

Code of Federal Regulations

Title 8. Aliens and Nationality

Chapter I. Department of Homeland Security ([Refs & Annos](#))

Subchapter B. Immigration Regulations

Part 212. Documentary Requirements: Nonimmigrants; Waivers; Admission of Certain Inadmissible Aliens; Parole ([Refs & Annos](#))

8 C.F.R. § 212.19

§ 212.19 Parole for entrepreneurs.

Effective: March 14, 2018

[Currentness](#)

<Text of section added by [82 FR 5286](#), effective March 14, 2018, as amended by [82 FR 31887](#).>

(a) Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) Entrepreneur means an alien who possesses a substantial ownership interest in a start-up entity and has a central and active role in the operations of that entity, such that the alien is well-positioned, due to his or her knowledge, skills, or experience, to substantially assist the entity with the growth and success of its business. For purposes of this section, an alien may be considered to possess a substantial ownership interest if he or she possesses at least a 10 percent ownership interest in the start-up entity at the time of adjudication of the initial grant of parole and possesses at least a 5 percent ownership interest in the start-up entity at the time of adjudication of a subsequent period of re-parole. During the period of initial parole, the entrepreneur may continue to reduce his or her ownership interest in the start-up entity, but must, at all times during the period of initial parole, maintain at least a 5 percent ownership interest in the entity. During the period of re-parole, the entrepreneur may continue to reduce his or her ownership interest in the start-up entity, but must, at all times during the period of parole, maintain an ownership interest in the entity.

(2) Start-up entity means a U.S. business entity that was recently formed, has lawfully done business during any period of operation since its date of formation, and has substantial potential for rapid growth and job creation. An entity that is the basis for a request for parole under this section may be considered recently formed if it was created within the 5 years immediately preceding the filing date of the alien's initial parole request. For purposes of paragraphs (a)(3) and (5) of this section, an entity may be considered recently formed if it was created within the 5 years immediately preceding the receipt of the relevant grant(s), award(s), or investment(s).

(3) Qualified government award or grant means an award or grant for economic development, research and development, or job creation (or other similar monetary award typically given to start-up entities) made by a federal, state, or local government entity (not including foreign government entities) that regularly provides such awards or grants to start-up entities. This definition excludes any contractual commitment for goods or services.

(4) Qualified investment means an investment made in good faith, and that is not an attempt to circumvent any limitations imposed on investments under this section, of lawfully derived capital in a start-up entity that is a

purchase from such entity of its equity, convertible debt, or other security convertible into its equity commonly used in financing transactions within such entity's industry. Such an investment shall not include an investment, directly or indirectly, from the entrepreneur; the parents, spouse, brother, sister, son, or daughter of such entrepreneur; or any corporation, limited liability company, partnership, or other entity in which such entrepreneur or the parents, spouse, brother, sister, son, or daughter of such entrepreneur directly or indirectly has any ownership interest.

(5) Qualified investor means an individual who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States, or 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 of the United States, provided such individual or organization regularly makes substantial investments in start-up entities that subsequently exhibit substantial growth in terms of revenue generation or job creation. The term “qualified investor” shall not include an individual or organization that has been permanently or temporarily enjoined from participating in the offer or sale of a security or in the provision of services as an investment adviser, broker, dealer, municipal securities dealer, government securities broker, government securities dealer, bank, transfer agent or credit rating agency, barred from association with any entity involved in the offer or sale of securities or provision of such services, or otherwise found to have participated in the offer or sale of securities or provision of such services in violation of law. For purposes of this section, such an individual or organization may be considered a qualified investor if, during the preceding 5 years:

(i) The individual or organization made investments in start-up entities in exchange for equity, convertible debt or other security convertible into equity commonly used in financing transactions within their respective industries comprising a total in such 5-year period of no less than \$600,000; and

(ii) Subsequent to such investment by such individual or organization, at least 2 such entities each created at least 5 qualified jobs or generated at least \$500,000 in revenue with average annualized revenue growth of at least 20 percent.

(6) Qualified job means full-time employment located in the United States that has been filled for at least 1 year by one or more qualifying employees.

(7) Qualifying employee means a U.S. citizen, a lawful permanent resident, or other immigrant lawfully authorized to be employed in the United States, who is not an entrepreneur of the relevant start-up entity or the parent, spouse, brother, sister, son, or daughter of such an entrepreneur. This definition shall not include independent contractors.

(8) Full-time employment means paid employment in a position that requires a minimum of 35 working hours per week. This definition does not include combinations of part-time positions even if, when combined, such positions meet the hourly requirement per week.

