

**IMPORTANT: This document contains information that is no longer current but remains on our site for reference purposes.**

## Services Available for Asylee and Refugee

### WHAT INFORMATION ARE YOU SEEKING? (PLEASE CHOOSE ONE BELOW)

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**Note:** For general information about filing for Asylum, please go back to the main page and see the Guide entitled “Special Programs” or call our toll-free number: 1-800-375-5283.

[Read Disclaimer](#)

**Chapter 1          Filing for Asylum****OVERVIEW**

Refugee status is not the only special program option available to foreign nationals who seek protection in the United States. Foreign nationals may file for asylum if they are already in the U.S. and wish to seek protection here and remain in the United States on a permanent basis. Filing for asylum may allow a foreign national to remain in the United States based on past persecution or a well-founded fear of future persecution in their country of origin based on one or more of the following factors:

- Race
- Religion
- Nationality
- Membership in a particular social group
- Political Opinion

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## Unit 1      General Information about Applying for Asylum

### **General FAQs about Filing for Asylum**

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When can I apply for Asylum?

Are there differences in the application processes between filing with USCIS and filing with the immigration court?

What is the process for Requesting Asylum at the Port of Entry?

If I'm outside the country, how do I seek Asylum?

How do I apply for Asylum with USCIS?

Do I need an interpreter to accompany me to my appointment or interview?

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**Who can apply for Asylum?*****You may apply for asylum if you are:***

- Physically present in the United States or arriving at a port of entry to the United States.

***In order to be eligible for asylum you would also need to establish that you are:***

- Unable or unwilling to return to your country of nationality or, if stateless, country of last habitual residence, because of past persecution or a well-founded fear of future persecution on account of your race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion (including resistance to coercive population control measures).

**Note:** *You can include a spouse and any unmarried children under age 21 who are physically present in the United States in your asylum application. If your asylum application is approved, you may be able to petition for certain family members who are not yet in the United States.*

You may file for asylum regardless of your immigration status in the United States. However, if you have been placed in proceedings in Immigration Court, you cannot apply with USCIS; you'll have to apply with the Immigration Court.

**When can I apply for Asylum?**

**If you choose to file for asylum, in order to remain eligible you must file the application within 1 year of your last arrival into the United States unless you can demonstrate either:**

- Changed circumstances, which materially affect your eligibility for asylum, or
- Extraordinary circumstances relating to the delay in filing.

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**Are there differences in the application processes between filing with USCIS and filing with the immigration court?**

An asylum applicant may be classified as either an:

- **Affirmative Asylum Applicant – (applied initially with USCIS) or**
- **Defensive Asylum Applicant – (applied initially with Immigration Court)**

**Affirmative Asylum Process –**

- Asylum applicant, who has not been placed in removal proceedings, comes forward to USCIS and files an application for asylum. He or she has initiated the process.
- 
- USCIS will either approve the asylum application, deny the asylum application, or refer the individual to Immigration Court where the asylum adjudication process will continue.

**Defensive Asylum Process --**

- The U.S. government initiates action to remove an alien from the United States. An alien files an asylum application with the Immigration Court as a defense against removal from the United States.
- An immigration judge adjudicates the asylum application.

**Note:** In both the affirmative and defensive process, in order to be granted asylum, the applicant must meet the 1-year filing deadline described above, or show that an exception applies.

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**What is the process for Requesting Asylum at the Port of Entry?**

You must first inform an Immigration Representative/United States Government Official that you would like to request asylum. What happens next will depend on your particular circumstances, but generally you will receive an interview with an U.S. government official where you can explain why you wish to seek asylum. You may be detained for a certain amount of time while your case is resolved.

**If I'm outside the country, how do I seek Asylum?**

**If you are outside of the United States, you would be seeking refugee status.** You should speak with an officer at the nearest United States Consulate or United States Embassy. The officer will advise you about the correct procedures to follow.

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### How do I apply for Asylum with USCIS?

To apply for asylum, the principal applicant must submit to the USCIS Service Center that has jurisdiction over the applicant's place of residence the following:

- Two (2) copies of an original [Form I-589, Application for Asylum and Withholding of Removal](#), which is completed in English and signed by the applicant and preparer, if any. The Form I-589 must have original signatures and should be accompanied by any available supplementary documents and/or detailed statements explaining why you are seeking asylum.
- One (1) passport-style photograph taken within 30 days of filing the Form I-589.
- One (1) Copy of All Passport Pages - If an applicant has a passport, he/she should submit one (1) copy of it cover to cover, with the asylum application and bring the original to the asylum interview.
- The Asylum Division may provide language interpreters at the interview if the applicant requests an interpreter in advance.

### Do I need an interpreter to accompany me to my appointment or interview?

The Asylum Division may provide language interpreters at the interview if you, the applicant, request an interpreter in advance. If you are hearing impaired, USCIS may be able to provide a sign language interpreter, if requested in advance. You may also bring your own interpreter with you, if he/she is able to certify that he/she can accurately translate to and from English and your native language.

### Can my child or other relative be my interpreter?

Unless it is an emergency situation, children and other immediate relatives should not be used as interpreters. Every attempt should be made to use an interpreter who is a disinterested third party. (***Please note that local offices have the discretion to accept or reject any person as an interpreter.***)

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**What about my Spouse and Children?**

A spouse and any child (under the age of 21 and unmarried) who is physically present in the United States may be included on the principal applicant's I-589 as a dependent derivative. If an applicant has a spouse or child in the U.S. who wants to be included as a dependent on the Form I-589, an applicant must also submit the following for each dependent:

1. One (1) additional copy of the principal applicant's original Form I-589.
2. One (1) passport-style photograph taken within 30 days of filing Form I-589.
3. Three (3) copies of a marriage certificate, if the dependent is a spouse.
4. Three (3) copies of a birth certificate, if the dependent is a child.

If a principle applicant does not have and is unable to obtain a marriage or birth certificate, he or she may submit three (3) copies of secondary evidence of the relationship. Secondary evidence may include, but is not limited to, medical records, school records and religious documents. Affidavits or sworn statements may also be accepted. All original documents should be brought to the asylum interview.

