



September 15, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

Since March 2022, Delta Regional Authority (DRA or the Authority) has undergone an organizational restructuring and program evaluation period to ensure the Authority is meeting the needs of its constituents throughout the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region.

During this process, DRA has been guided by its [Equity Action Plan](#), which was developed and published earlier this year in response to the Biden-Harris Administration's [Executive Order 13985](#) on "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government".

In this plan, DRA committed to:

- Devise a more inclusive stakeholder outreach strategy and revise programmatic guidelines to increase engagement with BIPOC, LGBTQ+, faith-based organizations, and other marginalized groups; and
- Revise programmatic guidelines to increase investment in persistent poverty counties and parishes.

Accordingly, DRA has evaluated its Delta Doctors J-1 Visa Waiver Program and has strategized ways to maximize impact throughout the region. Ultimately, DRA is committed to administering programs and initiatives that generate equitable outcomes, and through its health programs, the Authority will continue to prioritize increased access to healthcare services in underserved communities. In alignment with the commitments made through DRA's Equity Action Plan to increase engagement with historically marginalized groups and increase investments in persistent poverty counties/parishes, the Authority is revising its guidelines for the Delta Doctors program by ceasing the requirement and collection of the J-1 Visa Waiver application fee. This new policy will become effective on October 1, 2022.

DRA will publish its newly revised Delta Doctors J-1 visa policies, procedures, and guidelines no later than October 15, 2022.

Any questions about these changes should be directed to Christina Wade, DRA Health Programs Manager, cwade@dra.gov.

Respectfully,

Corey Wiggins, Ph.D.
Federal Co-Chairman