

Zimbabwe Visa Services Suspended by US Embassy

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HARARE, ZIMBABWE, The United States has temporarily suspended routine visa services at its embassy in Zimbabwe, citing concerns with the country's government. The decision, which takes effect Friday, is part of a broader effort by U.S. authorities to strengthen national security and curb visa misuse.

According to a statement released by the U.S. State Department, the suspension will impact most nonimmigrant visa services, including tourist and business applications. However, the embassy clarified that diplomatic and official visa categories will remain largely unaffected.

“This measure is temporary while we address concerns with the Government of Zimbabwe,” the embassy stated on Thursday. No specific timeline was given for when normal operations might resume.

The announcement comes amid a series of immigration reforms implemented under the Trump administration aimed at tightening control over U.S. borders and entry processes. The policy changes are intended to deter visa overstays and improve vetting procedures for applicants from certain countries.

“The Trump Administration is protecting our nation and our citizens by upholding the highest standards of national security and public safety through our visa process,” the State Department said.

Zimbabwe is among several African nations affected by Washington’s expanded visa scrutiny. In June, the U.S. imposed travel bans on citizens from 12 countries, seven of which are located in Africa. Additional restrictions were applied to citizens from another seven countries, including three African nations.

As part of the policy overhaul, 36 countries were issued formal warnings by the U.S. government. These nations, the majority located in Africa, were instructed to improve the documentation and vetting procedures for travelers seeking to enter the United States. Zimbabwe, along with Malawi and Zambia, was among those cited.

The U.S. is also urging these countries to take responsibility for their nationals who remain in the U.S. illegally. Failure to comply with these demands could result in more stringent travel restrictions in the future.

Just days before the Zimbabwe decision, the State Department rolled out a pilot program requiring visa applicants from Malawi and Zambia to post a refundable bond of up to \$15,000. The measure applies to business and tourist visa categories and is designed to prevent overstays.

Under the new rules, applicants must post a bond of either \$5,000, \$10,000, or \$15,000, depending on the visa officer’s assessment. The bond is forfeited if the individual fails to

leave the U.S. upon visa expiration.

In addition, travelers from Malawi and Zambia are now required to enter and exit the United States through one of three designated airports: John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, Logan International Airport in Boston, or Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C.

The pilot bond program is scheduled to begin on August 20. While currently limited to Malawi and Zambia, the policy could be extended to other countries with high rates of visa overstays if deemed successful.

U.S. officials have emphasized that these measures are part of a broader effort to enforce immigration laws rather than punish specific countries. The focus remains on improving compliance and accountability in the visa process.

Critics, however, have raised concerns that such policies may negatively affect diplomatic and economic relations with the targeted nations. Still, the State Department has insisted that the policies are necessary to protect national interests.

As of now, there is no indication of how long the visa suspension for Zimbabwe will remain in place. Applicants are encouraged to monitor the U.S. embassy's website and official State Department channels for further updates.