

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) created special economic and trade relationships for the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The TN nonimmigrant classification permits qualified Canadian and Mexican citizens to seek temporary entry into the United States to engage in business activities at a professional level.

Among the types of professionals who are eligible to seek admission as TN nonimmigrants are accountants, engineers, lawyers, pharmacists, scientists, and teachers. You may be eligible for TN nonimmigrant status, if:

- **You are a citizen of Canada or Mexico.**
- **Your profession qualifies under the regulations.**
- **The position in the United States requires a NAFTA professional.**
- **You have a prearranged full-time or part-time job with a U.S. employer (but not self-employment - see documentation required below); and**
- **You have the qualifications to practice in the profession in question.**

Generally, a bachelor's degree or higher is required to be considered a professional in the TN category. A TN visa has no quota limitation and there is no need to go through a complex labor condition procedure. The initial time limit for a TN professional to work in the United States is up to 3 years, with possible extensions of stay. Mexican nationals are required to have TN visas before they may be admitted to the United States with this status, whereas Canadian nationals need only apply with the USCIS at the border to bypass the visa requirement.

Any accompanying or "following to join" spouse and children under the age of 21 may be eligible for TD nonimmigrant status. Spouses and children are:

- **Not permitted to work while in the United States, but they are permitted to study.**
- **Granted TD status for no longer than the period granted to the principal TN nonimmigrant.**