





























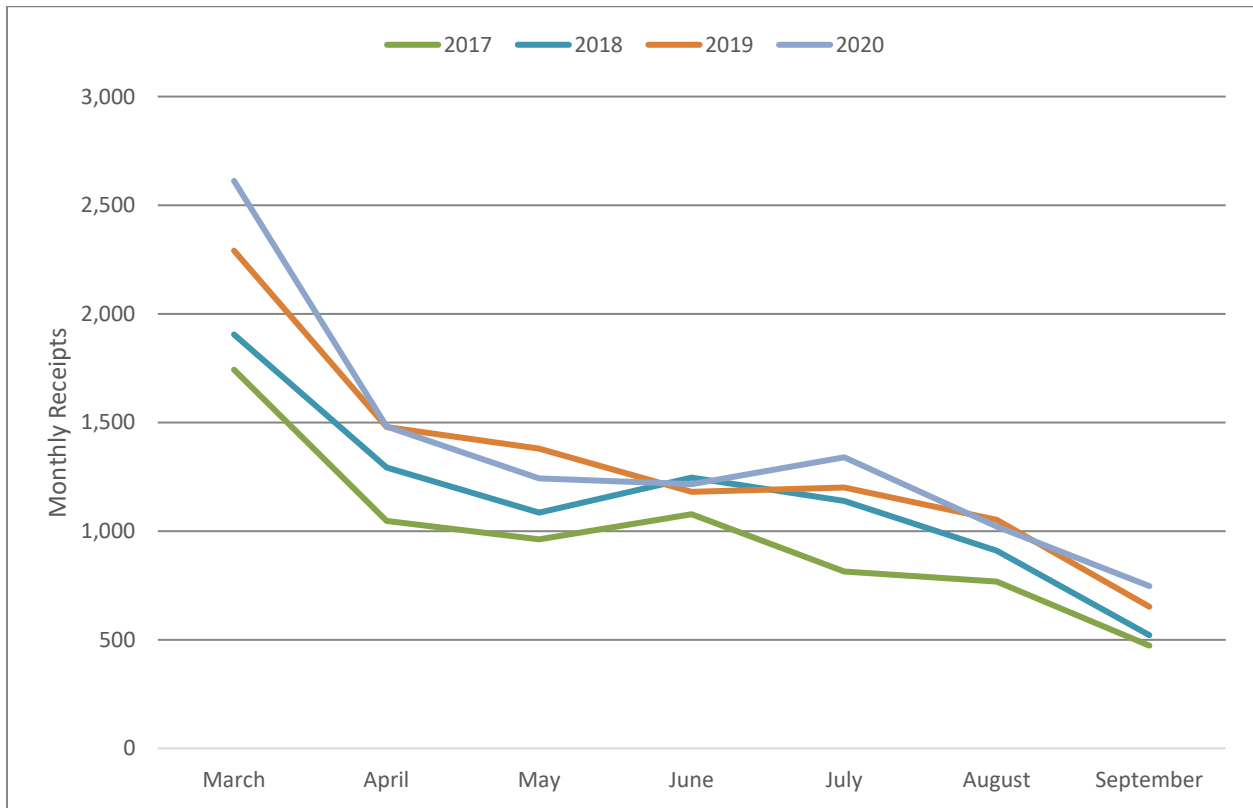








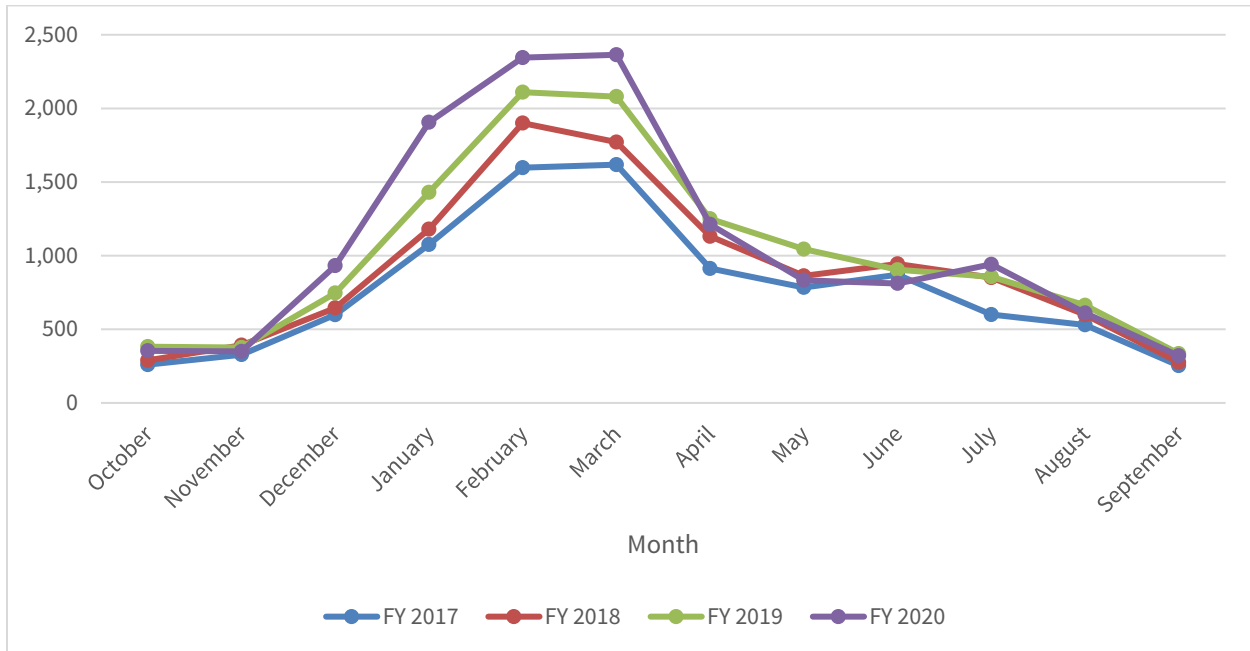
**Figure 5. Year-on-Year H-2A Monthly Receipt Comparison**



**Source:** USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy

Further analyses showed that declines in receipts were seen mostly for new employment petitions, as shown below in Figure 6 and Table 4.

**Figure 6. H-2A Petitions - New Employment**



Source: USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy

**Table 4. H-2A Petitions - New Employment by Month, FY, and Yearly Difference**

Month	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY17-18 Difference	FY18-19 Difference	FY19-20 Difference
October	260	289	382	354	11%	32%	-7%
November	328	392	376	350	20%	-4%	-7%
December	599	645	746	932	8%	16%	25%
January	1,076	1,180	1,430	1,906	10%	21%	33%
February	1,597	1,900	2,110	2,345	19%	11%	11%
March	1,618	1,771	2,080	2,364	9%	17%	14%
April	913	1,131	1,250	1,212	24%	11%	-3%
May	784	863	1,044	833	10%	21%	-20%
June	871	944	904	811	8%	-4%	-10%
July	600	851	857	941	42%	1%	10%
August	530	599	663	611	13%	11%	-8%
September	253	276	335	320	9%	21%	-4%

