

New Colorado Law Forces Immigration Software Company to Leave the State

RapidVisa has relocated its headquarters from Colorado Springs, CO to Las Vegas, NV.

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COLORADO SPRINGS, Aug. 29, 2016 - In early June, Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper signed House Bill 16-1391 into law. The law forced [RapidVisa](#) to unexpectedly have to relocate out of the state. Also known as [Immigration Consultants Deceptive Trade Practice](#), the act takes aim at deceptive “notarios”, which are small operations common in Hispanic communities that are known for the unauthorized practice of law (UPL) and taking advantage of undocumented immigrants.

Though not a “notario”, RapidVisa has been dealt a blow by the new law. RapidVisa is an online cloud software solution that aims to streamline the family immigration process. “Our software has done for filing your immigration petitions what TurboTax has done for filing your taxes.” says Kyle Marvin, Marketing Manager of RapidVisa. The new law prohibits any person from offering any service related to immigration whatsoever, unless that person is a lawyer, even if it’s not considered practicing law. Because the law does not contain any language excluding software or services like RapidVisa, the company was immediately forced to leave the state of Colorado.

House Bill 16-1391 was sponsored by Democrat State Rep. Dan Pabon, a lawyer. Pabon was [arrested](#) on the same day the bill was introduced in the House for a DUI as he was allegedly driving home from a House “beer caucus” tasting event at the Governor’s mansion. Pabon was [sentenced](#) to probation in July and remains in office as House speaker pro tempore.

This isn’t the first time RapidVisa has been targeted by lawyers that aren’t happy about the “nonlawyer” competition. RapidVisa was investigated by DHS in 2014 and by the Colorado Supreme Court in 2015 for the Unauthorized Practice of Law, and both times [cleared](#) of any wrongdoing, though costing the company tens of thousands of dollars to defend. But the latest law changes the rules by explicitly prohibiting a company like RapidVisa from operating in the state. Though RapidVisa and its lawyers believe the new law is unconstitutional, they opted to relocate to a more favorable state, rather than spend hundreds of thousands of dollars fighting it.

Ben Ives, President of RapidVisa, thinks the law’s intentions aren’t necessarily to protect immigrants. “Lawyers are desperate to fight off new technology that is disrupting their industry. They change the laws to eliminate any possibility of competition. This particular topic drives home our theory that this was done to protect lawyers, not immigrants. Additionally, the fact that they didn’t reach out to the document consulting industry when

putting this bill together further validates that this was simply a case of lawyers protecting their income.” says Ives.

RapidVisa clearly states on its website that it is not a law firm, nor does it offer legal advice. The company also often refers cases that have legal issues to attorneys, but says that a lawyer is not required for most of these types of services. “Petitioning for a family visa is a benefit request, not a legal issue. Do you hire a lawyer to apply for your driver’s license?” Ives says.

RapidVisa has already signed the lease on its new headquarters in Las Vegas, NV. Nevada was chosen primarily due to its laws that are favorable to the “doc prep” industry. The state has embraced and regulated the non-lawyer document preparation industry. Nevada has set in place rules that will allow an upstanding, law-abiding company like RapidVisa to operate in a manner that is regulated by the state.

“Although we don’t like the way we were driven out of the state we all love, we are excited for the company’s future in Nevada. Our new headquarters is three times the size of our old one to make room for our growth. Now we can get back to work disrupting an industry that desperately needs it. If Colorado doesn’t want to participate in that, it’s their loss.” says Marketing Manager, Kyle Marvin.

Some of RapidVisa’s Colorado-based employees accepted an offer to relocate to Las Vegas. Those who didn’t will lose their jobs. RapidVisa will continue selling services to customers in Colorado, but the state will not benefit from any of the taxes generated on those sales. RapidVisa made the 2016 Inc. 5000 list as the #1413 fastest growing private company in America, and the #3 fastest growing in Colorado Springs, with a growth rate of 271%.

About RapidVisa, Inc.

Since its founding in 2006, [RapidVisa](#) has helped over 21,000 people from over 170 countries file their visa and green card petitions. With offices in the United States, China and the Philippines, RapidVisa offers full-service phone, chat and walk-in support 7 days a week and boasts a 99.7% visa approval rate.

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