(9) U.S. business entity means any corporation, limited liability company, partnership, or other entity that is organized under federal law or the laws of any state, and that conducts business in the United States, that is not an investment vehicle primarily engaged in the offer, purchase, sale or trading of securities, futures contracts, derivatives or similar instruments.

(10) Material change means any change in facts that could reasonably affect the outcome of the determination whether the entrepreneur provides, or continues to provide, a significant public benefit to the United States. Such changes include, but are not limited to, the following: Any criminal charge, conviction, plea of no contest, or other judicial determination in a criminal case concerning the entrepreneur or start-up entity; any complaint, settlement, judgment, or other judicial or administrative determination concerning the entrepreneur or start-up entity in a legal or administrative proceeding brought by a government entity; any settlement, judgment, or other legal determination concerning the entrepreneur or start-up entity in a legal proceeding brought by a private individual or organization other than proceedings primarily involving claims for damages not exceeding 10 percent of the current assets of the entrepreneur or start-up entity; a sale or other disposition of all or substantially all of the start-up entity's assets; the liquidation, dissolution or cessation of operations of the start-up entity; the voluntary or involuntary filing of a bankruptcy petition by or against the start-up entity; a significant change with respect to ownership and control of the start-up entity; and a cessation of the entrepreneur's qualifying ownership interest in the start-up entity or the entrepreneur's central and active role in the operations of that entity.

(b) Initial parole—

(1) Filing of initial parole request form. An alien seeking an initial grant of parole as an entrepreneur of a start-up entity must file an Application for Entrepreneur Parole (Form I-941) with USCIS, with the required fees (including biometric services fees), and supporting documentary evidence in accordance with this section and the form instructions, demonstrating eligibility as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section.

(2) Criteria for consideration—

(i) In general. An alien may be considered for parole under this section if the alien demonstrates that a grant of parole will provide a significant public benefit to the United States based on his or her role as an entrepreneur of a start-up entity.

(ii) General criteria. An alien may meet the standard described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section by providing a detailed description, along with supporting evidence:

(A) Demonstrating that the alien is an entrepreneur as defined in paragraph (a)(1) of this section and that his or her entity is a start-up entity as defined in paragraph (a)(2) of this section; and

(B) Establishing that the alien's entity has:

(1) Received, within 18 months immediately preceding the filing of an application for initial parole, a qualified investment amount of at least \$250,000 from one or more qualified investors; or

(2) Received, within 18 months immediately preceding the filing of an application for initial parole, an amount of at least \$100,000 through one or more qualified government awards or grants.

(iii) Alternative criteria. An alien who satisfies the criteria in paragraph (b)(2)(ii)(A) of this section and partially meets one or both of the criteria in paragraph (b)(2)(ii)(B) of this section may alternatively meet the standard described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section by providing other reliable and compelling evidence of the start-up entity's substantial potential for rapid growth and job creation.

(c) Additional periods of parole—

(1) Filing of re-parole request form. Prior to the expiration of the initial period of parole, an entrepreneur parolee may request an additional period of parole based on the same start-up entity that formed the basis for his or her initial period of parole granted under this section. To request such parole, an entrepreneur parolee must timely file the Application for Entrepreneur Parole (Form I-941) with USCIS, with the required fees (including biometric services fees), and supporting documentation in accordance with the form instructions, demonstrating eligibility as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section.

(2) Criteria for consideration—

(i) In general. An alien may be considered for re-parole under this section if the alien demonstrates that a grant of parole will continue to provide a significant public benefit to the United States based on his or her role as an entrepreneur of a start-up entity.

(ii) General criteria. An alien may meet the standard described in paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section by providing a detailed description, along with supporting evidence:

(A) Demonstrating that the alien continues to be an entrepreneur as defined in paragraph (a)(1) of this section and that his or her entity continues to be a start-up entity as defined in paragraph (a)(2) of this section; and

(B) Establishing that the alien's entity has:

(1) Received at least \$500,000 in qualifying investments, qualified government grants or awards, or a combination of such funding, during the initial parole period;

(2) Created at least 5 qualified jobs with the start-up entity during the initial parole period; or

(3) Reached at least \$500,000 in annual revenue in the United States and averaged 20 percent in annual revenue growth during the initial parole period.

(iii) Alternative criteria. An alien who satisfies the criteria in paragraph (c)(2)(ii)(A) of this section and partially meets one or more of the criteria in paragraph (c)(2)(ii)(B) of this section may alternatively meet the standard described in paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section by providing other reliable and compelling evidence of the start-up entity's substantial potential for rapid growth and job creation.

