

Acceptance

During the acceptance step USCIS reviews newly received applications and petitions to ensure that they are properly filed (i.e. signed by the applicant, appropriate fees, etc.) USCIS issues a receipt number for the application or petition, and sends a receipt notice to the applicant or petitioner.

Applications and petitions that are not properly filed are rejected with an explanation of why the application is rejected and the corrective action needed. Rejected applications or petitions do not retain their filing date.

The acceptance step is typically completed within 2 business days of when the application is received. With mail time it may take several weeks for you to get the receipt or rejection notice in the mail. If you do not receive your notice within 30 days of mailing your application, please contact our national customer service center at 1-800-375-5283.

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Initial Review

During this step, USCIS initiates the background checks of the applicant/petitioner and identifies issues that may need to be addressed either during an interview or by asking the applicant/petitioner to submit additional information or documentation. USCIS reviews the applicant's/petitioner's criminal history, determines if there are national security concerns that need to be addressed, and reviews the application/petition for fraud indicators.

If you have filed an I-485, I-589, I-751, N-400, I-90, I-821, I-131 or I-765, you can expect to receive an appointment notice to appear at an Application Support Center to have your fingerprints and/or photographs taken. The timing of your appointment is determined by the number of applicants ahead of you that also need a biometric appointment. We try to schedule biometric appointments as quickly as possible and in most cases you will receive your appointment notice within 30 days of submitting your application. We will send your appointment notice approximately 14 days ahead of your scheduled appointment. It is important that you keep this appointment. If absolutely necessary, you can request that your appointment be rescheduled however, please be aware that rescheduling may delay the processing of your application. Please follow the instructions on your appointment notice if you need to reschedule. Occasionally, you may receive an appointment notice to appear at an Application Support Center to have your fingerprints taken when you have filed a form other than those listed above. In these situations, you may receive your appointment notice more than 30 days after submitting your application or petition.

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Request for Evidence

A request for evidence is made when an application/petition is lacking required documentation/evidence (initial evidence) or the officer needs more documentation/evidence (additional evidence) to determine an applicant's eligibility for the benefit sought. We may send you a request for evidence at any stage of our review. The request will indicate what evidence or information is needed for us to fully evaluate your application or petition. The notice will explain

where to send the evidence and will give the deadline for your response. Your application or petition will be held in suspense during that time. If you receive a request for evidence and have questions about what you need to submit, you may call our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283.

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Request for Evidence Response Review

Once a timely response to the request for evidence is received by USCIS, we review the evidence or information you submitted. If you submitted the requested evidence, we continue with the adjudication of your application or petition in light of the new evidence.

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Testing and Interview

If your case status indicates that you are currently in this step, you have either been scheduled for an interview or are in line to be scheduled for an interview. The amount of time your application will remain in this step will vary by office and is largely determined by the number of cases ahead of yours. The interview notice will have specifics about time, location and anything you will need to bring to your interview. If your application remains pending beyond our normal processing times (as shown below) please contact our national customer service center at 1-800-375-5283.

Please note that not every application/applicant will require an interview. In some instances, an interview is required by regulation and others an interview is requested because USCIS has determined that this is the most efficient means to determine eligibility. For a naturalization application the interview will include your taking the required English and/or Civics tests (unless exempt or waived).

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Decision

During this step the formal decision (approved/denied) is written and the decision notice is mailed and/or emailed to the applicant/petitioner. You can use our current processing time to gauge when you can expect to receive a final decision.

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Post Decision Activity

For approved applications/petitions, post-decision activity may include USCIS sending notification of the approved application/petition to the National Visa Center or the Department of State. For denied applications/petitions, post-decision activity may include the processing of an appeal and/or motions to reopen or reconsider and revocations.

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Oath Ceremony

Naturalization Applicants: you will receive your certificate at your oath ceremony. You can expect to be scheduled for an oath ceremony within 45 days of receiving your recommended approval. Many offices schedule approved applicants for the oath ceremony on the same day as the day of the interview. Please check the local office profile page on our website to determine if the office where you will be interviewed schedules same day oath ceremonies.

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Card/ Document Production

This step applies to applications that result in an applicant receiving a card (such as a "green card") or other document (such as a naturalization certificate, employment authorization document, travel document, or advance parole). Applications will be in this step from the time the order to produce the card/document is given until the card/document is produced and mailed to the applicant. You can expect to receive your card/document within 30 days of the approval of your application.

If you do not receive your document, please contact our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283.

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