**What if I don't appear for an interview?**

It is very important that you appear for the asylum interview, especially if you are not in lawful immigration status. If you fail to appear for the asylum interview and your failure to appear is not excused, USCIS may refer your asylum application to an immigration judge by issuing a Notice to Appear (NTA) and placing you into removal proceedings. If you cannot appear for the scheduled asylum interview, you should send a written request to the asylum office that has jurisdiction over the asylum application explaining the reason you cannot appear and requesting that the interview be rescheduled.

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### What happens when an application is referred to the Immigration Court?

An asylum applicant that has been referred to the Immigration Court by an asylum office will receive a new hearing on his or her claim to asylum by an immigration judge. The immigration judge hearing the case makes an independent determination on asylum eligibility and is not bound by the decision of the asylum office. The immigration judge may consider any evidence submitted to the asylum office, and may also consider new evidence provided in Immigration Court. Asylum applicants have the right to be represented by an attorney, at no cost to the U.S. Government, at all stages of the asylum process, including while in removal proceedings.

If the immigration judge finds the applicant ineligible for asylum, the applicant may appeal this decision to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).

- If the applicant receives an oral decision from the judge, he/she must state in court if he/she wishes to appeal that decision.
- The immigration judge provides the applicant with the appropriate appeal forms that must be filed within 30 days of the judge's decision.
- If the applicant receives a written decision, the applicant's appeal rights will be specified on the decision form.
- The timely filing of an appeal allows the applicant to remain in the United States while the appeal is pending, and to apply for (or renew) employment authorization.
- Form EOIR-26, Notice of Appeal from a Decision of an Immigration Judge, is the form that must be filed with the BIA to appeal the decision of an immigration judge.

### Where can I find additional information?

The USCIS Asylum Division released a pamphlet entitled **Information Guide for Prospective Asylum Applicants**, which is intended to serve as a practical resource for potential asylum applicants. You may access this Guide by visiting the Asylum Division's website at [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum) and select the appropriate link on the right-hand side.

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## Unit 2 Employment Authorization While the Asylum Application is Pending

An asylum applicant cannot file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, unless at least 150 days have elapsed since the asylum applicant filed his or her asylum application, and the case is still pending. An asylum application is considered “pending” if the case meets either of the following criteria:

- 150 days has passed and no decision has been made on Form I-589; or
- The Form I-589 was referred by the Asylum Office to the Immigration Court and, after 150 days from the date it was filed, has not yet been decided by an immigration judge.

If the applicant’s case history meets any one of the above scenarios, he/she may file Form I-765 under the (c)(8) category. There is no fee for the initial application. Applicants should see Form I-765 instructions for more detailed information.

**Note:**

- If an application for asylum is denied before 150 days from the date of filing the Form I-589, the asylum applicant is not eligible to file for employment authorization under the (c)(8) category on the Form I-765 at any time thereafter.
- If an application for asylum is denied before an application for employment authorization filed under the (c)(8) category is decided, the employment authorization will be denied.

### How long does USCIS have to make a decision on the initial Form I-765?

If properly filed, USCIS must make a decision on the *initial* Form I-765 under the (c)(8) category within 30 days from the date it was received at the Service Center. Failure to adjudicate the initial (c)(8) Form I-765 within 30 days will render the applicant eligible to request an interim EAD from a USCIS local office.

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**Unit 3** **Traveling Outside the U.S. While the Asylum Application is pending**

Do I have to get a travel document before I leave the United States while my application for asylum is pending?

May I apply for a travel document to leave the United States and return while my application for asylum is pending?

What form do I use to apply for Advance Parole?

Once I have the Advance Parole document, can I travel to any country?

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**Do I have to get a travel document before I leave the United States while my application for asylum is pending?**

Yes. If you leave the United States without first obtaining Advance Parole, your application for asylum could be considered abandoned.

**May I apply for a travel document to leave the United States and return while my application for asylum is pending?**

You may apply for Advance Parole while your asylum application is pending. If your application is approved and you obtain Advance Parole, you may depart and return to the United States. However you should be aware that obtaining Advance Parole does not guarantee reentry into the United States.

**What form do I use to apply for Advance Parole?**

The [Form I-131](#), Application for Travel Document, is used to apply for Advance Parole.

**Once I have the Advance Parole document, can I travel to any country?**

An Advance Parole document may allow you to re-enter the United States and continue to pursue your application for asylum. However, an applicant for asylum who leaves the United States with an Advance Parole document and returns to the country from which they are claiming persecution shall be presumed to have abandoned his or her application, unless the applicant is able to establish compelling reasons for such return.

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**Chapter 2 Asylum for Unaccompanied Alien Children****OVERVIEW**

New procedures were created due to the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (TVPRA). USCIS has initial jurisdiction over applications for asylum filed by all Unaccompanied Alien Children (UACs). Even UACs who have been issued a Notice to Appear in immigration court can have their application for asylum adjudicated by USCIS if they were UACs on the date they filed for asylum. The TVPRA also provides an opportunity for UACs, who did not previously file for asylum with USCIS and who have a pending case in immigration court, on appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals, or in federal court, to have their asylum claim heard and adjudicated by a USCIS Asylum Officer in a non-adversarial setting.

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[I was in custody with the Office of Refugee Resettlement \(ORR\) and was released to a parent or relative. Am I still a UAC?](#)

[I was in custody with the Office of Refugee Resettlement \(ORR\) and turned 18 years old after I was released. Am I still a UAC?](#)

[I am a UAC and I wish to apply for asylum. However, I was not issued a Notice to Appear and have never been in immigration court. Where do I apply?](#)

[I am a UAC who was in Office of Refugee Resettlement \(ORR\) custody and was issued a Notice to Appear in immigration court. I have not previously filed for asylum. Can I file directly with USCIS or do I have to wait until my hearing date in immigration court?](#)

[I am in removal proceedings and filed a Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, with USCIS. Will ICE and the immigration judge know I applied for asylum?](#)

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[I am a UAC and my asylum application was pending in immigration court, on appeal before the Board of Immigration Appeals, or with a federal court when the TVPRA took effect. May I request that USCIS adjudicate my asylum application?](#)

[How do I know if CBP or ICE has made a previous UAC status determination in my case?](#)

[I am an unaccompanied minor in removal proceedings but have never been in Office of Refugee Resettlement \(ORR\) custody. May I request that USCIS adjudicate my asylum application?](#)

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**Who is an Unaccompanied Alien Child (UAC)?**

Unaccompanied Alien Child (UAC) is a legal term referring to a child who: has no lawful immigration status in the United States; has not attained 18 years of age; and has no parent or legal guardian in the United States, or for whom no parent or legal guardian in the United States is available to provide care and physical custody.

