislation, and affected individuals should continue complying with existing immigration requirements and seeking individualized legal advice regarding their circumstances.

# IABA PERSPECTIVE

The Iranian American Bar Association (IABA) has supported the Iranian American community since the USCIS adjudication pause went into effect. Through public education webinars and written resources, IABA has worked to inform and support impacted individuals. Through coalition engagement and ongoing advocacy efforts, IABA has also sought to address the immigration, employment, and humanitarian consequences associated with prolonged non adjudication of pending immigration applications.

The Iranian Temporary Immigration Relief Act is a significant legislative proposal addressing many of the concerns raised by affected community members, including uncertainty regarding lawful presence, employment authorization disruptions, and the broader consequences of prolonged adjudication delays.

IABA further recognizes that many impacted individuals are students, professionals, researchers, entrepreneurs, and families

who have sought to comply with existing immigration laws and procedures. The legislation's focus on individuals already lawfully present in the United States and affected by delayed adjudication reflects concerns regarding fairness, predictability, and the integrity of the immigration system.

At the same time, IABA recognizes that the bill was only recently introduced and still faces a lengthy legislative process before any potential enactment into law. Individuals should continue complying with existing immigration requirements, monitor official government guidance, and seek individualized legal advice regarding their circumstances.

# SUPPORT IABA

Support IABA's mission in three impactful ways:

- **Donate.** Make a tax-deductible contribution to fund scholarships, advocacy, and community programs.
- **Join.** Become a member to stay informed, engaged, and connected to opportunities.
- **Follow.** Help amplify our voice by following and sharing our posts on Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

DISCLAIMER: This guide provides general information that may not be applicable in every situation and does NOT constitute legal advice. If you need legal advice regarding a specific situation, you should consult with a licensed and trusted attorney.