



Straight from the Source

Immigration News from USCIS

January 2012

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1. **USCIS Introduces New I-693**—On Nov. 1, 2011, USCIS introduced a new, more user-friendly version of Form I-693, Report of a Medical Examination and Vaccination Record. This form is used by designated civil surgeons to report results of medical examinations for people seeking certain immigration benefits. Beginning Jan. 1, 2012, civil surgeons must use the new version of the form (dated 10/11/11 on the lower right corner). If a medical exam completed on or after Jan. 1, 2012, is reported using an old form, USCIS will reject it and the applicant will have to go back to the civil surgeon to get the results documented on the new form.



2. **Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Reminders!**—Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Honduras and Nicaragua has been extended for 18 months, through July 5, 2013. The re-registration period for Honduras and Nicaragua ends on January 5, 2012. Also, DHS extended TPS for Sudan for 18 months and designated the new Republic of South Sudan for TPS for 18

months. Both the extension and the new designation were effective Nov. 3, 2011, and will continue through May 2, 2013. People from Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan who want to get or maintain their TPS must apply by April 10, 2012. Visit www.uscis.gov/tps for the latest information.

3. **Filing Address Changes for Stand Alone I-130s**—Effective Jan. 1, 2012, petitioners in the United States will mail their **stand-alone** I-130 applications to either the Chicago Lockbox or the Phoenix



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Lockbox, depending on where they live in the United States. The new filing addresses will be updated on Jan. 1 on the [Form I-130 Direct Filing Locations](#) web page. This change will balance workloads between the two locations and provide more efficient processing. For more information click [here](#).

4. USCIS Reaches Fiscal Year 2012 H-1B Cap—On November 23, 2011, USCIS [announced](#) it had reached the statutory cap of 65,000 H-1B petitions for fiscal year 2012. Nov. 22, 2011, was the final receipt date for new H-1B specialty occupation petitions requesting an employment start date in FY12. Properly filed cases are considered “received” the date that USCIS physically receives the petition; not the date the petition was postmarked. USCIS will reject cap-subject petitions for new H-1B specialty occupation workers seeking an employment start date in FY 2012 that arrived after Nov. 22, 2011.

5. USCIS Issues Redesigned Employment Authorization Document and Certificate of Citizenship—In October 2011, USCIS began issuing a redesigned [Employment Authorization Document and Certificate of Citizenship](#) with new, state-of-the-art security features to deter counterfeiting and facilitate authentication. About 1 million people will receive the new documents over the next year.



6. USCIS Streamlines Processing for Four “N” Forms—On Oct. 19, 2011, USCIS issued a [news release](#) announcing its plan to centralize the intake of Forms N-336, N-600 and N-600K at the Phoenix Lockbox facility, and the N-300 at the Dallas Lockbox. These changes, which took effect December 2, 2011, streamline the intake process and improve consistency. If these forms are submitted to a local USCIS office now, they will be returned with instructions on re-filing. The filing addresses are noted below:

Phoenix Lockbox (N-336, N-600, and N-600K)	Dallas Lockbox (N-300)
For regular mail: USCIS P.O. Box 20100 Phoenix, AZ 85036	For regular mail: USCIS PO Box 650809 Dallas, TX 75265
For courier deliveries: USCIS Attn: Form Type (i.e. N-336, N-600, or N-600K) 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034	For courier deliveries: USCIS Attn: Form N-300 2501 S State Hwy 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067

7. USCIS Announces “Entrepreneurs in Residence” Initiative—In October, USCIS Director Mayorkas announced “[Entrepreneurs in Residence](#),” an initiative to use industry expertise to strengthen USCIS policies surrounding immigrant investors, entrepreneurs and workers with specialized skills, knowledge, or abilities. USCIS will launch the initiative with a series of informational summits with industry leaders to gather strategic input. The agency will then stand up a tactical team comprised of entrepreneurs and experts, working with USCIS personnel, to design and implement effective solutions. This effort builds on USCIS’s [August announcement](#) about efforts to promote startup enterprises and spur job creation.

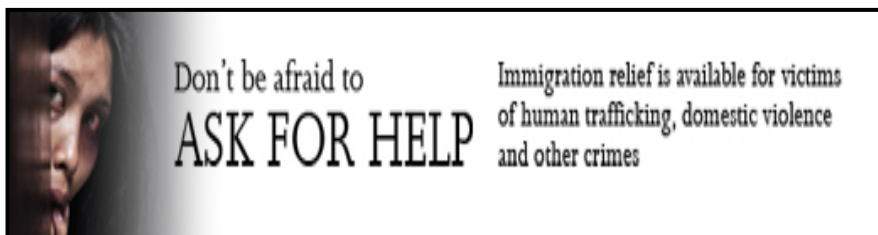
8. USCIS Announces FY2011 Grant Recipients—During Constitution Week this past September, USCIS announced the award of \$9 million in grants to expand citizenship preparation programs for permanent residents. Forty-two organizations from 27 states and the District of Columbia will receive funding. This [fact sheet](#) has all the details. The Citizenship and Integration Grant Program is part of a multifaceted

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effort to provide citizenship preparation resources, support, and information to immigrants and immigrant-serving organizations.