**How can I apply for asylum?**

All UACs must file [Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal](#). You can access the form on our website at [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms). Please follow the instructions to the form except that you must submit your application to the Nebraska Service Center.

If you are a UAC, you should also submit proof that you were determined to be a UAC with your Form I-589. Evidence that you were in Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody as a UAC, such as either the ORR Initial Placement Form or the ORR Verification of Release Form, can show that you were determined to be a UAC.

**When should I apply for asylum?**

The requirement to file your asylum application within 1 year of your last arrival into the United States does not apply to you as long as you have a UAC status determination in place. However, you should file your asylum application as soon as you are able to do so.

**Can I apply for asylum with USCIS even if I am already in removal proceedings in immigration court?**

Yes. If you are a UAC, you should file your asylum application with USCIS even if you have already been issued a Notice to Appear in immigration court. However, you must attend all scheduled hearings in immigration court while your asylum application is pending with USCIS. You should also take a copy of your USCIS receipt notice to your next immigration court hearing to show the immigration judge and the ICE trial attorney.

**Where can I find additional information?**

The USCIS Asylum Division has a web page titled “Minor Children Applying for Asylum by Themselves” that contains more information and answers to frequently asked questions. You may access this page by visiting the Asylum Division’s website at [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum) and selecting the appropriate link on the right-hand side.

**I was in custody with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and was released to a parent or relative. Am I still a UAC?**

Under updated procedures effective June 10, 2013, USCIS will adopt a prior UAC status determination made by CBP or ICE that was in place on the date you first filed for asylum. If either CBP or ICE found that you were a UAC and transferred you to ORR custody, USCIS will generally take jurisdiction over your asylum application, and generally will not conduct further inquiry into whether you may have reunited with a parent or legal guardian after CBP or ICE determined that you were a UAC.

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**I was in custody with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and turned 18 years old after I was released. Am I still a UAC?**

Under updated procedures effective June 10, 2013, USCIS will accept a prior UAC status determination made by CBP or ICE if that status determination was still in place on the date you first filed for asylum. If either CBP or ICE found that you were a UAC and transferred you to ORR custody, and there was no action taken by ICE, CBP or ORR to terminate that UAC finding, USCIS will take jurisdiction over your asylum application and will not generally re-determine whether you meet the age or other elements of the UAC definition.

**I am a UAC and I wish to apply for asylum. However, I was not issued a Notice to Appear and have never been in immigration court. Where do I apply?**

If you are a UAC who was not issued a *Notice to Appear* in immigration court and you wish to apply for asylum, you can file an asylum application with USCIS. You should follow the general instructions for asylum applicants not in proceedings in immigration court in the Form I-589, *Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal*, available at [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms).

**I am a UAC who was in Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody and was issued a Notice to Appear in immigration court. I have not previously filed for asylum. Can I file directly with USCIS or do I have to wait until my hearing date in immigration court?**

You can file Form I-589 directly with USCIS before appearing in immigration court. You should submit proof that you were determined to be a UAC with your Form I-589. Evidence that you were in ORR custody as a UAC, such as either the UAC Initial Placement Referral Form or the ORR Verification of Release Form, can show that you were determined to be a UAC. However, **you must attend all scheduled immigration court hearings**. You should inform the immigration judge and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) trial attorney that you filed Form I-589 with USCIS and provide the status of your application with USCIS, including whether you have been interviewed or have an interview scheduled. If you have already appeared in immigration court and been provided with a UAC Instruction Sheet, please submit it to USCIS with your asylum application.

**I am in removal proceedings and filed a Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, with USCIS. Will ICE and the immigration judge know I applied for asylum?**

After you have filed for asylum with USCIS, **you must appear at any hearings scheduled in immigration court**. You should be certain to tell the immigration judge and ICE trial attorney that you have filed an application with USCIS and at your next hearing in immigration court, you may be required to provide a copy of your USCIS receipt notice to the ICE trial attorney.

**If I was issued a Notice to Appear and then applied for asylum with USCIS, do I still have to appear in immigration court?**

Yes. Even while pursuing the asylum claim, you must appear in immigration court if you have a hearing scheduled. At the hearing, ICE may again seek to continue your case to allow USCIS to adjudicate your asylum application.

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**What happens if I am in removal proceedings and I do not file a Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, with USCIS?**

If you indicated that you wished to apply for asylum and you fail to file a Form I-589, *Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal*, USCIS cannot adjudicate your asylum application and the immigration judge may proceed with your removal proceedings.

**I am a UAC and my asylum application was pending in immigration court, on appeal before the Board of Immigration Appeals, or with a federal court when the TVPRA took effect. May I request that USCIS adjudicate my asylum application?**

Yes. USCIS also has initial jurisdiction over asylum applications filed by UACs who, on December 23, 2008 (the date the TVPRA was enacted), had proceedings pending before DHS or the Executive Office for Immigration Review (i.e., either before an immigration court or the Board of Immigration Appeals), or had related Federal appeals pending (i.e., a petition for review with a federal court). If your case was pending in any of these places and you filed for asylum as a UAC, and if your asylum claim was never adjudicated by USCIS, you should raise your concerns in the context of those proceedings.

**How do I know if CBP or ICE has made a previous UAC status determination in my case?**

If you were apprehended by CBP or ICE and transferred to ORR custody, it is most likely because CBP or ICE determined that you were a UAC. An Asylum Officer will know if a previous UAC status determination has been made in your case by examining the documents in your alien file.

