



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on February 2, 2026

Texas and Florida Crack Down on H-1B Use at State Agencies

The two largest Republican-controlled states, Texas and Florida, have announced efforts to crack down on H-1B visa use at their respective state universities.

On Tuesday, January 27, Texas Governor Greg Abbott ordered that state agencies freeze new H-1B visas and report on their prior use of the federally issued visa. *The Texas Tribune* [reports](#):

Under the directive, public universities and state agencies may not initiate or file new H-1B visa petitions without written permission from the Texas Workforce Commission through the end of the next legislative session on May 31, 2027.

Abbott also ordered agencies and higher education institutions to submit detailed reports to the commission, including the number of new or renewed H-1B visa petitions filed in 2025, the number of H-1B visa holders currently sponsored, job titles, countries of origin and visa expiration dates. He also directed agencies and universities to provide documentation showing they made an effort to give qualified Texans a reasonable opportunity to apply for positions filled by H-1B visa holders.

“State government must lead by example and ensure that employment opportunities — particularly those funded with taxpayer dollars — are filled by Texans first,” Abbott said.



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Meanwhile, Florida is expected to ban its public universities from using H-1B visas to hire faculty. On Thursday, January 29, the Florida Board of Governors, which oversees the public-university system, approved a [proposal](#) that Governor Ron DeSantis [ordered](#) late last year.



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As the *Orlando Sentinel* explained prior to Thursday's vote:

The board is to vote on a proposed one-year ban on hiring faculty who would use the H-1B visa to work in the United States. If approved, the proposed new rule would be put out for two weeks of public comment and then the board could finalize it at a later meeting.

The ban would apply only to new hires, and does not affect H-1B visa holders already working at state universities.

These actions demonstrate that states [play a key role](#) in stopping mass migration — both legal and illegal — and much of that role simply involves preventing migrants from accessing government benefits, programs, or (as in these instances) employment.

Despite Texas' and Florida's actions, these states — and the remaining 48 states — can and must do much more to counter mass migration, including by reasserting their [sovereign authority](#) over immigration, as Texas [tepidly \(and partially\) did](#) in 2024. States should not place their trust in the federal government for a secure border and pro-American immigration policy. They themselves must act.

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