

US speeds up visa processing for 2026 World Cup ticket holders

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Dhaka: With the largest World Cup in history approaching next summer, the United States has unveiled a new “FIFA Pass” designed to ease visa bottlenecks for fans traveling to matches. Announced on November 17, 2025, by President Donald Trump alongside FIFA President Gianni Infantino, the initiative gives verified ticket holders priority access to visa interview appointments.

The 2026 tournament — co-hosted by the US, Mexico, and Canada — will feature 48 teams and 104 matches, with 11 US cities staging games, including the final in Miami. Organizers expect between five and ten million visitors, raising concerns that America’s already lengthy visa queues could deter international supporters.

The new system links official ticket purchases with embassy scheduling, allowing applicants in high-demand regions to potentially cut wait times

from months to weeks. More than 400 additional consular staff have been deployed worldwide to handle the anticipated surge.

However, US officials stressed that a ticket does not guarantee entry. All applicants must still pass background checks, attend interviews, and meet normal visa requirements. The program simply moves them to the front of the line.

With ticket demand expected to reach record levels and the tournament projected to generate billions for the US economy, officials hope the streamlined process will reinforce America's image as a welcoming host.

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