

9 FAM Appendix K, VISA REFERRAL SYSTEMS

(TL:VISA-411; 05-16-2002)

9 FAM 100 INTRODUCTION

9 FAM 101 General Policy

(TL:VISA-119; 07-03-1995)

U.S. government employees abroad are approached from time to time by persons seeking assistance in obtaining nonimmigrant visas. As a general rule, it is best to avoid offering any assistance other than to provide the information that applicants should apply directly to the consular section because only visa officers may determine visa eligibility under the law.

9 FAM 102 Visa Referral as Foreign Policy Tool

(TL:VISA-411; 05-16-2002)

In some instances, however, it may be in the U.S. national interest to provide special assistance. The visa referral system is a useful method of serving U.S. national interests in the foreign and domestic policy context. In the interest of uniformity, as an aid to interested officers, and to provide a monitoring mechanism, a formal visa referral system *must* be established by all posts for use in referral cases. A visa referral system, if monitored and administered properly, can be a useful method for expediting visa issuance in cases that involve U.S. Government interests, or promote U.S. public diplomacy efforts in the host country. As a management tool, the referral system can conserve scarce consular resources and time by providing additional information regarding an applicant's eligibility under the law.