**I am an unaccompanied minor in removal proceedings but have never been in Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody. May I request that USCIS adjudicate my asylum application?**

Yes. You can file Form I-589 directly with USCIS. You should inform the immigration judge that you believe you are a UAC. **You must attend all scheduled immigration court hearings.** You should inform the immigration judge and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) trial attorney that you filed Form I-589 with USCIS and provide the status of your application with USCIS, including whether you have been interviewed or have an interview scheduled. If you have already appeared in immigration court and been provided with a UAC Instruction Sheet, please submit it to USCIS with your asylum application. If CBP or ICE has not made a previous UAC status determination in your case, USCIS will have jurisdiction over your asylum case if you were a UAC at the time that you filed your asylum application. The UAC Instruction Sheet, by itself, is not evidence that CBP or ICE has made a UAC status determination in your case. The Asylum Officer will make this determination by asking you questions regarding your age and unaccompanied status.

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**What do I do if I was released from an Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) facility or my address otherwise changed?**

If you change your address after filing a Form I-589 application, you must:

1. Submit a Form AR-11 (Alien's Change of Address Card) to USCIS; and
2. Submit a Form EOIR-33/IC (Alien's Change of Address Form/Immigration Court) to EOIR.

If the forms are not included in the asylum instruction packet you received from ICE, they are available on the Web at [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms) or [www.usdoj.gov/eoir](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir).

**I am currently in Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody. Are the procedures any different for me?**

The procedures for filing for asylum are the same. You should submit proof that you were determined to be a UAC, such as the UAC Initial Placement Referral Form, with your Form I-589. ORR will coordinate with the local asylum office if any interview-related issues arise. For more information on ORR's general implementation of the TVPRA, please see ORR's website at [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr).

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## Chapter 3 What Should I Show an Employer When Applying for a Job?

### OVERVIEW

Refugees and Asylees are authorized to work in the United States. The date employment authorization begins for refugees and asylees is the date on which they obtain their status and continues for as long as they remain in that status. While refugees and asylees are not required to obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), they may show their eligibility to work in the United States by applying for an EAD by using Form I-765. Individuals may also establish their eligibility to work by using alternate documents, as indicated on Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, such as an unrestricted Social Security Card along with an appropriate government-issued photo identity document.

Unit 1 What Do I Show to an Employer if I am a Refugee?

Unit 2 What Do I Show to an Employer if I am an Asylee?

**Note:** The automation of Form I-9 does not impact Refugees and Asylees. Individuals without a foreign passport will be sent by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for secondary inspection upon arrival, where they will be issued a paper Form I-94 with the electronic I-94 number hand-written on the form. Employers and agencies can expect refugees, asylees, and others who do not have travel documents to have these I-94s. This Form I-94 with the hand-written number is the correct admission number and can be used for lawful status verification purposes when necessary.

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**Unit 1**      **What Do I Show to an Employer if I am a Refugee?****OVERVIEW**

Refugees are not required to obtain an Employment Authorization Document in order to prove work eligibility. A refugee may prove employment eligibility by using a variety of documents. In most cases, refugees may prove employment eligibility by showing a prospective employer an unrestricted Social Security Card and an acceptable identity document as described on Form I-9. Refugees may also use Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record, as temporary evidence of employment eligibility after entry into the United States.

If you entered the United States as a refugee, you should have been given a Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record, when you were inspected at a port of entry. You may use your Form I-94 as temporary proof of your authorization to work in the United States as long as it has an unexpired refugee admission stamp. The Form I-94 may be used as proof for up to 90-days after your entry into the United States. If you use your Form I-94 to prove your employment eligibility, you will be required to show additional evidence at the 90-day re-verification timeframe.

You can get additional evidence of your eligibility to work by using your Form I-94 and a government-issued photo identity document to apply for an unrestricted Social Security Card. For information about how to apply for a Social Security Card, you can visit the Social Security Administration's website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov), or you can call them at 1-800-772-1213. Once you have your Social Security Card, you can show it to your employer as proof that you are eligible to be employed in the United States.

If you want additional documentation, you can also apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). You can get an EAD by filing [Form I-765](#), Application for Employment Authorization, with USCIS. If you choose to file a Form I-765, please read the instructions carefully before completing and submitting the form. The form can be downloaded from our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

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**Unit 2**      **What Do I Show to an Employer if I am an Asylee?****OVERVIEW**

Asylees are not required to obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) in order to prove work eligibility. However, in most cases, EADs are automatically generated and issued to asylees. An asylee may prove employment eligibility by using a variety of documents. Asylees may prove employment eligibility by showing a prospective employer an unrestricted Social Security Card and an acceptable identity document as described on Form I-9.

As an asylee, you are authorized to work in the United States. As proof, you may use the Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Document, which was issued to you when you were granted asylum. The Form I-94 should have a stamp showing that you were granted asylum under Section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). You may also use this document, along with your asylum approval notice and government-issued photo identity document, to apply for an unrestricted Social Security Card. For information about how to apply for a Social Security Card, you can visit the Social Security Administration's website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov), or you can call them at 1-800-772-1213. Once you have your Social Security Card, you can show it to your employer as proof that you are eligible to be employed in the United States.

As an asylee, you are not required to obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). However, in most cases, an EAD is automatically generated for you if you have been granted asylum. If you were granted asylum by an Immigration Judge and have not received your EAD, you should schedule an INFOPASS appointment at your nearest USCIS office. When you appear for your appointment, you should bring a copy of the Immigration Judge's order granting you asylum and documents establishing your identity. If you were granted asylum by USCIS and have not received your EAD, you will need to schedule an appointment with the USCIS Asylum Office having jurisdiction over your case.

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## Chapter 4 How Can I Obtain a Refugee Travel Document?

### OVERVIEW

Refugees and asylees are granted protection in the United States because they are fleeing their country of nationality due to persecution. As a result, these individuals cannot acquire a passport from their country of nationality. Individuals who have been granted refugee or asylee status in the United States may instead apply for a Refugee Travel Document. This document allows the refugee or asylee to travel outside of and return to the United States and serves as a substitute for a passport. Individuals may obtain a Refugee Travel Document by filing Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, with USCIS.

If you are a refugee or asylee and wish to travel outside the United States, you will need to apply for a Refugee Travel Document. The Refugee Travel Document will allow you to travel outside of and return to the United States, while maintaining your status. The document may be used in place of a passport and is similar in appearance to a U.S. passport.

