

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Deferred Enforced Departure for Certain Lebanese Nationals

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BACKGROUND

On July 26, 2024, the Biden-Harris administration [announced](#) the designation of Lebanon for Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for 18 months, from July 26, 2024 to January 25, 2026, due to worsening humanitarian conditions in southern Lebanon. [The White House cited](#) significantly deteriorating country conditions due to tensions between Hezbollah and Israel. Global Refuge applauds the administration's decision.

DED is a temporary immigration status that provides protection from deportation for certain eligible nationals of the designated country. In addition, individuals covered under DED may be eligible for certain benefits such as eligibility for work authorization during the specified period.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE UNDER THIS DED DESIGNATION

The DED designation allows Lebanese nationals to defer their removal from the United States for a period of up to 18 months if they were present in the country as of July 26, 2024, and have continuously remained since that time.

In order to be eligible for DED, Lebanese nationals cannot have been convicted of a felony or two or more misdemeanors in the United States, be subject to any of the mandatory bars to asylum, nor have been found inadmissible or deportable under any of the security-related grounds in INA sections (212)(a)(3) & 237(a)(4). Additionally, Lebanese nationals who are subject to extradition, whose presence is not in the interest of the United States or poses a danger to public safety, or whose presence would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States may not be eligible for DED.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR DED AND WORK AUTHORIZATION

Most Lebanese nationals, who were in the United States as of July 26, 2024, will automatically possess DED status until its expiration or termination. **It is important to note that DED is not classified as an immigration benefit and no formal application is required to obtain it.**

Lebanese nationals covered by DED are eligible for employment authorization documents (EAD) through January 25, 2026 under category code (a)(11). Eligible individuals may apply for DED-based work authorization by filing a [Form I-765](#) with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) along with filing fees and supporting documentation. On the Form I-765, individuals should enter (a)(11) in response to Question 27.

The USCIS filing fee for Form I-765 filed online is \$470 and the fee for paper forms filed by mail

is \$520. The complete fee schedule can be found [here](#). Fee waivers ([Form I-912](#)) are available for certain individuals who cannot afford USCIS filing fees. However, when submitting a Form I-912, the fee waiver request and associated EAD application cannot be filed online and must be submitted by mail.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT PROCESSING TIME FOR EAD APPLICATIONS

The current processing time for EAD applications varies and can range from 6 weeks to 6 months. We recognize the importance of accurate information regarding processing times and will update this document accordingly as more information becomes available.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER

Individuals covered by DED may be eligible for travel authorization as a matter of discretion. However, if an individual leaves the United States without first receiving travel authorization, they may no longer be eligible for DED or permitted to reenter the country. Additionally, if an individual returns to Lebanon, even with travel authorization, they may be rendered ineligible for DED. Additional information will be provided following the publication of the Federal Register notice implementing the Lebanon DED memorandum.

Note: A listing of non-profit immigration legal services providers can be found at www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/.