

## H-2B: 35,000 More Visas Being Released To Answer Demand

The logo for Turf, featuring the word "Turf" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A green grass blade graphic is integrated into the letter 'T'.The logo for Tree Services, featuring the words "Tree Services" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A small green leaf graphic is above the 'i' in "Services". Below the main text is the tagline "Taking Tree Care to New Heights" in a smaller, italicized font.The logo for DesignBuild, featuring the word "Design" in a black, sans-serif font and "Build" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. A small orange square graphic is above the 'i' in "Design".The logo for PLOW, featuring the word "PLOW" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is to the upper right of the word.

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**It should enable more H-2B workers into the country by early May.**

It's no April Fool's Day joke. The National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) reported that yesterday the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a joint temporary final rule to release an additional 35,000 H-2B visas for seasonal non-agricultural workers for the second half of the year beginning on or after April 1, 2022, through September 30, 2022. That brings the total number of supplemental H-2B visas released by the Administration for FY 2022 to 55,000, nearly double the most supplemental visas ever released in one year.

There are 23,500 visas available to returning H-2B workers who received a visa in the past three years. The remaining 11,500 visas, which are exempt from the returning worker requirement, are earmarked for Northern Triangle countries, including Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador employees.

Citing the pressures on employers to find qualified workers, DHS Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas said, "informed by current demand in the labor market, today we are announcing the availability of an additional 35,000 H-2B visas that will help to support American businesses and expand legal pathways for workers seeking to come to the United States."

"NALP, on behalf of the landscape industry, commends Secretary Mayorkas and Walsh for understanding the critical need to supplement our seasonal workforce with additional H-2B visas during an unprecedented tight labor market," stated Andrew Bray. "This announcement of additional H-2B visas in excess of 30,000 and coming before the April 1 date of need is a testament to all those who have been advocating for cap relief; it's clear your voice matters and was heard."

The official rule will likely publish by mid-April and will hopefully enable supplemental H-2B workers into the country in early May. The rule will include integrity measures to prove the need to access the supplemental visas and some additional worker protections similar to last year and January.

Due to record demand, the Department of Homeland Security will likely conduct a new lottery for those attempting to access the 23,500 returning worker allocation, and lottery assignments from January will be irrelevant. However, NALP does not believe a lottery will be required to access the 11,500 visas from the Northern Triangle and Haiti.