### General FAQs

[What is a Refugee Travel Document?](#)

[Why would I need a Refugee Travel Document?](#)

[How may I apply for a Refugee Travel Document?](#)

[How may I obtain the Form I-131?](#)

[Where do I file the Form I-131 for a Refugee Travel Document?](#)

[Am I going to receive an appointment to get my fingerprints and photographs done?](#)

[Can I travel back to the country I fled or claimed a fear of future persecution?](#)

[Can I travel back to the country from which I claimed persecution once I have been granted permanent residence based on a grant of asylum?](#)

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**What is a Refugee Travel Document?**

The Refugee Travel Document, also called Form I-571, is similar in appearance to a U.S. passport and may be used by refugees and asylees to travel and to return to the United States. The document may be used in place of a passport. A Refugee Travel Document is valid for 1 year, or until the date the refugee or asylee status expires, whichever comes first.

**Why would I need a Refugee Travel Document?**

If you are an asylee or refugee and want to temporarily travel outside the United States, you will need a Refugee Travel Document to maintain your status while traveling outside of the United States and to return.

**How may I apply for a Refugee Travel Document?**

If you need a Refugee Travel Document, you should file a Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, with USCIS. Please read the instructions carefully before completing and submitting the form. You may find the form and instructions on our website at [www.uscis.gov/i-131](http://www.uscis.gov/i-131).

**How may I obtain the Form I-131?**

You may find and download the form and instructions on our website at [www.uscis.gov/i-131](http://www.uscis.gov/i-131). If you do not have access to the internet, you can call our forms request line at 1-800-870-3676 or we can place the order on your behalf if you are ready.

**Where do I file the Form I-131 for a Refugee Travel Document?**

You may find and download the instructions for the form on our website at [www.uscis.gov/i-131](http://www.uscis.gov/i-131). The instructions will provide you with all of the information you need in order to properly file your application.

**Am I going to receive an appointment to get my fingerprints and photographs done?**

If you have applied for a Refugee Travel Document, you will need to provide biometrics (such as fingerprints and photographs) at a USCIS Application Support Center (ASC). After you file Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, you will be scheduled for an ASC appointment; it is very important that you attend your appointment and bring your appointment notice and identity documents with you. Biometrics is necessary for USCIS to conduct background and security checks and also to create your secure travel document.

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[Asylee and Refugee Benefits](#)

**Can I travel back to the country I fled or claimed a fear of future persecution?**

If your travel abroad suggests that you no longer need the protection of the United States, your status as a refugee or asylee may be terminated. If you return to the country where you experienced past persecution or claim a fear of future persecution, you may be required, upon your return to the United States, to explain your travel to that country to avoid losing your asylee or refugee status. In some cases, returning to the country that you fled can be considered evidence that your fear of persecution is not genuine or that you no longer need the protection of the United States.

In some limited circumstances, you may be able to return to the country where you experienced persecution or claim a fear of future persecution if your stay is of a short duration and you can demonstrate that your return to that particular country was due to compelling reasons.

**Can I travel back to the country from which I claimed persecution once I have been granted permanent residence based on a grant of asylum?**

If you return to the country where you experienced past persecution or claim a fear of future persecution, you may be required, upon your return to the United States, to explain your travel to that country to avoid losing your status. In some cases, returning to the country that you fled can be considered evidence that your fear of persecution is not genuine or that you no longer need the protection of the United States.

A person granted permanent residence based on a grant of asylum is still subject to the possible consequences of returning to the country of claimed persecution. An individual's underlying asylum status may be terminated even if the individual has already become a lawful permanent resident. In some limited circumstances, you may be able to return to the country you fear if your stay is of a short duration and you can demonstrate that your return to that particular country was due to compelling reasons.

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**Chapter 5      How Can I Become a Permanent Resident Based on Refugee or Asylee Status?****OVERVIEW**

Refugees are required to apply for permanent residence one year after entering the United States. If the individual is a child or spouse of a refugee, and has an approved I-730, the person must apply for adjustment of status one year after admission to the United States as a refugee. If the person was in the United States when the I-730 petition was approved, the one year period starts at the time of the approval of the I-730. Asylees may apply for permanent residence one year after being granted asylum, but are not required to do so.

[I am a Refugee. How Can I Become a Permanent Resident?](#)

[I am an Asylee. How Can I Become a Permanent Resident?](#)

[What are the initial eligibility requirements for a refugee/asylee applying for permanent residence?](#)

[How long do I have to be in refugee/asylee status before I can apply for permanent residence in the United States?](#)

[If I have been convicted of a crime or I am inadmissible to the United States am I still eligible to adjust status in the United States?](#)

[Are there any additional applications I can or should file concurrently with the I-485?](#)

[Do I have to file a separate I-485 for every member of my family if I am the principal refugee/asylee?](#)

[Am I required to submit a medical examination with my adjustment of status application?](#)

[Do my fingerprints have to be taken for my adjustment of status application?](#)

[Where do I go to have my fingerprints taken?](#)

[Am I required to attend an interview in order to adjust my status?](#)

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**I am a Refugee. How Can I Become a Permanent Resident?**

You are required by law to apply for permanent residence one year after entry into the United States in refugee status. To apply for permanent residence, you will need to file Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, with USCIS. You can download the form on our website, [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or you can call our forms request line at 1-800-870-3676. If you are the child or spouse of a refugee, and you have an approved I-730, you must apply for adjustment of status one year after admission to the United States as a refugee. If you were in the United States when the I-730 petition was approved, the one year period starts at the time the I-730 was approved.

**I am an Asylee. How Can I Become a Permanent Resident?**

While you are not required to apply for permanent residence, doing so may be in your best interests. You may apply for permanent residence one year after being granted asylum in the United States. To apply for permanent residence, you will need to file Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, with USCIS. You can download the form on our website, [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or you can call our forms request line at 1-800-870-3676.