(d) Discretionary authority; decision; appeals and motions to reopen—

(1) Discretionary authority. DHS may grant parole under this section in its sole discretion on a case-by-case basis if the Department determines, based on the totality of the evidence, that an applicant's presence in the United States will provide a significant public benefit and that he or she otherwise merits a favorable exercise of discretion. In determining whether an alien's presence in the United States will provide a significant public benefit and whether the alien warrants a favorable exercise of discretion, USCIS will consider and weigh all evidence, including any derogatory evidence or information, such as but not limited to, evidence of criminal activity or national security concerns.

(2) Initial parole. DHS may grant an initial period of parole based on the start-up entity listed in the request for parole for a period of up to 30 months from the date the individual is initially paroled into the United States. Approval by USCIS of such a request must be obtained before the alien may appear at a port of entry to be granted parole, in lieu of admission.

(3) Re-parole. DHS may re-parole an entrepreneur for one additional period of up to 30 months from the date of the expiration of the initial parole period. If the entrepreneur is in the United States at the time that USCIS approves the request for re-parole, such approval shall be considered a grant of re-parole. If the alien is outside the United States at the time that USCIS approves the request for re-parole, the alien must appear at a port of entry to be granted parole, in lieu of admission.

(4) Appeals and motions to reopen. There is no appeal from a denial of parole under this section. USCIS will not consider a motion to reopen or reconsider a denial of parole under this section. On its own motion, USCIS may reopen or reconsider a decision to deny the Application for Entrepreneur Parole (Form I-941), in accordance with [8 CFR 103.5\(a\)\(5\)](#).

(e) Payment of biometric services fee and collection of biometric information. An alien seeking parole or re-parole under this section will be required to pay the biometric services fee as prescribed by [8 CFR 103.7\(b\)\(1\)\(i\)\(C\)](#). An alien seeking an initial grant of parole will be required to submit biometric information. An alien seeking re-parole may be required to submit biometric information.

(f) Limitations. No more than three entrepreneurs may be granted parole under this section based on the same start-up entity. An alien shall not receive more than one initial grant of entrepreneur parole or more than one additional grant of entrepreneur re-parole based on the same start-up entity, for a maximum period of parole of five years.

(g) Employment authorization. An entrepreneur who is paroled into the United States pursuant to this section is authorized for employment with the start-up entity incident to the conditions of his or her parole.

(h) Spouse and children.

(1) The entrepreneur's spouse and children who are seeking parole as derivatives of such entrepreneur must individually file an Application for Travel Document (Form I-131). Such application must also include evidence

that the derivative has a qualifying relationship to the entrepreneur and otherwise merits a grant of parole in the exercise of discretion. A biometric services fee is required to be filed with the application. Such spouse or child will be required to appear for collection of biometrics in accordance with the form instructions or upon request.

(2) The spouse and children of an entrepreneur granted parole under this section may be granted parole under this section for no longer than the period of parole granted to such entrepreneur.

(3) The spouse of the entrepreneur parolee, after being paroled into the United States, may be eligible for employment authorization on the basis of parole under this section. To request employment authorization, an eligible spouse paroled into the United States must file an Application for Employment Authorization (Form I-765), in accordance with [8 CFR 274a.13](#) and form instructions. An Application for Employment Authorization must be accompanied by documentary evidence establishing eligibility, including evidence of the spousal relationship.

(4) Notwithstanding [8 CFR 274a.12\(c\)\(11\)](#), a child of the entrepreneur parolee may not be authorized for and may not accept employment on the basis of parole under this section.

(i) Conditions on parole. As a condition of parole under this section, a parolee must maintain household income that is greater than 400 percent of the federal poverty line for his or her household size as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services. USCIS may impose other such reasonable conditions in its sole discretion with respect to any alien approved for parole under this section, and it may request verification of the parolee's compliance with any such condition at any time. Violation of any condition of parole may lead to termination of the parole in accordance with paragraph (k) of this section or denial of re-parole.

(j) Reporting of material changes. An alien granted parole under this section must immediately report any material change(s) to USCIS. If the entrepreneur will continue to be employed by the start-up entity and maintain a qualifying ownership interest in the start-up entity, the entrepreneur must submit a form prescribed by USCIS, with any applicable fee (not including any biometric fees), in accordance with the form instructions to notify USCIS of the material change(s). The entrepreneur parolee must immediately notify USCIS in writing if he or she will no longer be employed by the start-up entity or ceases to possess a qualifying ownership stake in the start-up entity.

