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President Donald Trump unveils 'FIFA Pass' to help World Cup travelers get their visas faster

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WASHINGTON (AP) — [The Trump administration](#) is announcing a new initiative for foreigners traveling to the U.S. for the World Cup next year that will allow them to get interviews for visas more quickly.

Dubbed “FIFA Pass,” it will allow those who have purchased World Cup tickets through FIFA to get expedited visa appointments, as the administration continues to balance President Donald Trump’s tough-on-migration stance with an influx of global travelers for the soccer tournament. The “pass” in the name stands for “prioritized appointments scheduling system.”

“If you have a ticket for the World Cup, you can have prioritized appointments to get your visa,” said [FIFA President Gianni Infantino](#), who was in the Oval Office with Trump on Monday to explain the new system. Turning to the U.S. president, he added: “You said it the very first time we met, Mr. President, America welcomes the world.”

Trump said Monday that he “strongly” encourages World Cup travelers to the U.S. to apply for their visas “right away.”

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the administration has dispatched more than 400 additional consular officers around the world to handle the demand for visas, and that in about 80 percent of the globe, travelers to the U.S. can get a visa appointment within 60 days.

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Under the new system, those who have bought tickets through FIFA will be allowed to go through a “FIFA portal” that would help get their visa application and interview prioritized at the State Department.

“We’re going to do the same vetting as anybody else would get,” Rubio said. “The only difference here is, we’re moving them up in the queue.”

[During next year's World Cup](#), 104 games will be played in Canada, Mexico and the United States. Trump has made the success of the World Cup a top priority, and Infantino has been a frequent visitor to the White House while FIFA prepares for a Dec. 5 World Cup draw at the Kennedy Center, the arts institution now led and managed by Trump loyalists.

Trump once again floated the prospect of moving World Cup games out of one of its host cities if he deemed it to be unsafe, with the [election of progressive activist Katie Wilson](#) as mayor of Seattle who has talked about Trump-proofing the city and protecting its sanctuary city status for migrants. Seattle is one of the 11 host cities in the U.S. next year.

“If we think there’s gonna be sign of any trouble, I would ask Gianni to move that to a different city,” Trump said of Seattle. The FIFA president stepped around the issue without committing to move host cities, noting that “I think safety and security is the number one priority for a successful World Cup” and that “we can see today that people have trust in the United States,” noting the [number of tickets](#) that have already been sold.



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