**Note:** [More FAQs about becoming a Permanent Resident based on Refugee or Asylee status](#)

**What are the initial eligibility requirements for a refugee/asylee applying for permanent residence?**

**Note:** The following answer is for individuals with asylee status –

If you are an asylee, you may apply for permanent residence 1 year after being granted asylum if you:

- Have been physically present in the United States for at least 1 year after being granted asylum;
- Continue to meet the definition of a refugee (or continue to be the spouse or child of such a refugee);
- Have not abandoned your refugee status;
- Are not firmly resettled in any foreign country; and
- Continue to be admissible to the United States (A waiver may be available to you if you are now inadmissible)

**Note:** The following answer is for individuals with refugee status –

If you are a refugee, you must apply for permanent residence 1 year after you are admitted to the United States as a refugee if you:

- Have been physically present in the United States for at least 1 year after being admitted as a refugee;
- Have not had your refugee admission terminated; and
- Have not already acquired permanent resident (green card) status

**How long do I have to be in refugee/asylee status before I can apply for permanent residence in the United States?**

You must be physically present in the United States in refugee/asylee status for a period of at least one year before you file for adjustment of status.

**If I have been convicted of a crime or I am inadmissible to the United States am I still eligible to adjust status in the United States?**

**Note:** For assistance with an answer to this question, please call our toll-free number at 1-800-375-5283.

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[Asylee and Refugee Benefits](#)

**Are there any additional applications I can or should file concurrently with the I-485?**

Yes, you should submit the following forms as part of the process of applying for permanent residence:

- Form G-325A, Biographical Information
- If you are a refugee, you will need to submit the Form I-693A, Vaccination Supplement to Medical Examination
- If you are an asylee, you will need to submit a completed Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record

Regardless of your status, you may also submit the following forms:

- Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative (G-28), if you are represented by an attorney;
- Application for Travel Document (I-131), if you need to travel outside the United States while your application is processed; or
- Application by Refugee for Waiver on Grounds of Excludability, if applicable (I-602)

Please carefully read the instructions before completing and submitting your application.

**Do I have to file a separate I-485 for every member of my family if I am the principal refugee/asylee?**

You should prepare a separate Form I-485 application packet for each member of your family who wishes to become a permanent resident. All family members' application packets should be mailed together in the same mailing envelope.

**Am I required to submit a medical examination with my adjustment of status application?**

If you are an asylee, you will need to submit a completed Form I-693. Form I-693 must be completed by a certified civil surgeon. A list of certified civil surgeons in your area may be found on our website.

**Note:** For assistance locating a civil surgeon, please use the [Civil Surgeon Locator](#) on the USCIS website or call our toll-free number at 1-800-375-5283.

If you were admitted to the United States as a refugee and are now applying for adjustment of status one year following your first admission, you do not need to repeat the entire medical exam you had overseas, unless medical grounds of inadmissibility were found at the time of arrival in the United States or if your refugee status was granted to you through approval of a Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition.

USCIS will accept Form I-693 with only pages 1, 3, and 5 submitted for refugees or any other class of alien who was only required to complete the vaccination portion of the exam. Pages 2 and 4 should be left blank as they do not apply.

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[Asylee and Refugee Benefits](#)

**Do my fingerprints have to be taken for my adjustment of status application?**

You will usually need to have your fingerprint, photo, and signature taken after filing the Form I-485.

**Where do I go to have my fingerprints taken?**

Biometrics (such as fingerprints and photographs) are usually taken at the nearest USCIS Application Support Center (ASC). You will receive an appointment notice in the mail; please refer to the appointment notice for information about where and when you should go to have your biometrics taken.

**Am I required to attend an interview in order to adjust my status?**

According to regulations, an immigration officer will interview each applicant for adjustment of status; however, there are exceptions to this rule. Therefore, your local USCIS office will notify you whether or not an interview is necessary.

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[Asylee and Refugee Benefits](#)

**Chapter 6**      **How Can I Help a Relative Become a Refugee or Asylee?****OVERVIEW**

Refugees and asylees may apply for derivative benefits on behalf of a spouse or unmarried child under the age of 21 within two years of admission to the United States as a principal refugee or asylee. If the child or spouse is already in the United States, he or she may be eligible for settlement as a refugee or asylee, regardless of whether he or she is in the country legally or illegally. The relationship between the principal and his/her spouse/child must have existed when the principal was admitted as a refugee or granted asylum and must continue to exist when the principal files Form I-730 (Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition) and when the spouse or child is admitted to the United States or is granted asylee or refugee status.

[Unit 1](#)      [I am an Asylee and want to Help a Relative Become an Asylee](#)

[Unit 2](#)      [I am a Refugee and want to Help a Relative Become a Refugee](#)

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**Unit 1**      **I am an Asylee and want to Help a Relative Become an Asylee****OVERVIEW**

Asylees are able to help some relatives (husband/wife, or unmarried children under 21) enter the United States. To assist their relative(s), asylees may file Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition, with USCIS. In the petition, the primary asylee must demonstrate a familial relationship to any listed beneficiaries. The relationship between the primary asylee and any petitioned relatives must have existed at the time asylum was granted to the petitioner and must continue to exist when Form I-730 is filed. Form I-730 must be filed within two years of the original grant of asylum, unless a time extension for humanitarian reasons is granted.

[General FAQs](#)

[FAQs regarding derivative status for a spouse](#)

[FAQs regarding derivative status for children](#)

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[Asylee and Refugee Benefits](#)

## General FAQs

[As an asylee, for which family members may I petition to receive asylum status in the US?](#)

[Can I help other relatives get asylum?](#)

[What happens after I file the petition for my relative?](#)

[How long will it take USCIS to process my petition?](#)

[Where can I find additional information about Asylum?](#)

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### As an asylee, for which family members may I petition to receive asylum status in the US?

As an asylee, you may use a Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition, to petition for:

- Your [spouse](#); and/or
- Your [unmarried children under 21 years of age](#)

**Note:** Select the appropriate link above to provide the customer with more information.

### Can I help other relatives get asylum?

Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition limits eligibility to spouses, and unmarried children less than 21 years of age.

For additional information about other ways to help family members get asylum, please visit [www.uscis.gov/howdoi/refugeesasylees](http://www.uscis.gov/howdoi/refugeesasylees).

