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## **Shortening the Green Card Process**

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An alien may obtain a green card either through a family-based or employment-based petition. If he has no relatives here, the alien generally has to find an employer who can sponsor him. The employer will then have to undergo a process called labor certification.

A labor certification is issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) if the employer can show that there is a shortage of qualified U.S. workers for the job being certified. This conclusion is arrived at after a cumbersome procedure which involves placing a DOL approved advertisement in a local newspaper and interviewing the applicants for the job. Obtaining a labor certification is never a certainty as the DOL's action depends on the labor market.

For some highly qualified individuals, this tedious process may be avoided altogether. The following are employment-based preference categories that do not need labor certification.

### **1. Aliens of extraordinary ability**

This category is for that small percentage who have risen to the very top in the field of science, arts, education, business or athletics. Their achievements must have been recognized nationally or internationally and are extensively documented. Some evidence to show extraordinary ability are internationally recognized awards or prizes, published materials about alien's achievements, authorship of scholarly articles, membership in associations which demand outstanding achievement of their members and other comparable evidence.

### **2. Outstanding professors or researchers**

This category is for internationally recognized professors or researchers who are outstanding in their academic area. Again receiving major awards, write-ups in professional journals about alien's work, authorship of original scientific or scholarly research preferably published in journals with international circulation could satisfy the requirements for this category.

### **3. Certain multinational executives and managers**

The beneficiary in this category must be coming in a managerial or executive capacity and has gained expertise in an overseas affiliate or subsidiary or parent company of an American Corporation. He must have held the executive or managerial position for at least one year immediately preceding the filing of the petition.

### **4. Business investors**

An alien who can invest \$1 million (or 500,000 in a rural or high unemployment area) in a commercial enterprise employing at least ten full-time U.S. workers may qualify for this category.

## **5. Religious workers**

This category offers green cards for ministers of religion, professionals working in a religious vocation and occupation, and other workers in religious vocations or occupations who work for U.S. nonprofit religious organizations or at nonprofit religious organizations affiliated with qualified religious denominations.

## **6. Professionals with Advanced Degree who will work in the national interest of the U.S.**

This refers to second employment-based professionals who have Master's degree or doctorate or who have exceptional ability in the science, arts or business. The criteria used in determining if a professional is working in the national interest are tough. One has to show for instance that his admission to the U.S. will improve the U.S. economy or will improve health care or the environment.