

## DHS Announces Extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for El Salvador

*Prepared by Rosa Molina and Jill Marie Bussey*

### BACKGROUND

On January 10, 2025, then-Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Mayorkas [announced](#) the extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for El Salvador for 18 months, from **March 10, 2025 to September 9, 2026**, due to environmental conditions in El Salvador that prevent individuals from safely returning. The DHS determined that the extension is warranted because environmental disasters have continued to cause a substantial, but temporary, disruption of living conditions in the affected areas of El Salvador.

Specifically, the DHS determined that this [most recent 18-month extension](#) of TPS for El Salvadoran nationals is necessary due to **geological and weather events, including significant storms and heavy rainfall in 2023 and 2024, that continue to affect areas heavily impacted by the earthquakes in 2001.**

El Salvador was [initially designated](#) for TPS on March 9, 2001 on the basis of environmental disaster, and at the request of the country's government, following two earthquakes that resulted in the substantial disruption of living conditions. El Salvador's TPS designation was extended 11 consecutive times for periods of 12–18 months and on the same basis. In 2018, former DHS Secretary Kirsten Nielsen [announced the termination](#) of the TPS designation for El Salvador effective September 9, 2019. The termination did not take effect due to [legal challenges](#). On June 13, 2023, former DHS Secretary Mayorkas announced the reconsideration and rescission of the termination of TPS designation for El Salvador and extended the TPS designation, again on the basis of environmental disaster, through March 9, 2025.

The extension of TPS for El Salvador allows approximately 232,000 current beneficiaries to re-register for TPS. **The re-registration period is January 17, 2025, through March 18, 2025.**

### WHAT IS TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS)?

TPS is a temporary immigration status that provides protection from deportation and eligibility for work authorization for certain, eligible nationals of the designated country. Designated countries have been determined to be experiencing conditions such as armed conflict, natural disaster, or other extraordinary circumstances. The DHS Secretary, after consulting with relevant government agencies, has the authority to designate, extend, or terminate TPS for a country based on prevailing conditions. The decision to extend El Salvador TPS designation follows a review of country conditions, including input from the Department of State and other U.S. government entities.

Individuals must initially register for TPS and apply for work authorization to receive benefits. If TPS is granted, the beneficiary may also seek a TPS travel authorization document for travel abroad. Thereafter, re-registration is typically required to maintain TPS status.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR TPS UNDER THIS EXTENSION?

This TPS extension allows nationals of El Salvador (and individuals having no nationality who last habitually resided in El Salvador) to register for TPS if they have been continuously residing in the U.S. since February 13, 2001, and have been continuously physically present in the U.S. since March 9, 2001.

With some [notable exceptions](#), TPS applicants must also demonstrate that they are admissible to the U.S. Individuals are not eligible for TPS if they have been convicted of a felony or two or more misdemeanors in the U.S., are subject to any of the [mandatory bars to asylum](#), or are inadmissible due to immigration fraud, human trafficking, commission of serious crimes, or other security-related grounds.

### WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR TPS RE-REGISTRATION?

Individuals seeking to re-register for Temporary Protected Status must submit [Form I-821](#) with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), along with the correct biometrics fees or a request for fee waiver and supporting documentation. TPS applicants seeking work authorization should file [Form I-765](#) and the correct filing fee with their TPS registration application. The filing fee for Form I-765 is the same for initial applicants as for individuals re-registering for TPS. Individuals who apply online will pay \$470 for work authorization, and those applying on paper will pay \$520. The complete fee schedule can be found [here](#). TPS and associated work authorization applications may be submitted online unless the applicant is seeking a fee waiver ([Form I-912](#)).

Fee waivers are available for certain individuals who cannot afford the USCIS filing fees. However, the fee waiver request and associated TPS and EAD applications must be submitted by mail. Detailed and updated information about the application process is found on [USCIS' TPS for El Salvador webpage](#).

**Note that individuals who have a TPS application (Form I-821) that was still pending as of January 17, 2025, do not need to file the application again. If USCIS approves the individual's Form I-821, USCIS will grant the individual TPS through October 19, 2026.**

### WHAT IS THE CURRENT PROCESSING TIME FOR TPS RE-REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS

USCIS is [currently processing](#) El Salvador TPS re-registration applications in 11 to 13 months.

## WILL MY CURRENT TPS-RELATED WORK PERMIT OR EAD BE AUTOMATICALLY EXTENDED?

**EAD “Card Expires” date March 9, 2025, June 30, 2024, December 31, 2022, October 4, 2021, January 4, 2021, January 2, 2020, September 9, 2019, or March 9, 2018.**

For TPS recipients with an EAD card with these expiration dates, the [January 17, 2025 Federal Register Notice](#) automatically extends the Salvadoran TPS recipient’s EAD or work authorization through **March 9, 2026**, without any further action. TPS recipients subject to the automatic extension of their work authorization may continue to use their current EADs without having to apply for an extension.

### **540-Day Automatic Extension of EADs**

Salvadoran TPS recipients may also be eligible for **an automatic extension of up to 540 days from the “Card Expires” date on the EAD, if they file Form I-765 EAD renewal application during the re-registration period of January 17, 2025, through March 18, 2025.** (“Up to 540-Day Automatic EAD Extension”). For more information regarding the 540-day EAD auto-extension, refer to the Federal Register Notice at the section “How can I receive an automatic extension of my current TPS EAD for up to 540 days from the ‘Card Expires’ date on the EAD by filing an EAD renewal application?”

## HOW TO SEEK LATE RE-REGISTRATION

USCIS may accept a late re-registration application if the applicant has a good reason for filing Form I-821 after March 18, 2025. The applicant must submit a letter explaining the reason for filing late along with the TPS re-registration application. Filing a late TPS re-registration application can cause a delay in processing the TPS application and related work permit or EAD application.

## ARE NATIONALS OF EL SALVADOR ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS IN THE U.S.

Generally, most non-citizens who are present in the U.S. on TPS are not eligible for federal mainstream benefits, such as cash assistance through Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), health insurance through Medicaid, and food assistance through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

## OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Non-citizens should **Know Your Status & Know Your Rights** and make sure they have a plan if they encounter immigration or other law enforcement officers. Be sure to rely upon Know Your Rights materials distributed through reputable agencies, including <https://familiesuniteddcmetro.org/> and <https://www.nilc.org/resources/>.
2. Individuals who have TPS should also seek comprehensive legal screenings to identify eligibility for more long-terms immigration benefits such as asylum, family-based immigration, and relief for survivors of crime and violence. As eligibility for benefits may change over time, we encourage periodic screenings.

3. Individuals with a pending asylum application (Form I-589) can and **should** consider applying for TPS, if they are eligible to do so.
4. Individuals who currently hold another temporary immigration status such as humanitarian parole, F-1 student status, H-2A or H-2B temporary work visas can and **should** consider applying for TPS, if they are eligible to do so.

**Note:** We strongly recommend consulting with a qualified immigration legal services provider when considering TPS to learn how seeking TPS may interact with other immigration benefits applications. A listing of non-profit immigration legal services providers can be found at [www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/](http://www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/).

