

PREFACE

The United States is the leading player in the global economy. The U.S. is the world's largest importer of goods and services, the largest exporter of services and the second-largest (to China) exporter of goods. We export more goods to Canada than any other country, with Mexico a close second. We also import more goods from Canada and Mexico than any other country except China.

The roots of North American free trade go back as far as 1980, when President Ronald Reagan proposed a North American common market modeled after the European Economic Community, the forerunner of the European Union. The first step was the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which went into effect in 1989 and remained in force until NAFTA replaced it in 1994. It has since been replaced by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). One of the stated goals of NAFTA was to “eliminate barriers to trade and facilitate the cross-border movement of goods and services.” Toward that end, the Agreement authorized the temporary entry of individuals as Business Visitors, Traders and Investors, Intra-Company Transferees, and Professionals.

This book focuses on the entry of individuals to the U.S. under the USCMA, with an emphasis on “Trade NAFTA (TN)” Professionals. The role of the U.S. immigration attorney has always been instrumental in helping business managers understand and comply with the immigration laws to allow foreign national personnel to travel, work, and conduct business legally in the United States. The purpose of this book is to make that task easier for the immigration practitioner. This edition is an update of AILA's previous NAFTA books containing accumulated guidance and reference material from leading immigration lawyers who have generously shared their wisdom and experience in this narrow field of immigration law.

We can't publish an updated edition without acknowledging the leadership of the pioneers who navigated the uncharted waters of immigration law during the early years of U.S.-Canada free trade and NAFTA. In particular, we note the passing of two authors from the prior edition, Mark T. Kenmore and William (“Bill”) Z. Reich. Both were gifted, tenacious lawyers who were not afraid to challenge the INS and CBP to bring clarity to the law and achieve fair, consistent outcomes for our clients. They were also our friends and respected colleagues. Finally, we are grateful for the steady guidance of AILA's Legal Editor, Richard Link.

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