### What happens after I file the petition for my relative?

After you file your petition, we will mail you a receipt notice. If your petition is incomplete, we may reject it or ask you for more evidence, which will delay processing. Please send all required papers the first time to avoid delay.

We will notify you when we make a decision regarding your case.

- If your relative is inside the United States, then the service center will mail you a decision which will be the final action on your relative's petition.
- If your relative is outside the United States, in addition to a favorable decision on the petition your relative must be found travel eligible by the local USCIS International Field Office or U.S. Embassy or consulate. The process varies slightly depending on your relative's country of residence indicated on the I-730 petition.

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**How long will it take USCIS to process my petition?**

The time to process and approve or process and transfer your petition to an USCIS International Field Office depends on a number of factors. Once you file, we will send you a receipt that with instructions on how to check the status of your case and what you can expect to next receive from USCIS. In addition, you can check current processing times on our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). These times reflect the domestic portion of the process and do not include the overseas interview and issuance of travel documents for beneficiaries abroad.

Please note that processing times for USCIS International Field Offices and U.S. Embassies or consulates are not currently available on [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov). USCIS International Overseas Offices strive to complete its cases within six months of receipt.

**Where can I find additional information about Asylum?**

If you would like additional information about asylum in the United States, please visit: [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum).

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**FAQs regarding derivative status for a spouse**

[How Do I Apply to Get Derivative Refugee or Asylee Status for my spouse?](#)

[Where Do I file Form I-730?](#)

[If my application is approved, how is my spouse notified of the decision?](#)

[Is there a time limit on when I have to file the I-730?](#)

[If my spouse becomes a refugee or asylee as a derivative, can he/she file the I-730 later for another family member?](#)

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**How Do I Apply to Get Derivative Refugee or Asylee Status for my spouse?**

If you want to help your spouse get derivative refugee or asylee status, you need to file Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition. You will need to include all supporting documents listed in the form instructions. Form I-730 is available on our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). For additional information about the following-to-join program for beneficiaries residing abroad visit: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/immigrate/join-refugees-and-asylees.html>.

**Where Do I file Form I-730?**

For information on where to file, please see the instructions to the form at: [www.uscis.gov/forms/i-730](http://www.uscis.gov/forms/i-730).

**If my application is approved, how is my spouse notified of the decision?**

If your spouse is outside of the United States, your spouse will receive a notice to complete processing at the local USCIS International Field Office or U.S. Embassy or consulate.

If your spouse is currently inside the United States, USCIS will directly mail an approval notice.

**Is there a time limit on when I have to file the I-730?**

Yes, you must file a Form I-730 petition for your spouse within two years of the date you were admitted to the U.S. as a refugee or within two years of the date you were granted asylum, unless a time extension for humanitarian reasons is granted.

**If my spouse becomes a refugee or asylee as a derivative, can he/she file the I-730 later for another family member?**

No, a spouse who receives derivative refugee or asylee status cannot file a Form I-730 petition on behalf of other family members.

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### **FAQs regarding derivative status for children**

Can I apply for any of my children, regardless of how he or she became my child?

How Do I Apply to Get Derivative Refugee or Asylee Status for my child?

Where Do I file the Form I-730?

If my application is approved, how is my child notified of the decision?

Is there a time limit on when I have to file the I-730?

If my child becomes a refugee or asylee as a derivative, can he/she file the I-730 later for another family member?

If my child turns 21 years of age while the I-730 petition is pending, is my child still eligible for derivative refugee or asylee status?

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**Can I apply for any of my children, regardless of how he or she became my child?**

You may apply for derivative asylum or refugee status for your biological child as long as that child is unmarried and was under the age of 21 at the time you were admitted as a refugee or granted asylum.

You may apply for derivative refugee or asylee status for a child who was already conceived, but not yet born, on the day you were admitted as a refugee or granted asylum.

You may apply for derivative refugee or asylee status for a stepchild if the marriage between you and the child's parent took place before the child's 18th birthday.

You may apply for derivative refugee or asylee status for an adopted child if the adoption took place before the child's 16th birthday and the child has been in your legal custody for at least two years.

**How Do I Apply to Get Derivative Refugee or Asylee Status for my child?**

If you want to help your child get derivative refugee or asylee status, you need to file Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition. You will need to include all supporting documents listed in the form instructions. Form I-730 is available on our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). For additional information about the following-to-join program for beneficiaries residing abroad visit: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/immigrate/join-refugees-and-asylees.html>.

**Where Do I file the Form I-730?**

For information on where to file, please see the instructions to [Form I-730](#) on the USCIS website.

**If my application is approved, how is my child notified of the decision?**

If your child is outside of the United States, your child will receive a notice to complete processing at the local USCIS International Field Office or U.S. Embassy or consulate.

If your foreign national child is currently inside the United States, USCIS will directly mail an approval notice.

**Is there a time limit on when I have to file the I-730?**

Yes, you must file a Form I-730 petition for your child within two years of the date you were admitted to the U.S. as a refugee or within two years of the date you were granted asylee status unless a time extension for humanitarian reasons is granted.

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[Asylee and Refugee Benefits](#)

**If my child becomes a refugee or asylee as a derivative, can he/she file the I-730 later for another family member?**

No, a child who receives derivative refugee or asylee status cannot file a Form I-730 petition on behalf of other family members.

**If my child turns 21 years of age while the I-730 petition is pending, is my child still eligible for derivative refugee or asylee status?**

Yes, an unmarried child who turns 21 while the refugee or asylee relative petition is pending may derive status so long as the child was under 21 years of age on the date of filing the application with USCIS.

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**Unit 2** **I am a Refugee and want to Help a Relative Become a Refugee****OVERVIEW**

As a refugee, you are eligible to help your husband, wife, or unmarried child under the age of 21 get refugee status in the United States. To help your relative get refugee status in the United States based upon your own status, you start the process by filing Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition, with USCIS on your relative's behalf. In your petition, you will need to prove your family relationship to the beneficiary.

Form I-730 must be filed within two years from the date you entered the United States as a refugee unless a time extension for humanitarian reasons is granted.

