



EMAIL BULLETIN

U.S. CONSULATES IN INDIA REQUIRE PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND COLLECTION OF BIOMETRIC IDENTIFIERS FOR VISA APPLICATION; OTHER CONSULATES TO FOLLOW

21 July 2004

U.S. Consulates in India have discontinued use of the "drop-box" system for visa applications, whereby applicants for visa "renewals" could avoid appearing at the Consulate for a personal interview. Discontinuance of "drop-box" application procedures was required by statutory measures mandating the collection of biometric identifiers and issuance of machine readable visas by October 26, 2004.

Most U.S. Consulates worldwide have already begun capturing biometric identifiers and issuing biometric enabled visas. The remaining consular posts will begin doing so by October 26, 2004. This means that applicants for U.S. visas who previously did not require a personal appearance will now be required to appear at the Consulate to submit index fingerprints which will be recorded on the machine-readable visa. When the visa holder then presents his or her passport and visa to U.S. Customs & Border Protection inspectors, the inspectors will be able to scan the visa stamp and compare the captured biometrics with fingerprints taken from the visa holder upon entry. The inspectors will be able to ensure that the person presenting the visa for entry is the same person who was issued the visa after application at a U.S. Consulate abroad.

Tindall & Foster, P.C. will continue to monitor these and other changes in consular procedures, and will provide additional updates in future Tindall & Foster, P.C. Email Bulletins. Should you have questions about the new biometric requirements and whether they have been implemented at a particular U.S. Consulate abroad, please contact your Tindall & Foster, P.C. immigration attorney for more information.