



Automatic Certificate of Citizenship for IR-3 and IH-3 Visas

The Certificate of Citizenship (“certificate”) is a legal document and proof of your child’s U.S. citizenship. You should keep it for your records. When you enter the United States, your child’s visa packet will be sent to the USCIS Buffalo Field Office in New York. Once this office receives these documents, it will process and mail out Certificates of Citizenship automatically for newly arrived children with IR-3 or IH-3 immigrant visas under the [Child Citizenship Act](#) for children under the age of 14. Children ages 14 years of age or older will complete the process at a local USCIS field office.

Signing the Certificate

If the child is 14 years of age or older, he or she may sign the certificate on the line above “Complete and true signature of holder.” If the child is under the age of 14, you may sign it for your child. For example, if your child’s name is Allison Jones and your name is John Jones, Sr., you would sign as “Allison Jones by John Jones, Sr.”

If your certificate contains a digital image, then do not sign the image. If the certificate has a paper passport-style photo attached to the certificate, follow these instructions:

- If the child is 14 years of age or older, then he or she may sign the photograph on the left border.
- If your child is under the age of 14, then you may sign the photograph by writing your child’s name on the left border of the photograph and your name on the right border. You may find it easier to sign the photograph if you first use a pencil eraser along the edge to remove the photo’s glossy finish.



Errors on the Certificate

The name and other information used on your child’s Certificate of Citizenship are taken from the child’s legal documents (such as the adoption decree, revised birth certificate, or child’s travel document) attached to the immigrant visa. We are required to use the child’s legal name on the certificate.

Please note that your child’s height may have changed from the date of adoption to the date the certificate is issued. We approximate a child’s height by using a height/age template to assign a child’s height on the certificate.

If the U.S. Embassy, U.S. Consulate, or USCIS made a clerical error, notify the USCIS Buffalo Field Office's Child Citizenship Act Unit within **10 business days from the day the certificate was postmarked**. We will then issue a corrected certificate at no cost to you. Send us a written explanation of the error by mail, the original Certificate of Citizenship, and two new passport-style photographs to the following address:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Buffalo Field Office (CCA Unit)
306 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14202

If more than 10 business days have passed since the postmark date, you will need to file [Form N-565, Application for Replacement of Naturalization/Citizenship Document](#), and include a written explanation of the clerical error, the original Certificate of Citizenship, and two new passport-style photographs. You can file your form online or download the form and instructions for free at www.uscis.gov/n-565. The form instructions will tell you where to send the form and whether or not you have to include the filing fee. For more information please visit our [contact center web page](#).

If Your Child's Name or Date of Birth has Legally Changed

If your child's name and/or date of birth has legally changed through readoption or another legal process, you may file [Form N-565](#) to request that we change your child's name and/or date of birth on the certificate. Include the filing fee and evidence of your child's new legal name or date of birth. You can file online or find the form and instructions on our website at www.uscis.gov/n-565. For more information please visit our [contact center web page](#).

Replacing a Lost Certificate

If this certificate is lost or destroyed, you may file [Form N-565](#), with fee. You can file online or find the form and instructions on our website at www.uscis.gov/n-565. For more information please visit our [contact center web page](#).

If You Adopted More Than One Child

Even if your children entered the United States together, their visa packets may have been separated during the certificate preparation process. Each child's certificate will be mailed separately to you. Please allow up to 60 days from the date of entry into the United States to receive all of your children's certificates.

If Your Child is 14 Years Old or Older

Children ages 14 years or older are required to take the [Oath of Allegiance](#) before receiving their Certificate of Citizenship. Your local USCIS field office will send you separate instructions about having your child take the *Oath* and receiving their certificate. For more information, visit our website at uscis.gov/adoption.

Obtaining a U.S. Passport and Social Security Number for Your Child

U.S. passports are issued by the U.S. Department of State. Visit travel.state.gov for information on obtaining a passport. Many post offices and county clerk's offices also have passport information.

For information on how to obtain a Social Security number, go to the Social Security Administration website at socialsecurity.gov.

Filing Your Form N-565 Online

You have two options for filing your Form N-565 with USCIS:

- Online, or
- By mail (paper).

To file your form N-565 online you must [create an online account](#). Having an online account will also allow you to:

- Pay your filing fee online;
- Check the status of your case;
- Receive notifications and case updates;
- Respond to requests for evidence; and
- Manage your contact information, including updating your address.

Applicants will be required to mail their original certificates and photos, if applicable, to the Nebraska Service Center after they file their applications online electronically through their online account.

Even if you mailed us your form, you can still create a USCIS online account to track and manage your case online.

When you submit your Form N-565 through the mail, you will receive a USCIS Account Acceptance Notice in the mail with instructions on how to create a USCIS online account. We will continue processing your application even if you choose not to access your online account. We will also continue to send you copies of notifications about your case by mail through the U.S. Postal Service.

Note for Attorneys and Accredited Representatives: If you are an attorney or accredited representative, you can also create an online account, which will allow you to manage all of your clients' applications in one place.