(k) Termination of parole—

(1) In general. DHS, in its discretion, may terminate parole granted under this section at any time and without prior notice or opportunity to respond if it determines that the alien's continued parole in the United States no longer provides a significant public benefit. Alternatively, DHS, in its discretion, may provide the alien notice and an opportunity to respond prior to terminating the alien's parole under this section.

(2) Automatic termination. Parole granted under this section will be automatically terminated without notice upon the expiration of the time for which parole was authorized, unless the alien timely files a non-frivolous application for re-parole. Parole granted under this section may be automatically terminated when USCIS receives written notice from the entrepreneur parolee that he or she will no longer be employed by the start-up entity or ceases to possess a qualifying ownership stake in the start-up entity in accordance with paragraph (j) of this section. Additionally, parole of the spouse or child of the entrepreneur will be automatically terminated without notice if the parole of

the entrepreneur has been terminated. If parole is terminated, any employment authorization based on that parole is automatically revoked.

(3) Termination on notice. USCIS may terminate on notice or provide the entrepreneur or his or her spouse or children, as applicable, written notice of its intent to terminate parole if USCIS believes that:

(i) The facts or information contained in the request for parole were not true and accurate;

(ii) The alien failed to timely file or otherwise comply with the material change reporting requirements in this section;

(iii) The entrepreneur parolee is no longer employed in a central and active role by the start-up entity or ceases to possess a qualifying ownership stake in the start-up entity;

(iv) The alien otherwise violated the terms and conditions of parole; or

(v) Parole was erroneously granted.

(4) Notice and decision. A notice of intent to terminate issued under this paragraph should generally identify the grounds for termination of the parole and provide a period of up to 30 days for the alien's written rebuttal. The alien may submit additional evidence in support of his or her rebuttal, when applicable, and USCIS will consider all relevant evidence presented in deciding whether to terminate the alien's parole. Failure to timely respond to a notice of intent to terminate will result in termination of the parole. When a charging document is served on the alien, the charging document will constitute written notice of termination of parole (if parole has not already been terminated), unless otherwise specified. Any further immigration and removal actions will be conducted in accordance with the Act and this chapter. The decision to terminate parole may not be appealed. USCIS will not consider a motion to reopen or reconsider a decision to terminate parole under this section. On its own motion, USCIS may reopen or reconsider a decision to terminate.

(l) Increase of investment and revenue amount requirements. The investment and revenue amounts in this section will be automatically adjusted every 3 years by the Consumer Price Index and posted on the USCIS Web site at www.uscis.gov. Investment and revenue amounts adjusted under this paragraph will apply to all applications filed on or after the beginning of the fiscal year for which the adjustment is made.

Credits

[[82 FR 5286](#), Jan. 17, 2017; [82 FR 31887](#), July 11, 2017]

SOURCE: [52 FR 16193](#), May 1, 1987; [52 FR 16372](#), May 5, 1987; [52 FR 48083](#), Dec. 18, 1987; [52 FR 48802](#), Dec. 28, 1987; [53 FR 9282](#), March 22, 1988; [53 FR 17450](#), May 17, 1988; [53 FR 24900](#), June 30, 1988; [53 FR 30017](#), Aug. 10, 1988; [53 FR 40867](#), Oct. 19, 1988; [55 FR 24859](#), June 19, 1990; [55 FR 36259](#), Sept. 5, 1990; [59 FR 13870](#), March 24, 1994; [60 FR 34090](#), June 30, 1995; [66 FR 236](#), Jan. 3, 2001; [67 FR 71447](#), Dec. 2, 2002; [68 FR 10923](#), March 6, 2003; [68 FR 35152](#), June 12, 2003; [68 FR 35275](#), June 13, 2003; [68 FR 46928](#), Aug. 7, 2003; [71 FR 68429](#), Nov. 24, 2006; [73 FR 18415](#), April 3, 2008; [74 FR 2833](#), Jan. 16, 2009; [74 FR 55738](#), Oct. 28, 2009; [76 FR 16232](#), March 23, 2011; [81 FR 72491](#), Oct. 20, 2016; [81 FR 92304](#), Dec. 19, 2016; [82 FR 5286](#), Jan. 17, 2017; [82 FR 41873](#), Sept. 5, 2017, unless otherwise noted.

AUTHORITY: [6 U.S.C. 111](#), [202](#), [236](#) and [271](#); [8 U.S.C. 1101](#) and note, [1102](#), [1103](#), [1182](#) and note, [1184](#), [1185](#), [1187](#), [1223](#), [1225](#), [1226](#), [1227](#), [1255](#), [1359](#); [8 U.S.C. 1185](#) note ([section 7209 of Pub.L. 108-458](#)); 8 CFR part 2.

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