9. USCIS Reaches 10,000 U Visa Approvals in FY11

—For the second year in a row, USCIS has approved 10,000 petitions for U nonimmigrant status, also referred to as the U-visa. Each year, 10,000 U-visas are set aside for victims of crime who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse and are willing to help law enforcement investigate crimes. Congress created the program to strengthen law enforcement’s response to domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other crimes, and to offer some protection to victims. More than 45,000 victims and immediate family members have received U-visas since 2008.



10. Certain Non-Citizen SSI Recipients Can Ask for N-400 to be Prioritized

—USCIS has announced it will prioritize processing of Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, for certain SSI recipients when the applicant’s:

- SSI benefits will end within 1 year from the date listed on their SSI notice; AND,
- Form N-400 has been pending for 4 months or more from the date of receipt

What Should I Do If My SSI Benefits Will Be Terminated Within 1 Year And...

I have **already** submitted an N-400?

OPTION 1: Schedule an INFOPASS appointment by calling 1-800-375-5283.

OPTION 2: Mail the documents listed below to the USCIS office that has jurisdiction over your place of residence ([USCIS Field Office Locator](#)).

1. A cover letter indicating your SSI benefits will end within one year and that your Form N-400 has been pending for 4 months or more.
2. A copy of the most recent letter from the Social Security Administration indicating when your SSI benefits will end (please write your USCIS alien number on the top right hand corner of the Social Security letter).

I have **not yet** submitted an N-400?

1. Write “SSI” at the top of page 1 of your N-400 application form when you submit it
2. Mail your N-400 application, a copy of the most recent letter from the Social Security Administration indicating when your SSI benefits will end, and any supporting documents required for Form N-400.
3. Please write your USCIS alien number on the top right hand corner of the Social Security letter.

NOTE: To ask that your N-400 be prioritized, your SSI benefits must be set to terminate within 1 year, and your N-400 application must have been pending for at least 4 months (or you haven’t applied yet). Each applicant must meet all eligibility requirements (please see [Form M-476](#), A Guide to Naturalization). There is no guarantee that USCIS will approve an application affected by this prioritization.

11. USCIS Launches Spanish Version of Self Check

—In August 2011, USCIS announced that [Self Check](#), a free online service of E-Verify that allows workers to check their own employment eligibility status, is now available in Spanish. Also, the program has expanded to 16 more



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states: California, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and Washington. The initial launch of [Self Check](#) in March 2011 included Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Mississippi, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Self Check gives workers fast, secure access to their employment eligibility information before they apply for jobs.

12. New Policy Memos Issued—USCIS issued and posted the following policy memo at: [www.uscis.gov>laws>policy memoranda](http://www.uscis.gov/laws/policy-memoranda)

- November 20, 2011—[Revised Guidance on the Adjudication of Cases Involving Terrorism-Related Inadmissibility Grounds \(TRIG\) and Further Amendment to the Hold Policy for Such Cases](#)
- November 20, 2011—[Implementation of New Exemption Under INA Section 212\(d\)\(3\)\(B\)\(i\) for the Provision of Material Support in the Form of Medical Care](#)
- November 7, 2011—[Revised Guidance for the Referral of Cases and Issuance of Notices to Appear \(NTAs\) in Cases Involving Inadmissible and Removable Aliens](#)
- October 7, 2011—[Model Plan for Administrative Naturalization Ceremonies](#)
- September 7, 2011—[Continued Eligibility to File for Child VAWA Self-Petitioners After Attaining Age 21](#)
- August 31, 2011—[Eligibility to Self-Petition as a Battered or Abused Parent of a U.S. Citizen;](#)
- August 30, 2011—[Field Guidance for Processing Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, for Applicants Who Will Have Their Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\) Benefits Terminated Because Their Time-limited Eligibility Ends](#)
- August 26, 2011—[Changes to B-2 Status and Extensions of B-2 Status for Cohabiting Partners and Other Nonimmigrant Household Members](#)
- August 17, 2011—[Transfer of Final Adjudication Authority to the National Benefits Center for Adjustment of Status Cases Filed Pursuant to Section 13 of Public Law 85-316 of 9/11/1957](#)
- August 9, 2011—[Adjudication of Adjustment of Status Applications from Aliens Present in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands \(CNMI\) on or after November 28, 2009](#)
- August 8, 2011—[Process for Responding to Requests by the Department of State \(DOS\) to Accept a Locally Filed Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative](#)



13. Upcoming National Engagements—USCIS manages a comprehensive calendar of public engagements to solicit feedback on USCIS procedures and policies. Please bookmark our engagement calendar for future reference: www.uscis.gov/publicengagement. Click on the links below for details:

- **January 18, 2012**—USCIS will host an engagement on [Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker](#) from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm (Eastern time.) This is a telephonic-only engagement.
- **January 23, 2012**—The USCIS Service Center Operations Directorate invites you to participate in stakeholder engagements to discuss the EB-5 Immigrant Investor program. All sessions begin at 1:00 pm Eastern Time. Please refer to this [EB-5 Stakeholder Engagement calendar](#) for details.