

The Trump administration has suspended U.S. diversity visa lottery program, citing its use by a suspect in recent shootings at Brown University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said.

The program, formally known as the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program, awards up to 50,000 green cards annually to applicants from countries underrepresented in U.S. immigration. Noem said she asked U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to pause the program while the administration reviews its vetting process.

U.S. authorities identified the shooter as Claudio Manuel Neves Valente, a 48-year-old Portuguese national and former Brown University student. Valente is accused of killing two students from Brown and an MIT professor and wounding nine others before dying Thursday from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, according to law enforcement officials.

Noem said Valente received a green card through the diversity visa lottery in 2017. He initially entered the United States on a student visa in 2000, according to a Providence police affidavit. His activities between leaving Brown in 2001 and obtaining permanent residency remain unclear.

“This individual should never have been allowed in our country,” Noem said in a post on the social platform X, adding that the pause would help ensure “no more Americans are harmed.”

The suspension marks the latest move by President Donald Trump to curb immigration, often following acts of violence his administration has blamed on weaknesses in immigration policy. Trump has long criticized the diversity visa program, arguing it poses national security risks.

The diversity visa lottery is administered by the State Department under federal law. Applicants who are selected must undergo background checks, interviews and standard consular screening before receiving permanent residency. For the 2025 lottery, nearly 20 million people applied worldwide, with about 131,000 selected, including family members. Portuguese citizens received 38 slots.

Immigration advocates note that the program remains one of the few legal pathways for immigrants from developing and underrepresented nations, particularly in Africa. Any long-term suspension is expected to face legal challenges, as the program was created by Congress and limits presidential authority to halt it

unilaterally.

The Trump administration has also proposed higher fees for certain work visas, expanded immigration detention capacity and tightened enforcement measures. It has previously imposed restrictions on immigration from several countries following violent incidents involving foreign nationals.

Legal experts say the suspension of the diversity visa lottery is likely to be challenged in court, raising questions about executive power and immigration policy enforcement.