[What relatives may I petition for?](#)

[Can I help other relatives get refugee status?](#)

[What happens after I file for my relative?](#)

[How long will it take USCIS to process my petition?](#)

[Where can I find additional information about refugee status?](#)

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### What relatives may I petition for?

As a refugee, you may use a Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition, to petition for:

- Your [husband or wife](#); and/or
- Your [unmarried children under 21 years of age](#)

**Note:** Select the appropriate link above to provide the customer with more information.

### Can I help other relatives get refugee status?

Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition limits eligibility to only spouses, and unmarried children less than 21 years of age.

For additional information about other ways to help family members get refugee status, visit <http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/factsheets/2013/210135.htm>.

### What happens after I file for my relative?

After you file your petition, we will mail you a receipt notice. If your petition is incomplete, we may reject it or ask you for more evidence, which will delay processing. Please send all required papers the first time to avoid delay.

We will notify you when we make a decision regarding your case.

- If your relative is inside the United States, then the service center will mail you a decision which will be the final action on your relative's petition.
- If your relative is outside the United States, in addition to a favorable decision on the petition your relative must be found travel eligible by the local USCIS International Field Office or U.S. Embassy or consulate. The process varies slightly depending on your relative's country of residence indicated on the I-730 petition.

### How long will it take USCIS to process my petition?

The time to process and approve or process and transfer your petition to an USCIS International Field Office depends on a number of factors. Once you file, we will send you a receipt that will instruct you as to how to check the status of your case and what you can expect to next receive from USCIS. In addition, you can check current processing times on our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). These times reflect the domestic portion of the process and do not include the overseas interview and issuance of travel documents for beneficiaries abroad.

Please note that processing times for USCIS International Field Offices and U.S. Embassies or consulates are not currently available on [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov). USCIS International Overseas Offices strive to complete its cases within six months of receipt.

### Where can I find additional information about refugee status?

If you would like additional information about refugee status in the United States, please visit: [www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/refugees](http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/refugees)

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**Chapter 7****How Do I Change My Address with USCIS, The Immigration Judge and The Board of Immigration Appeals?****OVERVIEW**

All non-U.S. citizens inside the United States are required by law to notify USCIS of any change of address within 10 days of moving. Individuals who need to notify USCIS of an address change should file a Form AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card. It is particularly important for individuals with pending cases to inform USCIS of any new addresses so that notices and documents are sent to the correct location. The Form AR-11 may be mailed in, or it can be completed electronically on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

**Note:** Read the information below which is appropriate to your situation: whether you have refugee/asylee status, or conditional status either granted by the BIA or an Immigration Judge.

I am a refugee or asylee. How do I change my address with USCIS?

I was granted "conditional asylum status" by an Immigration Judge. What do I need to do to change my address?

I was granted "conditional asylum status" by the Board of Immigration Appeals. What do I need to do to change my address?

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**I am a refugee or asylee. How do I change my address with USCIS?**

You will need to notify USCIS of your address change by filing a Form AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card. The Form AR-11 may be mailed in, or it can be completed electronically on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

If you have filed Form I-730 which is currently being processed by U.S. International Field Office or U.S. Embassy or consulate, please notify the U.S. International Field Office or U.S. Embassy processing your case directly with any change in your or your beneficiary's contact information.

**Contact information:**

- Type "International Offices: in the Search function on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) to obtain contact information for the 25 USCIS offices overseas.
- U.S. Embassies: Embassy-specific contact information is available at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov), under How to Contact Us. Links to specific Embassy and Consulate websites may be found at [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov).

**I was granted "conditional asylum status" by an Immigration Judge. What do I need to do to change my address?**

If your case was granted by an Immigration Judge, you will need to submit a Form EOIR-33/IC, Change of Address Form, to the Immigration Court that last had jurisdiction over your case. You must submit the Form EOIR-33/IC within 5 days of any address change. You can download the form on the internet at the following address: [www.usdoj.gov/eoir/formslst.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/formslst.htm). When you submit the form, you must also send a copy of the Immigration Judge's conditional grant of asylum.

In addition to completing the EOIR-33/IC, you will also need to submit a Form AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card, to USCIS within 10 days of any change of address. You are required by law to notify us of your change of address within 10 days of moving to your new address. The Form AR-11 can now be completed electronically on our website at: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

**I was granted "conditional asylum status" by the Board of Immigration Appeals. What do I need to do to change my address?**

If your case was granted by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), you will need to submit a Form EOIR-33/BIA, Change of Address Form. You must submit the form within 5 days of any address change. You can download the form on the internet at the following address: <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/formslst.htm>. When you submit the form, you must also send a copy of the BIA's conditional grant of asylum

In addition to completing the EOIR-33/IC, you will also need to submit a Form AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card, to USCIS within 10 days of any change of address. You are required by law to notify us of your change of address within 10 days of moving to your new address. The Form AR-11 can now be completed electronically on our website at: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

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## Chapter 8 What Assistance and Services Are Available for Refugees and Asylees?

### OVERVIEW

Individuals who have obtained refugee or asylum status in the United States may be eligible to receive assistance and services through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). ORR funds and administers programs to help refugees, asylees and other special populations restart their lives in the United States. Programs include cash and medical assistance, employment preparation, job placement and English-language training.

If you are a refugee or asylee, you may be eligible to receive assistance and services through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). ORR helps refugees and asylees start their lives in America and helps them integrate into American society. To find out what programs you are eligible for and where to go for direct assistance, you will need to contact the Office of Refugee Resettlement at 1-800-354-0365.

Additionally, you may find helpful information at the ORR website: [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/)

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**Disclaimer**

The information contained here is a basic guide to help you become generally familiar with many of our rules and procedures. Immigration law can be complex, and it is impossible to describe every aspect of every process. After using this guide, the conclusion reached, based on your information, may not take certain factors such as arrests, convictions, deportations, removals or inadmissibility into consideration. If you have any such issue, this guide may not fully address your situation, as the full and correct answer may be significantly different.

This guide is not intended to provide legal advice. If you believe you may have an issue such as any described above, it may be beneficial to consider seeking legal advice from a reputable immigration practitioner such as a licensed attorney or nonprofit agency accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals before seeking this or any immigration benefit.

For more information about immigration law and regulations, please see our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

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