

Walmart Pauses Job Offers to Candidates Needing H-1B Visas



A stockroom at a Walmart store in Grand Prairie, Texas. *Photographer: Shelby Tauber/Bloomberg*

By Jaewon Kang

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- Walmart Inc. has paused offers to candidates requiring H-1B visas, according to people familiar with the matter, due to the Trump administration's \$100,000 visa fees.
- The current guideline primarily impacts Walmart's corporate employees, and the company is the largest user of H-1B visas among major retail chains.
- The Trump administration's visa fee change has caused disruption and confusion among employers and H-1B holders, with critics saying the fee will make it cost-prohibitive for US employers to utilize the H-1B program.

Walmart Inc. has paused offers to candidates requiring H-1B visas, people familiar with the matter said, the latest example of how the Trump administration's \$100,000 visa fees are disrupting workforces.

The current guideline primarily impacts Walmart's corporate employees, said the people, who asked not to be identified discussing private information.

The Trump administration last month slapped a \$100,000 fee for new H-1B applications in a bid to overhaul the visa program and curb overuse. The move has reverberated across technology and other industries that employ thousands of such visa holders.

Walmart is the largest user of H-1B visas among major retail chains, employing an estimated 2,390 H-1B visa holders, according to

government data. That represents a small fraction of its total US workforce of about 1.6 million.

While it's among major employers of H-1B recipients, it's dwarfed by Amazon.com Inc., Microsoft Corp., Meta Platforms Inc. and other tech giants that rely more heavily on the visas.

“Walmart is committed to hiring and investing in the best talent to serve our customers, while remaining thoughtful about our H-1B hiring approach,” a Walmart spokeswoman said.

The administration also recently issued guidance exempting current visa holders from the fee if they change status, meaning that some immigrants – including those on current student visas – would be exempt from the fee. Still, Walmart and other employers would be required to make the \$100,000 payment for workers they sought to hire under the H-1B program not already legally able to work in the US.

The pause to new H-1B hiring adds to the confusion that has beset employers and H-1B holders since the change was announced. Workers with visas say it's frustrating to face the unpredictability around immigration policies when many have abided by US law, while employers say quotas on visas limit their ability to fill staffing.

“The new \$100,000 visa fee will make it cost-prohibitive for U.S. employers, especially start-ups and small and midsize businesses, to utilize the H-1B program, which was created by Congress expressly to ensure that American businesses of all sizes can access the global talent they need to grow their operations here in the U.S.,” Neil Bradley, executive vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, said in a statement after the nation’s largest business lobbying group sued the Trump administration earlier this month over its visa system changes.

In response, the White House said the visa changes were legal and an “incremental step towards necessary reforms to the H-1B program.”

Critics have said the program – which was introduced in 1990 to address specific labor shortages – undermines employment of skilled US workers. Today, visas are used primarily by the tech industry, which has pointed to a dearth of professionals with science, math and computer skills. Universities and hospitals also rely on them to recruit researchers and lecturers.

Read More: [Chamber of Commerce Sues Over Trump’s \\$100,000 H-1B Visa Fee](#)

“It seems like \$100,000 is a fairly arbitrary amount. People are looking at it going, ‘Is this

for real?” [John Veitch](#), dean for the school of business and management at Notre Dame de Namur University, said. The ongoing H-1B changes, coupled with artificial intelligence advances evolving roles, could upend workforces, especially for small- to medium-sized companies, Veitch said.

– *With assistance from Hadriana Lowenkron*

(Adds detail about government clarification in seventh paragraph and additional context in twelfth paragraph.)

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