

The International Entrepreneur Parole – Is it for you?



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What is the International Entrepreneur Parole (IEP)? This is a discretionary policy based option that was implemented a few years ago by USCIS. It is aimed at helping entrepreneurs with their start-up businesses in the U.S. who have garnered the interest of U.S. investors and who are poised to create jobs and benefit the nation as a whole through their business activity.

How do you apply for IEP? File [Form I-941, Application for Entrepreneur Parole](#) with USCIS

How long can parole be approved for? Parole can be approved for a period of up to 30 months (can be renewed)

What is the processing time for I-941s? Unfortunately, USCIS does not release estimated processing times for I-941's at this time. We are seeing significantly long process times though. Premium Processing is not available currently.

What are the requirements?

To qualify for IEP, the Applicant must:

- Applicant must possess a substantial ownership interest (at least 10%) in a start-up entity created within the past five (5) years in the United States that has substantial potential for rapid growth and job creation.
- Applicant must have a central and active role in the start-up entity such that they are well-positioned to substantially assist with the growth and success of the business.
- Applicant will provide a significant public benefit to the United States based on their role as an entrepreneur of the start-up entity by showing that:
 - The start-up entity has received a significant investment of capital from certain qualified U.S. investors with established records of successful investments;
 - The start-up entity has received significant awards or grants for economic development, research and development, or job creation (or other types of grants or awards typically given to start-up entities) from federal, state, or local government entities that regularly provide such awards or grants to start-up entities for over \$105,659; or
 - They partially meet either or both of the previous two requirements and provide additional reliable and compelling evidence of the start-up entity's substantial potential for rapid growth and job creation.
 - *Significant Investment of Capital = Generally, the start-up entity must have received a qualified investment of at least \$264,147 from one or more qualified investors within 18 months immediately preceding the filing.*
 - *Qualified U.S. Investor = The regulation defines the term "qualified investor" to include an organization that is located in the United States and operates through a legal entity organized under the laws of the United States or any state that is majority owned and controlled, directly and indirectly, by U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents (LPRs). While USCIS does not require the applicant to establish that at least 50% of the capital contributed to the fund is sourced from U.S. citizens or LPRs, the applicant must nevertheless show that the fund is majority owned, directly and indirectly, by U.S. citizens or LPRs (which often corresponds with the amount of capital contributed). The applicant will also have to establish, among other things, that the investor has a successful track record making investments in start-up entities and that the investment is a good faith investment of lawfully derived capital.*
 - *Established records of successful investments = For purposes of this requirement, USCIS considers such an individual or organization a qualified investor if, during the preceding five years, the following apply:*
 - *The individual or organization made investments in start-up entities in exchange for convertible debt or other security convertible into equity commonly used in financing transactions within their respective industries, comprising a total in such five-year period of no less than \$633,952; and*
 - *Subsequent to such investment by such individual or organization, at least two such entities each created at least five qualified jobs or generated at least \$528,293 in revenue with average annualized revenue growth of at least 20%.*

Where can I find additional information? USCIS released comprehensive guidance in its [USCIS Policy Manual – Volume 3 – Humanitarian Protection & Parole – Part G: International Entrepreneur Parole](#) and provided [FAQ's on the International Entrepreneur Parole](#) as well. However, it's best to speak with an experienced immigration attorney to whether the IEP would potentially best suit your needs or if there is another nonimmigrant category – such as an O-1, L-1, or even an E-2 – that might suit your overall needs and situation better.

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