



# Immigration Regulatory Updates

## Overview

Famsville is pleased to present an in-depth review of the latest updates in immigration law. This briefing focuses on significant changes in visa processing, eligibility criteria, and compliance obligations. Staying current with these developments empowers clients to navigate the dynamic legal environment effectively, ensuring adherence and capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

## Visa Processing

### **Ghana Introduces Visa-Free Entry for African Nationals**

Beginning January 2025, Ghana will open its borders to all African nationals, allowing visa-free entry. This marks a significant expansion from the previous policy, which granted visa-free access to nationals from 19 African countries, including ECOWAS members and South Africa. By implementing this policy, Ghana aligns with nations such as Seychelles, Rwanda, The Gambia, and Benin in providing unrestricted entry to all African passport holders.

### **Thailand Expands E-Visa Programme**

From 1 January 2025, Thailand will extend its e-visa programme to include several African countries, notably Nigeria. The requirement for physical submissions will cease on 20 December 2024. Applicants will now submit their applications online and receive an email confirmation, which must be presented upon arrival. Additional details on visa validity and entry requirements will be announced in due course, so applicants are advised to stay updated.

### **Nigeria Reduces Biometrics Fee for African Nationals**

Effective 18 September 2024, Nigeria has lowered the biometrics fee for visas on arrival for African nationals from USD 170 to USD 50. This reduction does not apply to non-African nationals, who will continue to pay the standard USD 170 fee. U.S. nationals remain exempt



under the current reciprocity agreement. While formal confirmation is pending, the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) has already commenced the implementation of the reduced fee.

### **Key Information**

- The reduced biometrics fee applies exclusively to African nationals applying for visas on arrival in Nigeria.
- This fee is in addition to the applicable visa fees, which vary based on the applicant's nationality.
- The biometrics fee for non-African nationals remains USD 170.
- Nationals exempt from the biometrics fee under existing reciprocity agreements with Nigeria will continue to benefit from free biometrics services.

These updates reflect Nigeria's commitment to facilitating easier access for African nationals and improving the overall visa process. For further guidance, clients are encouraged to reach out to Famsville for detailed advice and support.

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