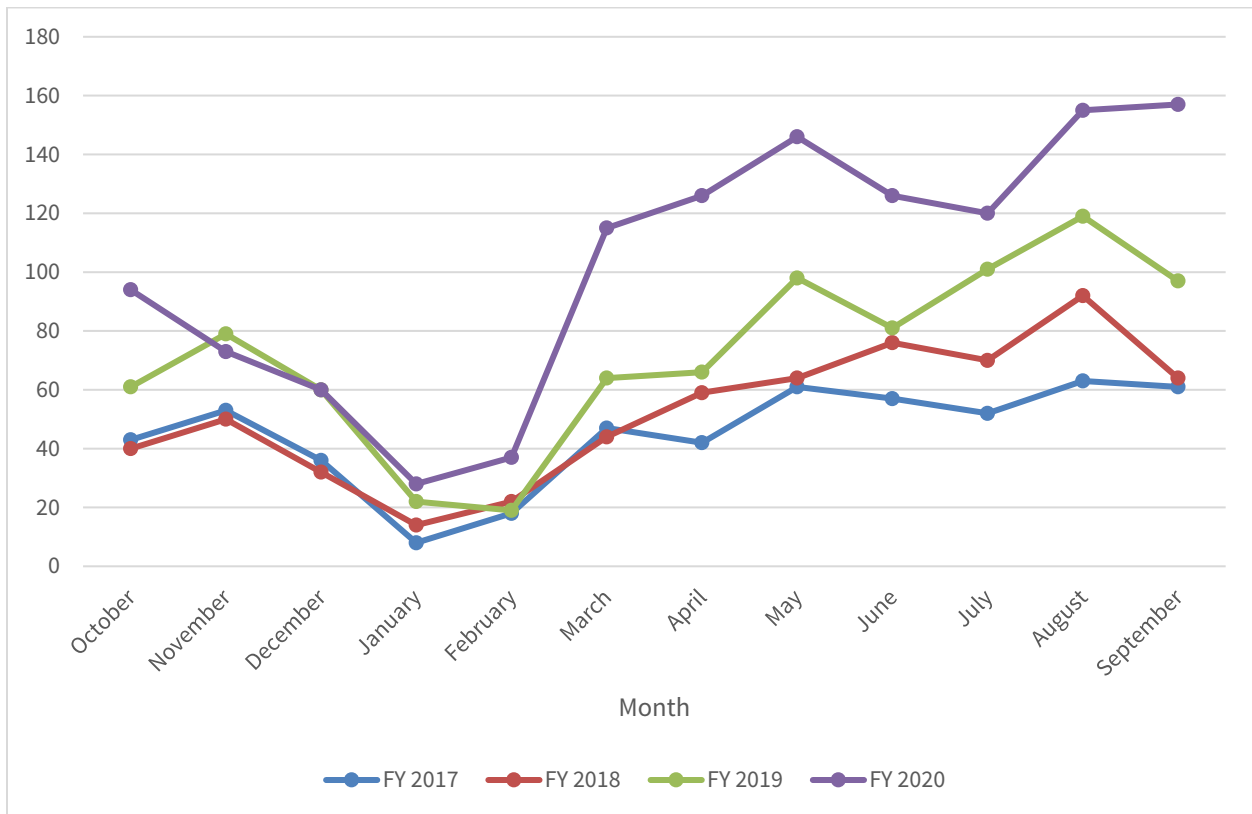
**Note(s):**

- 1) The data reflects the most up-to-date estimate available at the time the database is queried, November 13, 2020.
- 2) Counts may differ from those reported in previous periods due to system updates and post-adjudicative outcomes.

Source: USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy

The number of petitions to change employers, however, increased more in FY 2020 than previous fiscal years, as shown in Figure 7 and Table 5 below. These patterns seen during the latter half of the fiscal year (April through September), which saw a decrease in petitions for new employment and an increase in petitions to change employers, may be associated with the TFR, which relaxed restrictions for H-2A workers who are already in the U.S. to begin employment with a new H-2A employer.

**Figure 7. H-2A Petitions - Change of Employer**



Source: USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy

**Table 5. H-2A Petitions - Change of Employer by Month, FY, and Yearly Difference**

Month	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY17-18 Difference	FY18-19 Difference	FY19-20 Difference
October	43	40	61	94	-7%	53%	54%
November	53	50	79	73	-6%	58%	-8%
December	36	32	60	60	-11%	88%	0%
January	8	14	22	28	75%	57%	27%
February	18	22	19	37	22%	-14%	95%
March	47	44	64	115	-6%	45%	80%
April	42	59	66	126	40%	12%	91%
May	61	64	98	146	5%	53%	49%
June	57	76	81	126	33%	7%	56%
July	52	70	101	120	35%	44%	19%
August	63	92	119	155	46%	29%	30%
September	61	64	97	157	5%	52%	62%

**Note(s):**

- 1) The data reflects the most up-to-date estimate available at the time the database is queried, November 13, 2020.
- 2) Counts may differ from those reported in previous periods due to system updates and post-adjudicative outcomes.

**Source:** USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy

**Summary**

Trends in H-2A Nonimmigrant Temporary Agricultural Worker Petitions show that there is a cyclical pattern in receipts and approvals, where petitions steadily increase from October through February, peak between February and March, then decrease again through September, with a slight increase in June or July. H-2A petitions have steadily increased over the years at about a 16% each fiscal year; however, in FY 2020, that increase was only 10%. This drop in H-2A petitions may be due to travel restrictions and visa processing limitations that occurred during FY 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19, as well as the possibility that some H-2A workers may have been unavailable due to COVID-19 related illness or a reasonable fear of contracting the virus. DHS temporarily amended its H-2A regulations, which relaxed some of the restrictions, as discussed earlier. The April and August 2020 H-2A temporary final rules may have helped to mitigate a possible further decline of receipts due to COVID-related restrictions, as seen in the increase of petitions for change of employers during the latter half of the fiscal year. Caution should be taken in interpreting these results as many factors may impact receipts that are outside of USCIS's data available for analyses.