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State Department Halts Gaza Medical Visas

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The U.S. State Department has temporarily stopped issuing visitor visas to individuals from Gaza, citing a need for a full and thorough review of the process. The decision follows increased public scrutiny and political concern after reports that several Palestinian individuals had recently entered the United States.

A State Department spokesperson confirmed on Saturday that a “small number” of temporary humanitarian visas had been issued in recent days but declined to provide

specific figures. The pause applies specifically to B1/B2 visitor visas, which allow foreign nationals to seek short-term medical treatment in the United States.

An analysis of public data shows that more than 3,800 such visas were granted in 2025 to holders of Palestinian Authority travel documents, which are issued to residents of both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Of that total, 640 were issued in May alone. However, the U.S. government has not publicly provided a territorial breakdown distinguishing between Gaza and the West Bank.

The change in visa policy comes after activist Laura Loomer posted on social media last Friday, claiming that Palestinian “refugees” had entered the U.S. in recent weeks. Loomer, a known political commentator and supporter of former President Donald Trump, has a following within certain conservative circles. Her claims triggered reactions from Republican lawmakers.

U.S. Representative Chip Roy (R-TX) stated that he planned to investigate the issue, while Representative Randy Fine (R-FL) expressed concerns about potential national security risks.

In response, some advocacy organizations have voiced opposition to the State Department’s decision. The Council on American-Islamic Relations issued a statement criticizing the move as harmful, while the Palestine Children’s Relief Fund warned that it could severely impact access to medical treatment for young patients from Gaza.

“This policy will have a devastating and irreversible impact on our ability to bring injured and critically ill children from Gaza to the United States for lifesaving medical treatment a mission that has defined our work for more than 30 years,” the group said in a public statement.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains critical following the outbreak of war on October 7, 2023. The conflict began after an attack on Israel by Hamas militants, which resulted in the deaths of approximately 1,200 people and the taking of over 250 hostages, according to Israeli government sources. In response, Israel launched a military operation in Gaza that, as of August 2025, has resulted in more than 61,000 reported deaths, based on figures from local health officials.

To date, the U.S. government has not announced any plans to accept Palestinian civilians displaced by the ongoing conflict.